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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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***For Immediate Release  
Monday, May 19, 2008***

### **1,000 Trees Planted to Help Restore Virginia Key Beach Park City of Miami, Volunteer Florida and EcoZone Celebrate National AmeriCorps Week** *-Native Trees Help Protect City, Marine Life from Hurricanes-*

(Miami, Florida)- Several hundred AmeriCorps volunteers from across the country joined the City of Miami AmeriCorps, Volunteer Florida and EcoZone to plant 1,000 trees as part of the closing event of National AmeriCorps Week at Virginia Key Beach Park yesterday.

“Thanks to EcoZone and the work of over 600 AmeriCorps volunteers from around the country, we can all breathe cleaner air in Miami,” said Mayor Diaz. “These trees will help restore this historic beach, which not only protects the city from storm surges but also provides home to thousands of species of marine life.”

Virginia Key Beach serves as a buffer to the mainland from hurricane and storm surges and is the City’s first and most economical line of defense against storms because it acts as a buffer between the storm waves and urban infrastructure along the coast. The 1,000 trees planted will also absorb a significant amount of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, each year.

Edna Bonhomme, an AmeriCorps Team Leader from the Little Haiti neighborhood of Miami, helped lead a group of 50 Florida AmeriCorps volunteers during the event. “I’m really proud to have been apart of this,” said Bonhomme. “I feel like I really made a contribution to the Mayor’s Green Miami initiative, and in a few years, people will be able to visit a grove of native trees that we planted.”

The tree planting event is part of the Green Miami Campaign to increase the tree canopy to 30 percent by 2017. The City of Miami VISTA Partnership, which helps local non-profit organizations by bringing in resources of cash, grants, donations and volunteers, helped organize this event.

Partners in the AmeriCorps tree planting include City of Miami, Volunteer Florida, EcoZone, Hands on Miami, Miami-Dade County and WFOR-TV.

#### **About City of Miami AmeriCorps Programs**

Since Mayor Diaz took office in 2001, the AmeriCorps and City of Miami VISTA programs have expanded to include over 15 new sites with over 80 program volunteers each year. For more information about Community Partnerships and volunteer opportunities in the City of Miami, please contact Dorcas Perez at 305-416-1536 or [dperez@miamigov.com](mailto:dperez@miamigov.com)

#### **About National AmeriCorps Week**

National AmeriCorps Week is an annual event designed to bring more Americans into service, salute members, alumni and partners for their services, and raise awareness about how AmeriCorps is “getting things done” for communities across the nation.

#### **About EcoMedia and EcoZone**

EcoMedia is a leading environmental media company, dedicated to pioneering marketing and media programs which help companies connect to consumers while generating necessary resources to address critical environmental challenges. EcoMedia and its flagship EcoZone Program were founded in 2002 with the mission to create solutions for environmental problems with all partners involved -

business, government, environmental advocates and the community. Visit [www.ecozonemedia.com](http://www.ecozonemedia.com) or [www.ecozone.tv](http://www.ecozone.tv) for more information.

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