



**NEWS ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

3606 Bridge Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44113
(216) 281-6468
Fax: (216) 281-5112
www.earthdaycoalition.org
facebook.com/earthdaycoalition
twitter.com/earthdaycoalit

To: Environmental News Editor
Contact: Christina Yoka
Events & Marketing Coordinator
(216) 281-6468 x231
cyoka@earthdaycoalition.org
Date: November 11th, 2011

**Earth Day Coalition's 14th Annual Instrumental
Evening for the Earth Honors "Partners in Sustainability"**

Cleveland, Ohio -

Earth Day Coalition's 14th Annual Instrumental Evening fundraiser was held on Thursday, November 10th at West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church in Rocky River. The event featured a local, sustainable and organic reception from 17 of Cleveland's finest restaurants and caterers. The restaurants/caterers included: Amp 150, AJ Rocco's, Bar Cento, Don's Lighthouse, Earth Fare Cleveland, Flying Fig, Great Lakes Brewing Company, Gypsy Beans and Baking Company, Laurello Vineyards, Luxe Kitchen and Lounge, Nature's Bin, Nature Friendly Products, Sow Food, Spice of Life Catering, Sweet Melissa's, Tartine Bistro and Vitamix. There was an exciting live auction of eco-friendly items and a fabulous performance by members of the Cleveland Orchestra. Daniel McKelway and Lembi Veskimets (who organized the performance) were joined by additional Cleveland Orchestra members Jeffrey Rathbun, Barrick Stees, Emma Shook, Martha Baldwin and Katherine Bormann for an intimate candle-lit concert.

The evening's theme "Harvest for Sustainable Neighborhoods" reflected Earth Day Coalition's year-round focus on community education and action in our neighborhoods, schools, local businesses and municipalities. Over \$14,000 was raised during a special Fund-A-Need Challenge lead by auctioneer Bob Hale to support Earth Day Coalition's *Sustainable Neighborhood Initiatives*. Prior to the Fund-A-Need, Earth Day Coalition presented three awards to acknowledge our program partners who work with us to create sustainable neighborhoods and improve their community. The following individuals were honored:

Cynthia Weatherspoon

Cynthia is the East 134th block club president and the lead gardener for the 5,000 square foot Earth Day Coalition Naturehood garden on her street. Cynthia's enthusiasm, hard work and community spirit guided the planning, installation and maintenance of her garden. Additional gardeners who were also present - Henrietta Miller, Alice Franklin, Mary Kery and Vince Parks from East 134th - were acknowledged.

City of Lakewood Fleet Manager, Howard Strong

When the city of Lakewood was awarded \$166,400 in grant dollars to retrofit 11 of their 19 garbage trucks with diesel particulate filters (DPFs), the Division of Fleet Maintenance became a model for sustainable waste management. Through a modern filtering system, the DPFs allow the truck's exhaust to heat up the ceramic structure and break down and entrap harmful particles. From the original time the grant was awarded in 2008, and throughout the entire retrofitting process completion in 2010, Earth Day Coalition has worked alongside the City of Lakewood as a constant proponent, supporter, and administrator of this initiative to improve air quality in our neighborhoods.

Rena Spyrou, Owner Mixed Greens

Rena is a graduate of Mayfield High School in 1998. From 1996-1998 she participated in Earth Day Coalition's Student Environmental Leadership program and was president and founder of her High School environmental club (PLANET: People Learning about Nature and Earth Today). Rena credits this High School experience and Program Director Dawn Wrench with sparking her passion for environmental protection. Rena went on to graduate from high school, study environmental studies in college and in 2008 start her own business in Cleveland, Mixed Greens at Tower City. Mixed Greens is an upscale salad bar featuring seasonal foods from local farmers markets. Rena also volunteers with the Downtown Alliance to improve our city as a place to live and work. Rena has opened a second location at Galleria and is working on a third location due to open in February.

To read the full story of how Earth Day Coalition and these inspiring awardees have worked together on neighborhood sustainability initiatives, visit our website and read our "Sustainable Neighborhood Stories" at www.earthdaycoalition.org.

Established in 1990, Earth Day Coalition's mission is to provide education, inspire leadership, and encourage action for a healthy environment. Earth Day Coalition's year-round programs include: Student Environmental Leadership, Clean Transportation, Neighborhood Action, and EarthFest. EarthFest is Ohio's largest environmental education event and the longest running Earth Day celebration in the nation. EarthFest 2012 will be held on Sunday, April 22nd, 10am-5pm at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.