

**PLANET'S 30th ANNUAL STUDENT CAREER DAYS A HUGE SUCCESS**

— Spectacular setting and enthusiastic students make event memorable —

**HERNDON, Va., April 3, 2006** — They climbed trees, leveled pavers, sawed, negotiated, sold green industry services, identified plants, and steered and drove their way through a full day of competition as approximately 800 students gave 26 different events their full attention and all of their energy.

PLANET's 30th Annual Student Career Days (SCD) was nothing short of spectacular. From the Brigham Young University (BYU) students who seemed to be everywhere with their yellow volunteer shirts making sure that everyone got to their destination to the great weather and spectacular setting, it appeared that everything was absolutely perfect. "Not exactly," said BYU Professor Phil Allen, Ph.D., as the organizer and host of the event who ran from venue to venue and then seemed very distressed to have lost his "brain." He later retrieved a notebook entitled "Phil's Brain" from the dashboard of his car.

If anything went wrong, it was hard to tell. There was a speaker substitution on Thursday morning when everyone learned that presenter Stephen Covey had flight problems and could not get back in time to speak; however, his 17-year associate, Boyd Craig, stepped in and delivered a very compelling seminar. "It's supposed to be about the message and not the speaker," Craig told the audience prior to his presentation, "so we are about to test that theory." His presentation was well received by hundreds of participants in attendance.

The event kicked off with a trip to the Olympic Village in Park City on Wednesday, March 22. Many students, including the University of Maryland team, were on spring break so they arrived earlier in the week to take advantage of the area and the skiing opportunities.

On Thursday, students had an opportunity to meet with industry experts and learn new techniques and expectations for the competitions. Local television stations came out Thursday and interviewed PLANET Board Member Jason **Cupp**, CLP; Phil Allen, and BYU students. They also covered STIHL's spectacular IronJack athletes who gave two performances on Thursday and Friday to the delight of students. They performed saw bucking, speed climbing, power sawing, underhand and springboard chop, and logrolling. Afterwards, students tried their skills at logrolling and walked away drenched. Phil Allen stood on a log for approximately 30 seconds before he took the plunge. He then climbed a large telephone pole that the IronJack's used for speed climbing. IronJacks have been shown on ESPN's Great Outdoor Games and The Outdoor Life Network.

On Friday, the SCD Career Fair included more than 90 green industry company booths. Participating companies scheduled interviews with students during the event and a large turnout of students came through the fair.

Approximately 800 students competed on Saturday. The outdoor competition was exceptional, particularly with all of the outdoor events at one location in BYU's Kiwanis Park. The local CBS station came out and did a broadcast just prior to the competition and then their cameraman and on-air talent tested their driving capabilities on Caterpillar's skidsteer course. The weather was perfect and the outdoor events went extremely well. Inside and across campus, students were estimating, selling, designing and identifying plant material.

Sunday brought a sudden turn in the weather, nature's way of telling everyone it was now time to go home. SCD Chair Jim McCutcheon, CLP, welcomed the group to the Provo Tabernacle for the Closing Ceremonies on Sunday morning. After announcing all of the ALCA Educational Foundation (AEF) scholarship winners, he turned the podium over to SCD Co-chair Jennifer Buck. Jennifer announced all of the student winners including this year's Superstars (individual students with the highest cumulative competitive scores in a total of five events): Jimmy Barnett with North Metro Technical College was named first-place winner (he was also first-place Superstar in 2005 and second-place Superstar in 2004); Victor Eggleston with BYU Idaho took second place; and third place went to Matthew Cousins of Clemson University.

Everyone then waited patiently as the top schools were named. Kansas State University took tenth place; Penn State University was ninth; Michigan State University fell into eighth place; North Carolina State University took seventh; North Metro Technical College was sixth; Columbus State Community College took fifth place; Cal Poly- Pomona was fourth; Colorado State University took third place; second place went to BYU-Idaho; and first place went to the host school, BYU-Provo.

BYU had a lot to be proud of. To have held such a phenomenal event and then to win the event was remarkable. There were many months of preparation and on-site work that made this event successful. But BYU did not do this alone. A very tired, hard-working PLANET staff packed their bags on Sunday and headed home. However, when they reached the airport, they were already planning for next year's event to be hosted by Michigan State University on March 29-April 1, 2007.

PLANET extends a special thanks to the following SCD major sponsors for their support: STIHL (Platinum Sponsor); Ariens/Gravely/Stens (Gold Sponsor); Caterpillar, Husqvarna, John Deere Worldwide/John Deere Landscapes, and The TruGreen Cos. (Silver Sponsors); Brickman, Pavestone, Outside Unlimited, and The Toro Co. (Bronze Sponsors) and Lawn and Landscape magazine (Media Sponsor).

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