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**For Immediate Release**

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**“Sugar from the Sun” Interpretive Programs and Web Site  
Promote Family Dialogue and Learning**

*Exhibit Opens March 1, Garfield Park Conservatory*

**CHICAGO (Feb. 28, 2008)** – The Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance will provide an array of interpretive materials and experiences to engage visitors of all ages in the “Sugar from the Sun” exhibit opening March 1 at the Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave., Chicago.

“Sugar from the Sun” is a highlight of “Chicagoasis: The Greenest Show on Earth” – a year-long celebration of the Conservatory’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2008. A series of centennial events and programs are planned to honor the world’s largest botanical collection under glass, designed on Chicago’s West Side by renowned landscape architect Jens Jensen.

Exhibit guides and supplemental rental materials will support self-guided explorations into the exhibit, stimulating families to ask questions, discuss possibilities and leave full of curiosity and an eagerness to learn more. On weekends, staff and volunteers will supervise “Sugar from the Sun” themed programs at interpretive carts and in the Children’s Garden. Take-home materials will encourage families to explore the air, water, sunlight, leaves and roots in their backyards and window sills, and to connect the food production of plants to common products they can find in their refrigerators or at the local grocery store. In this way, the scientific insight at the heart of “Sugar from the Sun” can become part of visitors’ daily lives.

As part of this project, the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance also will launch [www.sugarfromthesun.org](http://www.sugarfromthesun.org), a ground-breaking interactive Web site about the process and relevance of photosynthesis. The site is designed to breathe life into the tired, widely misunderstood topic for an audience of students, educators, families, gardeners of all skill levels and casual Web users.

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## “Sugar from the Sun” Interpretive Programs//Add One

“In the process of pulling together information and data to support the exhibit, we discovered that a one-stop, easily-navigated, widely-understood and enjoyable Web site about photosynthesis did not exist,” said David Snyder, the Alliance’s director of educational exhibits. “The ‘Sugar from the Sun’ online exhibit will intuitively guide visitors through educational pathways that are not only organized, accessible and meaningful on many different levels, but are fun and fresh for visitors.”

Studies have shown that inter-generational groups learn best when what they see and do at an exhibit results in conversation and play. Cues in the “Sugar from the Sun” exhibit and related programming are designed to spur conversations, especially between generations in family groups, and to keep dialogue active through the rest of the visit to the conservatory, its outdoor gardens, and on the walk or drive home.

“Sugar from the Sun” is built on a hierarchy of interpretation that provides multiple methods for multiple audiences to engage in the exhibit. Interpretation begins with immersion experiences that every family member can see, hear, smell and touch in his or her own way. The rich experiences are intended to stimulate parent-child interactions that continue in conversations at home. In this way, every family member can contribute to the learning experience.

“Sugar from the Sun” is made possible in part by a \$1.65 million grant from the National Science Foundation. Support also has been received from the “Public Museum Capital Grants Program” of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois State Museum.

Admission to “Sugar from the Sun” is free. Owned by the Chicago Park District and operated in partnership with the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance, the Conservatory is open every day of the year, with free admission and convenient free parking. (Special exhibit and activity fees may apply.) For information about Garfield Park Conservatory’s Centennial and related programming, call 773-638-1766 extension 13, or visit [www.garfieldconservatory.org](http://www.garfieldconservatory.org).

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*Garfield Park Conservatory turns 100 years old in 2008, celebrating its heritage as one of the world’s largest botanical gardens under glass. Owned by the Chicago Park District and operated in partnership with the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance, the innovative horticultural masterpiece was designed by renowned landscape architect Jens Jensen. Many activities and programs are planned to commemorate this Centennial. For the latest information, call the Alliance at 773-638-1766 ext. 13 or visit [www.garfieldconservatory.org](http://www.garfieldconservatory.org).*

