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Ninth Annual MESSA 8K for H2O to Benefit Water-Watchdog Organization

Charleston WATERKEEPER® Teams Up With CofC Master Students
to Host Run for Clean Water

Folly Beach, SC - January 25, 2011: For the ninth consecutive year, the College of Charleston Masters of Environmental Studies Student Association (MESSA) will host the 8K for H2O, an 8K run scheduled for February 19, 2011 at 9:00a.m, in front of the Folly Fishing Pier on Center Street. Working to raise awareness and funds to help improve the quality of our local water supply, more than 300 runners and walkers are expected to participate in this year's race, whose course runs through the streets of Folly Beach. This year, local water-watchdog organization, Charleston Waterkeeper, will be the race beneficiary, further highlighting the importance of the public's involvement in the fight to protect our waterways. Registration and additional donations will be available online via Active.com or at the registration table the day of the race.

With more than 200 participants and nearly \$6,000 raised in 2010, this year's MESSA 8K for H2O is expected to break records with both attendance and support. As this year's chosen benefactor, Executive Director of Charleston Waterkeeper, Cyrus Buffum, commented on the partnership, "The MESSA 8K for H2O highlights exactly what Charleston Waterkeeper works to accomplish on a daily basis - involving the public to protect, as well as improve the quality of our water. Charleston relies heavily on its proximity to water for a multitude of industries. It is in our best interest as a community to get actively involved in the fight to preserve, as well as nurture this vital local resource."

This year's race awards will be given based on the top male and female runners for each age category. T-shirts, snacks and beverages will be provided for participants, and an after-party is scheduled from 11:00a.m.-1:00p.m., location to be announced. Attendees may peruse a silent auction before and after the race which will feature items from locally-owned businesses. All proceeds from the race and silent auction will benefit Charleston Waterkeeper.

Registrations received before February 1st receive a discounted rate of \$20; on or after February 1st, registration is \$25. T-shirts for race-day registrations are available while supplies last. All current CofC students receive \$5 off. CofC student organizations with five or more participants receive \$10 off. Valid ID must be shown for all students when packet is picked up. Race packets and T-shirts may be picked up on Race Day starting at 7:45a.m. at the registration tables located near the Folly Fishing Pier on Center Street. This event is rain or shine. For more information about the race or available sponsorship opportunities, please visit the race site at <http://spinner.cofc.edu/~messa/8k4h2o/8k4h2o.htm?referrer=webcluster&>.

Charleston WATERKEEPER® is a citizen-based, environmental organization committed to defending local waterways against pollution, while protecting the public's right to clean water. As part investigator, scientist, lawyer, educator and community organizer, Charleston WATERKEEPER® strives to improve the quality of Charleston's waterways. Our waterways have been given to the public in trust that we will watch over and protect these natural resources. As a member of the WATERKEEPER® Alliance, Charleston WATERKEEPER® is one of nearly 200 other WATERKEEPER® programs around the world dedicated to clean water and strong communities. For more information and to get involved, please visit charlestonwaterkeeper.org.

In 2003, the Masters of Environmental Studies Student Association (MESSA) established the 8K for H2O Road Race as a means to make a more tangible contribution to the Charleston community. The goal of MESSA is to promote environmental awareness on the College of Charleston campus and throughout the local community. The MESSA 8K for H2O calls to attention crucial issues presently facing our local waterways, as well as the promotion of improved water quality. Held annually on Folly Beach, the MESSA 8K for H2O brings participants within visual distance of the issue, providing a fun and interactive method to raise funds for a local organization working toward the same goal.

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