



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MEDIA CONTACTS: Kati Spencer, B.J. Communications
602-277-9530 x228; kati@bjc.com
John Sallot, Desert Botanical Garden
480-481-8101; jsallot@dbg.org

MAJOR GRANTS AWARDED FOR GARDEN'S ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

Desert Botanical Garden Closing in on \$16 Million Goal

PHOENIX (Oct. 3, 2007) – The Desert Botanical Garden recently received two major grant awards toward its \$16 million endowment and capital campaign. The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust awarded the Garden \$800,000 to support education initiatives. The Kresge Foundation awarded an \$850,000 Challenge Grant.

The two grants bring the current fundraising total of *Tending the Garden: Campaign to Endow the Future* to more than \$12.4 million.

“We started this campaign with some very specific goals – fund critical programs and initiatives that support the Garden’s mission and create an endowment that ensures the Garden’s role as an innovative steward of Sonoran flora for future generations,” said Hazel Hare, *Tending the Garden* campaign co-chair. “It’s so exciting to see what we have achieved so far, and we feel incredibly honored that the Garden’s mission and future are worthy of such esteemed grants.”

Grant monies from The Piper Trust include \$250,000 to fully fund the development of an interdisciplinary environmental curriculum for grades K-8. The Sonoran Desert Adventure Digital Curriculum Unit for Teachers will be distributed statewide and designed for use as stand-alone lessons in the classroom or in conjunction with field trips to the Garden. The Garden will use \$50,000 to support the production of an audio tour specially designed for children – one of five audio tour options being created for Garden visitors. The largest portion of the grant, \$500,000, will be invested into the Garden’s endowment to fund future educational programs for Arizona children.

The Garden was the only Arizona institution selected to receive funds from The Kresge Foundation in this recent grant cycle. The Kresge Foundation’s Challenge Grant is designed to assist the Garden with raising additional restricted private gifts to complete campaign funding. The goal is to generate \$3,723,306 in cash pledges and irrevocable planned gifts to *Tending the Garden* by December 2008. If this challenge and other grant conditions are met, the Garden will receive The Kresge Foundation’s grant award. The Garden will use \$325,000 of The Kresge Foundation monies to fund major enhancements and a central plaza linking the new Sybil B.

Harrington Cactus and Succulent Galleries. \$175,000 will fund future new exhibits on the Center for Desert Living Trail. The balance of the grant award will be designated to offset campaign costs.

These amazing gifts will allow the Garden to turn long-term dreams into realities, and create a legacy for so many generations yet to come,” said Oonagh Boppart, *Tending the Garden* campaign co-chair.

The *Tending the Garden* campaign began in March 2006. Individuals, including members of the Garden’s board, senior staff and volunteers, made many of the early gifts. Private foundations also have been generous, including major grants from The Dorrance Family Foundation and the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. Campaign support from businesses to date includes gifts from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, Davison Benefits Group, Northern Trust and Greenberg Traurig.

Some of the notable exhibits and projects to be funded by campaign donations include a new entry gallery featuring iconic plantings of cacti and succulents, the Sybil B. Harrington Cactus and Succulent Galleries to replace those constructed in 1950 and 1965 respectively, expanded educational programs to heighten awareness of the need for conservation, Garden audio tours in five languages to enhance the visitor experience, and the addition of new research scientists and studies to yield knowledge about desert plants and their environments.

#

About The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust

The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust is committed to honoring Virginia Piper’s legacy of making grants to organizations whose work enhances the lives of people in Maricopa County. Since it began awarding grants in 2000, the Piper Trust has invested more than \$177,000,000 in local nonprofits and programs. The Piper Trust focuses its grantmaking on healthcare and medical research, children, older adults, arts and culture, education and religious organizations. For more information about The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, please visit www.pipertrust.org.

About The Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation is a private, national foundation established in 1924 by Sebastian S. Kresge to promote human progress. In 2006, it awarded approximately \$150 million in grants to nonprofit organizations in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa and Mexico and had year-end assets of \$3.3 billion. The foundation is headquartered in Michigan. For more information, please visit www.kresge.org.

About the Desert Botanical Garden

A “Phoenix Point of Pride,” the Desert Botanical Garden is one of only a few botanical gardens accredited by the American Association of Museums. It is a privately funded, non-profit organization and depends on revenues from admissions, gift shop sales and memberships as well as contributions from individuals, foundations and businesses to fund its exhibits and programs of environmental education, plant conservation and scientific research. The Garden is

located at 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix. For more information about the Garden please visit www.dbg.org or call 480-941-1225. To learn more about the *Tending the Garden* campaign, please call Beverly Duzik, campaign director at 480-481-8160.