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Burlington Man Singled Out for Environmental Leadership Honoree Receives Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen Fellowship

New York, NY, December 1, 2008—A Burlington, Vermont man is the recipient of a new national fellowship designed to advance the work of individuals with outstanding potential to help shape a brighter environmental future.

James Barnes is one of only 40 people selected from competitors nationwide for the *TogetherGreen* Conservation Leadership Program, part of a new conservation initiative of the National Audubon Society with support from Toyota. Fellows receive specialized training in conservation planning and execution, the chance to work and share best practices with gifted conservation professionals, and assistance with project outreach and evaluation. Each Fellow will also receive \$10,000 towards a community-focused project to engage local residents in conserving land, water and energy, and contributing to greater environmental health.

For his fellowship, Barnes will focus his efforts on expanding his successful Land Stewardship Program (LANDS) at the University of Vermont. The LANDS program provides college students with paid opportunities to assist land management groups like Green Mountain Club, The Nature Conservancy, and the VT Agency of Natural Resources, and along the way, gain valuable, hands-on experiences while working under the guidance of a mentor. Students create maps, inventory rare species, and design curriculum for elementary children, just to name a few stewardship projects. Conservation groups in turn receive quality, low cost service. The LANDS program was created and piloted by Barnes as part of his Master's research in partnership with the University of Vermont and The Student Conservation Association.

Barnes has demonstrated a commitment to environmental leadership—and to fostering those leadership skills in others, namely college students. Before LANDS, he volunteered internationally, and worked as a biology research technician in North Carolina and as an environmental restoration crew member with the Nevada Conservation Corps.

“James is the kind of person who can make a real difference in the health of our environment and the quality of our future,” said Audubon President John Flicker. “Each of our *TogetherGreen* Fellows demonstrates exceptional environmental understanding and commitment, combined with tremendous potential to inspire and lead others. Together, they represent the talented and diverse leadership the environmental community will need to tackle the huge challenges and opportunities confronting us now and in the years to come.”

“The challenges we face today require a new call to service, much like the New Deal and the Civilian Conservation Corps,” said Barnes. “What I’m working to create is a new kind of corps that provides college students with hands-on, affordable education, and land agencies with much needed help. Vermont is perhaps the best place in the nation to develop this idea.”

Barnes has been affiliated with UVM and LANDS since 2006. Half of the *TogetherGreen* Fellows come from within Audubon's far-reaching national network; half channel their environmental efforts through other organizations.

Barnes received a Masters degree from the University of Vermont's Field Naturalist program. He was valedictorian at North Carolina State University, where he graduated with a double degree in biology and psychology.

"Toyota believes in the power of grassroots efforts to develop the environmental leaders of tomorrow," said Patricia Salas Pineda, Group Vice President, Toyota Motor North America. "These 40 *TogetherGreen* Fellows will receive invaluable training for the future while immediately making a difference today with on-the-ground community projects."

A complete list of the 2008 *TogetherGreen* fellows can be found at www.TogetherGreen.org/fellows.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in spring, 2008 to fund conservation projects, train environmental leaders, and offer volunteer and individual action opportunities that significantly benefit the environment. As of October, volunteer days have begun in 40, tallying in excess of 11,000 volunteer hours. Funding totaling \$1.4 million was recently awarded to innovative conservation projects nationwide, while www.TogetherGreen.org helps users take individual conservation action and share and celebrate success stories. The *TogetherGreen* initiative and grants programs are funded by a \$20 million Toyota gift to Audubon, the largest in the conservation group's long history.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon online at www.audubon.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants, with another under construction in Mississippi. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Through its corporate initiatives, manufacturing operations and philanthropy, Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. In 2007, Toyota contributed more than \$56 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit <http://www.toyota.com/community>.