



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: James Johnson

Phone: (703) 736-9666

E-mail: jamesjohnson@landcarenetwork.org

For Immediate Release

**THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION SCHOOL OF HORTICULTURE RECEIVES
PLANET ACCREDITATION**

– First PLANET Accredited Canadian Program –

HERNDON, Va., March 1, 2007 — The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) is pleased to announce that the Ornamental Horticulture Diploma Program at The Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) School of Horticulture in Niagara Falls, Ontario has been granted PLANET Provisional Accreditation at the four-year bachelor-degree level, and upon completion of requirements, will receive full PLANET accreditation.

The PLANET Accreditation Review Team met with staff, students, alumni, and industry associates to review the extensive application and further investigate the unique educational program. Their recommendations for accreditation were approved at the international meeting in Columbus, Ohio, on November 3, 2006.

PLANET Accreditation is the only nationally recognized endorsement offered to colleges with landscape/horticulture curricula. It is designed to recognize schools with landscape contracting curricula that meet or exceed industry standards. Accreditation provides guidance to create and/or improve current program curricula, while providing both local and national recognition.

The Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture is a family of students, staff, and alumni whose passion for the art, science, and mystery of horticulture is evident in superior education, research, leadership, industry professionalism and stewardship of their gift to the world — the Botanical Gardens.

Liz Klose, B.S. (Agriculture), superintendent of the NPC School of Horticulture states, "This accreditation is a major milestone in the history of the school. It will also increase the awareness for other horticulture colleges and universities across Canada. When we began investigating the PLANET accreditation criteria, it became very clear that we exceeded the two-year accreditation standards. Our program aligned more appropriately with four-year accreditation standards, which validates the extensiveness of the NPC School of Horticulture curriculum and the dedication of staff and students."

Thomas Laviolette, N.P.D., superintendent, Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and Butterfly Conservatory, Floral Showhouse, Parks Greenhouse Production and Landscape Design remarks, "As staff and graduates, we have been praised time and time again from the world over about the unparalleled education we offer and have experienced since our humble beginnings in 1936. PLANET has proudly recognized the special educational experience at the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture and once again solidifies what we have always believed was important in training the best horticulturists."

The students involved in the accreditation process are proud to be attending the first college in Canada to be accredited by PLANET. The accreditation will increase the awareness of the excellence for which the School of Horticulture and Botanical Gardens strives.

Current four-year PLANET accredited programs in North America:

Brigham Young University

Landscape Management
Provo, Utah

Brigham Young University–Idaho

Landscape Horticulture
Rexburg, Idaho

California Polytechnic State University

Environmental Horticultural Science
San Luis Obispo, California

Colorado State University

Landscape Design and Contracting
Fort Collins, Colorado

Mississippi State University

Landscape Contracting and Management
Mississippi State, Mississippi

The Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture

Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada

Oklahoma State University

Horticulture and Landscape Architecture
Stillwater, Oklahoma

For more information about PLANET school accreditation, please contact James Johnson at the Professional Landcare Network office, (800) 395-2522 or e-mail jamesjohnson@landcarenetwork.org.

PLANET is the association of members who create and maintain the QUALITY OF LIFE in communities across America. With more than 4,200 member companies and affiliates, these firms and their employees represent more than 100,000 green industry professionals.

Professional Landcare Network

950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 450 • Herndon, VA 20170 • (800) 395-2522 • LandcareNetwork.org