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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THREE LOCAL JACKSONVILLE SCHOOLS TO RECEIVE NEW BENCHES

Keep Jacksonville Beautiful presents awards to school principals

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., April 18, 2011 – Over the next month the Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Commission will formally present park benches made of recycled materials to two of the three schools that were recognized at the Mayor's Environmental Luncheon in March with Environmental Achievement Awards.

WHEN/WHERE: **Tuesday, April 26, 2:30 p.m.**
Kirby Smith Middle School, 2034 Hubbard St., 32206
Presentation to Principal June Marshall

Thursday, May 5 at 9:30am
Alden Road Exceptional Student Center, 11780 Alden Road, 32246
Presentation to Principal Linda Leonard

Hendricks Avenue Elementary School students and Principal Robert Rhodes were also presented with a bench on Friday, April 15. A photo from the presentation is attached.

WHAT: The Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Commission applauded these schools for their ongoing beautification, recycling and community efforts to keep their facilities clean and environmentally friendly.

The recycled benches, remanufactured from 100 percent recycled plastic HDPE (high-density polyethylene), demonstrate the organizations' concern for environmental issues and for sustaining the earth's fragile and limited resources. The benches also highlight the Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Commission's goals of encouraging beautification and maintenance of the city's green landscape.

Individuals, businesses, organizations, colleges and schools are encouraged to begin projects or document current project status for consideration for the 2012 Keep Jacksonville Beautiful (KJB) Awards. For more information, visit www.coj.net, key words: *Keep Jacksonville Beautiful* or contact Vivian Harrell at (904) 630-3420 or vharrell@coj.net.

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Elementary category: Hendricks Avenue Elementary School

Hendricks Avenue Elementary teaches its students about sustainability in a variety of ways: The school's PTA ecology group, parents and students maintain and improve the school's grounds with activities such as campus cleanup days several times a year; its Environmental Eagles Club promotes recycling on and off campus (the club recycled 22,340 pounds of classroom recycled paper last year) and distributes "green cleaner" to each classroom; and HAE partnered with Greenscape of Jacksonville and T & D Preventative Maintenance of JEA to promote Florida Arbor Month by planting eight trees on campus. They promoted their activities in a paperless newsletter.

Middle School category: Kirby Smith Middle School

Kirby Smith Middle School's PTSA had an ambitious list of environmental projects in 2010: clean up the school's courtyard, participate in a classrooms-wide recycling program, create an outdoor dining/learning area and promote environmental education to students' families. Those goals were achieved in a variety of ways, including 20 adults and teens donating more than 80 hours to clean up the school's courtyard by replanting planters, prepping a fountain for painting and cleaning up the area. The school's Green Team provided classrooms with recycling containers and continues to make bi-weekly pickups. The creation of a dining/learning area became an Eagle Scout project.

High School category: Alden Road Exceptional Student Center

Alden Road students, all with special needs from profound mental and physical handicaps to intellectual disabilities, demonstrate everyday through many special projects, their environmental commitment to the school and community. Students maintain the grounds, rake, mow and plant shrubbery and keep sidewalks and parking areas free of debris. They proudly compost yard waste and build structures to accommodate classmates in wheelchairs. They clean and maintain the facilities, even vacuuming carpets. Students even melt down and mold old crayons into fun-shaped new crayons. The school won the first runner-up award for the Duval County Public Schools' "Green Champions Program."