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AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY HONORS NICHOLAS BROTHERS WITH CATHERINE H. SWEENEY AWARD

Alexandria, VA (March 12, 2010). The American Horticultural Society (AHS) is pleased to announce that brothers **William, Daniel, and Albert Nicholas** have been named the 2010 recipients of the Society's Catherine H. Sweeney Award. The award is one of 12 Great American Gardeners Awards that the Society presents annually to individuals, organizations, and businesses that represent the best in American gardening. Each of the recipients has contributed significantly to fields such as scientific research, garden communication, landscape design, youth gardening, teaching, and conservation.

The Catherine H. Sweeney Award recognizes extraordinary and dedicated philanthropic support of the field of horticulture.

In 2006, the Nicholas brothers made a lead gift of \$2,150,000 to the Rockford Park District in Illinois for a centerpiece project to celebrate the District's 100th anniversary in 2009. The gift is being used to create the Nicholas Conservatory & Gardens in Sinnissippi Park. Sinnissippi Park was the first land purchased by the District in 1909.

The conservatory, which will become the third largest in Illinois when it is completed in spring 2011, will be a showcase for the community and a source of inspiration and education for generations to come.

Like many children growing up in Rockford in the 1940s and 1950s, the brothers spent much of their time enjoying the outdoors near the site of the future conservatory. The brothers elected to support the district as a way to honor their parents, William and Ruby Nicholas, while at the same time enhancing the riverfront property located along the shores of the Rock River. The donation underscores their commitment to make Rockford a great place to live, work, and play, and ties in with their ongoing efforts to champion the benefits of plants and quality of life issues.

On Thursday, June 10, 2010, the American Horticultural Society will honor the Nicholas brothers and the other 2010 award recipients during the Great American Gardeners Awards Ceremony and Banquet, held at the Society's headquarters at River Farm in Alexandria, Virginia.

Images are available upon request. For more information on this award, or the overall Great American Gardeners Award program, please contact David J. Ellis at (703) 768-5700 ext. 122, or dellis@ahs.org.

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The American Horticultural Society (AHS), founded in 1922, is an educational, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization that recognizes and promotes excellence in American horticulture. One of the oldest and most prestigious gardening organizations, AHS is dedicated to **making America a nation of gardeners, a land of gardens**. Its mission is to open the eyes of all Americans to the vital connection between people and plants, to inspire all Americans to become responsible caretakers of the Earth, to celebrate America's diversity through the art and science of horticulture; and to lead this effort by sharing the Society's unique national resources with all Americans.