



FRIENDS of HILLTOP ARBORETUM

June, 2009

Dear Friend:

Friends of LSU Hilltop Arboretum so appreciates your participation at Hilltop. You've probably heard by now that we are planning to build the final structure remaining in the design created by Lake/Flato Architects in 1998. We hope to begin construction on the enclosed educational facility during the first half of 2010.

We have put off sending you this letter for several months hoping for a change in the economic climate, but have finally decided that we may be able to reach our goal with a little help from all of our friends. Consider this:

Total needed:	\$1,400,000
Funds on-hand and pledged:	<u>\$1,150,000</u>
Remainder needed:	\$ 250,000

If 500 people sent an average of \$500, we'd be there!

In spite of bad economic times, our organization has much to be glad for. The educational facility is already LEED registered (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), the standard bearer of sustainable building practices. We are the first building at LSU to earn the designation, and among the first in Baton Rouge. The building will be an educational tool and an example to the community.

Executive Director, Peggy Davis, is making a mark for the organization through exciting new programs and community partnerships. Many of these are part of our educational initiative focusing programs on planting for a healthier future in our own back yards. More people are attending more programs at Hilltop than ever before including children, students of all ages and professionals for continuing education.

The Friends group is working closely with the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture at LSU, our official managing entity. Classes and projects are held regularly at the Arboretum. Most importantly, LSU has agreed to pay 75% of our Executive Director's salary, although Hilltop may be a casualty of the budget cuts.

The new bridge made possible by the 25th Anniversary fundraiser has just been built. Work on a path donated by Nancy and Paul Murrill in honor of their son, Whit, has begun and may be finished by the time you receive this letter. A generous gift by Betsy Thomas will allow us to rebuild the Cathedral area, heavily damaged during Hurricane Gustav, and an important state grant has been awarded to Hilltop for improvements in the back part of the property. It's hard to believe all of the wonderful things that are happening at Hilltop!

Yet we are still a critical \$250,000 short of the necessary funds to begin work on the enclosed educational facility so desperately needed. Three long time members of our Advisory Council have agreed to act as Honorary Chairmen: Richard Lipsey, T.O. Perry and Dudley Coates. A word from them and more information about the project is enclosed.

We ask you to help make this dream of an enclosed educational facility a reality. Pledges can be made by check or credit card, and extend over three years. Donations will be held at the LSU Foundation and can earn TAF (*Tiger Athletic Foundation*) points. All donations are tax-deductible.

We thank you in advance. If you would like to learn more, please contact Cathy Coates, at cabr@cox.net or 767-9074, or Hilltop at hilltop@tigers.lsu.edu or 767-6916.

Sincerely,

Cathy Coates
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