

For more information, contact Sharon Crout  
864-688-2251 or email [scrout@clermson.edu](mailto:scrout@clermson.edu)

April 11, 2008

For Immediate Release:

## Riley Community Garden to Serve as Gathering Place for Residents

### Groundbreaking April 19

A groundbreaking ceremony and work day on April 19 will celebrate the Riley Community Garden, a new gathering place for residents of southern Greenville County. The garden, located on the grounds of the Riley Child Development and Family Learning Center at 9130 Augusta Rd., will contain trees, plants, flowers, a rainbow garden, play space, labyrinth, outdoor classroom, arbor and statuary. The garden is designed to be used by families in the community as well as Riley Center families.

Plants, pavers, block, stone, mulch, irrigation system components, signage, and plaques have already been donated to the garden project by area businesses, organizations, and individuals, said Beth Bagwell of Strong Communities for Children. Strong Communities is coordinating the project in conjunction with the Riley Center.

The Carolina Association of Lawn and Landscapers adopted the garden as its service project for 2008 and members have donated supplies and expertise, said Bagwell. CALL volunteers will supervise the Saturday workday.

The public is invited to the ceremony that will begin at 9 a.m. and will include entertainment by Riley Center children, comments by Riley Center director Tina Haley and community volunteer Mamie Reid, a balloon release and the official groundbreaking.

Wielding shovels will be Dick Riley, Former Governor and Secretary of Education; Terry Creamer, South Greenville Fire District commissioner and garden project manager; Holley Stokely, with Plant and Supply Locator and garden project advisor; Rep. Eric Bedingfield, House District 28; Mamie Reid, community volunteer; Tina Haley, Riley Child Development Center Director, Greenville County Schools; Mario Walker, president of Carolina Association of Lawn and Landscapers; Susannah Horton, Clemson student and garden designer and Beth Bagwell, Strong Communities garden coordinator.

Trees will be planted in the garden in memory of Ann “Tunky” Riley and several recently deceased community members. The Riley Center, which opened in August 2005, was named in honor of former US Secretary of Education and Mrs. Riley.

Volunteers ages 18 and older are needed to work beginning at 10 a.m. Child care will be provided from 10 a.m. – noon and a barbecue lunch will be served at 1 p.m. For more information on volunteering, call 243-9568. Rain date for the event is April 26.

“Since April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, this is an appropriate time to bring the community together to celebrate and work on the garden project,” said Bagwell, “The community garden will offer a new opportunity for building community and strengthening families, which are key components to help keep kids safe.” Strong Communities for Children, a child protection initiative of the Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life at Clemson University, occupies office and meeting space at the Riley Center.