

ALL-AMERICA ROSE SELECTIONS ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AMERICA'S TOP 10 ROSE GARDEN COMPETITION

San Jose Garden Win's Top Honor, as Tens of Thousands of Rose Lovers Across the Nation Weigh in and Vote for Their Favorite Rose Garden

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 12, 2010 – All-America Rose Selections (AARS, rose.org) is pleased to announce the winners of America's Best Rose Garden Competition 2010. After an admirable journey of restoration and community support, the historic San Jose Municipal Rose Garden has been awarded the title of "America's Best Rose Garden" in the All-America Rose Selections' national competition, which garnered over 21,000 votes from rose garden lovers across the nation.

Two New York State gardens rounded out the top three spots, as Dr. E.M. Mills Memorial Rose Garden of Syracuse was deemed the runner-up, while Central Park Rose Garden of Schenectady earned third place in this year's competition. Winners are determined by total votes from visitors and rose enthusiasts, overall garden condition, and community programs, including tours and volunteers days that engage visitors and promote each respective garden.

"This competition encapsulates the importance of roses and the essential role these gardens play in our lives and within our community," said Henry Conklin, Board President, AARS. "The overwhelming response of votes we received was extraordinary, which affirms that rose lovers are undoubtedly some of the most passionate people in the world."

In efforts to increase visitors and encourage the community to get involved with roses, the first place winner, San Jose Rose Garden, demonstrated innovative creativity in driving traffic to the garden through social media platforms and knowledgeable on-site volunteers, to special installments of WiFi for iPad voting within the garden and customized sandwich wrappers at the local deli, which assisted in driving thousands of votes.

"Three short years ago the garden was on probation and close to losing its accreditation from AARS, and as result of the massive support from our community volunteers, city staff and local media, we have gone from probation to America's Best Rose Garden," said Terry Reilly, of Friends of San Jose Rose Garden. Reilly, along with Beverly Rose Hopper are the Founders of "Friends of San Jose Rose Garden", a non-profit organization bringing together a very motivated community of caring volunteers, which partnered with city staff/officials to revive the garden.

"Over 3,000 volunteers, some traveling more than two hours, have helped transform the San Jose Municipal Rose Garden into a place of beauty for all to enjoy. The garden has touched so many people's lives, and we are proud our program serves as a model for other parks nationwide" said Hopper. To learn more about this wonderful public garden and the volunteer group, go to <http://www.FriendsSJroseGarden.org/>.

All-American Rose Selections' (AARS) "America's Best Rose Garden" competition is a national competition to find the best public rose gardens in America. The voting officially began on April 1st, 2010 and closed July 1st, 2010, allowing communities across America to vote for their

favorite local garden. The top ten gardens with the most individual votes became finalists, followed by AARS representatives who reviewed past judging forms, each gardens website and programs, selecting one winner based on beauty, creativity and the garden's overall contribution to its community. The winning garden, the San Jose Rose Garden, will receive a \$2,500 cash donation to its volunteers organization and each of the top ten gardens will be featured on the AARS website rose.org as well as be included in a national promotion highlighting the best gardens in America.

In addition to the top three gardens in this inaugural competition, the gardens found below encompass the complete list of top 10 winners for 2010.

San Jose Municipal Rose Garden, San Jose, CA (1st Place)
Dr. E.M. Mills Memorial Rose Garden, Syracuse, NY (2nd Place)
Central Park Rose Garden, Schenectady, NY (3rd Place)
Columbus Park of Roses, Columbus, OH
Elizabeth Park Rose Garden, West Hartford, CT
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Rose Garden, Sarasota, FL
State Capitol World Peace Rose Garden, Sacramento, CA
Ritter Park Rose Garden, Huntington, WV
Morcom Rose Garden, Oakland, CA
Garden Club of McKeesport Rose Garden, McKeesport, PA