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The Environment and the Economy Take Center Stage at 2007 VisionBROWARD Community Leadership Forum

City Mayors Join Effort to Prevent Global Warming

Celebrities pitch it, activists practice it, politicians set the policies, pundits promote the cause. Green is the new black. The environment, its protection and our individual roles and responsibilities have captured the focus of the Country.

Next week, VisionBROWARD will advance environmental issues in South Florida with the Fourth Annual Community Leadership Forum. This year's theme is "**E² = SF: Environment and the Economy – Keeping them both alive in South Florida**", and a number of renowned speakers and subject area experts will address issues such as restoration and urban sustainability, marine and land resources, the problem of solid waste, water quality issues and the need for sustainability in development practices.

Broward County Mayor Josephus Eggelletion, Jr. will kick-off of the two day event at a welcome reception on February 8 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Bonnet House, 900 North Birch Road in Fort Lauderdale. **At 7:00 p.m., the Broward County Audubon Society will honor the Mayors of the 23 Broward County cities that have become signatories of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement by presenting them with the Protector of the Climate award in recognition of their leadership. These 23 Mayors join over 360 others from all 50 states in fighting global warming in their communities.** Thursday night's

keynote speaker will be Miami Mayor Manuel A. Diaz who is also the vice president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

The VisionBROWARD Leadership Forum gets underway on February 9 at Nova Southeastern University, University Center, 3301 College Avenue, in Fort Lauderdale from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The keynote speaker is Michael Grunwald, an award-winning national reporter with the Washington Post, as well as the author of the Swamp, a dramatic history of the Everglades that received the Worth Bingham Award for investigative reporting. Mr. Grunwald will also be available for a book signing.

“The Broward County Board of County Commissioners tackled environmental issues long before it was fashionable, setting an example by being among the first to purchase, protect and preserve green space and natural areas; build environmentally friendly green buildings; implement the use of gasoline saving vehicles; create greenways through out the county, and carrying out the will of the voters who approved a \$400 million Safe Parks and Land Preservation bond, ” said Broward County Commissioner Ilene Lieberman, a VisionBROWARD Co-Chair. “This forum takes it one step further by focusing on the environment in relation to economic development.” Commissioner Lieberman will moderate a panel discussion on *Land Use: Maximizing Yield Potential*.

Broward County Commissioner Kristin Jacobs will participate in a panel entitled *Managing our Water Resources for the Future – Policy Issues of Water Quality and Quantity* that will also feature representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the National Parks Conservation Association, the State of Florida, the South Florida Water Management District and the Clean Water Network of Florida.

“These are important issues and these influential panelists can and do make a difference in policy on water resource issues,” said Commissioner Jacobs. “This open, public dialogue is a way to express our concerns and develop a plan of action.” Commissioner Jacobs has taken a leadership role on environmental issues. When she became Broward County Mayor in 2004, she declared it the “Year of the Environment.” She was instrumental in creating and implementing “NatureScape Broward” a water conservation program, which has won numerous awards and resulted in Broward County becoming one of two counties in the Country certified by the National Wildlife Federation. She was named “Spokesperson of the Year” by PR News and was recently presented with the James D. Webb Award by the Everglades Coalition.

Broward County Vice Mayor Lois Wexler’s will close the meeting with a discussion on moving the ideas presented at the forum forward.

To register for the Fourth Annual VisionBROWARD Leadership Forum or to get more information, please visit http://www.broward.org/econdev/e2_intro.htm, or contact the Broward County Office of Economic Development at (954) 357-6155.

VisionBROWARD is a community economic development partnership undertaken by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners, the Broward League of Cities, the Broward Alliance, the Broward Workshop and Nova Southeastern University. This visioning process has involved more than 2,000 individuals representing hundreds of groups from private businesses, the educational community, local governments, community organizations and the public that took part in this public/private initiative and solicited opinions and contributions. This strategic community visioning process resulted in a final plan of recommended action steps designed to promote the continued development and redevelopment of Broward County was accepted by the Board of County Commissioners of Broward County as its long-range vision. For more information of VisionBROWARD, please visit <http://www.visionbroward.org>.

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