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For Immediate Release

**CU to host series of events celebrating 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day**

By Christina Miller, student news writer

CAMPBELLSVILLE, Ky.—Campbellsville University will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day April 20-22 with three days of events focusing on earth stewardship and creation care.

The first event will be Tuesday, April 20 at 3 p.m. in the Banquet Hall. Rex Mann with The American Chestnut Foundation will speak about restoring the chestnut tree in Taylor County.

Dr. Richie Kessler, associate professor of biology/environmental studies program coordinator, said, “If we can restore the chestnut, that would be a grand achievement for science. It would be like bringing a species back from extinction.”

A nationwide simulcast titled “Hope for Creation” is the second event in the Earth Day celebration series. Blessed Earth is the sponsor of the event, which is a “joyful celebration of God and his creation.” The event is Wednesday, April 21 at 7:30 p.m. in Ransdell Chapel. A pre-show is at 7 p.m.

The simulcast gives emphasis to the 40<sup>th</sup> celebration from a Christian perspective. A discussion will follow the hour-long event.

Dr. Matthew Sleeth, and his wife, Nancy, founders of Blessed Earth, will lead the interactive dialogue with thousands of churches and leaders from a variety of perspectives, regions and denominations.

Sleeth has previously spoken at Campbellsville University and has visited Campbellsville University’s Clay Hill Memorial Forest.

There will be discussion following the Simulcast.

Campbellsville University will also plant a swamp oak tree near the university's Ransdell Chapel Thursday, April 22 at 2 p.m. rain or shine to remember Earth Day and raise consciousness for earth stewardship.

"We wanted to plant a tree that is sturdy, long-lasting and native to Kentucky," John Chowning, vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president, said.

The oak tree located on Stapp lawn is approximately 150-200 years old, and measures 16-feet around, said Rob Roberts, director of grounds and landscape development.

"We hope the new tree will be around for 300 years," Roberts said.

Chowning said, "Any time you plant a tree it is positive for the environment."

Campbellsville Mayor Brenda Allen, Taylor County Judge/Executive Eddie Rogers, Kessler and Dr. John Hurtgen, dean of the School of Theology and professor, are scheduled to participate in the tree planting event. Each will give a different perspective of earth stewardship, the view from the city's efforts, the science perspective and the theology perspective.

"Earth stewardship is about becoming more concerned about environmental issues," Chowning said. "We are to preserve God's creation and utilize the resources given while using it in a responsible Christian manner."

Chowning hopes to make Earth Day an annual observance at Campbellsville University, and also honor it all year long.

“There are little things we can do over a long time such as our recycling program started by Student Government Association, building eco-friendly buildings, adopting a road or a creek, and pick up trash,” Chowning said.

“Planting the oak tree is a symbol of something more ongoing and significant.”

For more information about the events, contact Chowning at 270-789-5520 or [jechowning@campbellsville.edu](mailto:jechowning@campbellsville.edu).

Campbellsville University is a private, comprehensive institution located in South Central Kentucky. Founded in 1906, Campbellsville University is affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and has an enrollment of 3,006 students who represent 97 Kentucky counties, 30 states and 37 foreign nations. Listed in U.S. News & World Report’s 2010 “America’s Best Colleges,” CU is ranked 23rd in “Best Baccalaureate Colleges” in the South, tied for fifth in “most international students” and fourth in “up-and-coming” schools in baccalaureate colleges in the South. CU has been ranked 17 consecutive years with U.S. News & World Report. The university has also been named to America’s Best Christian Colleges® and to G.I. Jobs magazine as a Military Friendly School. Campbellsville University is located 82 miles southwest of Lexington, Ky., and 80 miles southeast of Louisville, Ky. Dr. Michael V. Carter is in his 11th year as president.