

Toyota Green Initiative Celebrates Fifth Anniversary at State Farm Magic City Classic

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TORRANCE, Calif. (Oct. 22, 2014) – Toyota Green Initiative will celebrate five years of partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) during the State Farm Magic City Classic in Birmingham, Ala. Launched by Toyota in 2009, the Toyota Green Initiative (TGI) is an environmental stewardship platform that educates HBCU students, alumni, and the surrounding community on the benefits of sustainable living. This year, the program aims to inspire and spark conversations beyond college campuses through partnerships and community service.

In an effort to make the State Farm Magic City Classic more “green,” TGI will join forces with local partners Alabama Power Company, City of Birmingham and the Birmingham Business Alliance to present a series of signature events geared toward educating – and empowering – Birmingham and surrounding communities.

State Farm Magic City Classic fans can get an early start on the weekend ‘rivalry’ by participating in the City of Birmingham’s Electronics Recycling Day at Linn Park on Thursday, October 23. Hosted by the city’s Keep Birmingham Beautiful Commission, Alabama A&M and Alabama State will compete for bragging rights as the “green team” of the State Farm Magic City Classic. On Friday, October 24, local sustainability experts will engage in a panel discussion presented by Alabama Power moderated by nationally syndicated radio host and MTV personality Sway Calloway.

Calloway will also join the Birmingham Business Alliance Talent Recruitment Project for a lunch with college students interested in learning more about various career paths, including green jobs. Then, TGI will lead Day of Service activities at Restoration Academy in Fairfield, Ala. where students and volunteers will install energy efficient light bulbs, build water conservation landscapes and participate in a community recycling drive.

As part of the fifth anniversary celebration, Toyota will conclude the delivery of leased Prius lift backs to twenty-two select Southwest Athletic Conference and Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association schools with a joint presentation to State Farm Magic City Classic rivals Alabama A&M University and Alabama State University.

“Our commitment to environmental progress extends throughout HBCU campuses” said Jim Colon, VP of African-American Business Strategy for Toyota Motor Sales, Inc. “Recently, 16 of 22 partner schools, were recognized for adopting sustainable practices, from campus recycling programs to LEED Certification. We are proud to provide resources that help further their sustainability practices.”

The TGI coalition, a collection of celebrities and environmental experts who speak on relevant ways to go green, participate in panel discussions and host workshops at TGI sponsored HBCU sports events in Birmingham, Ala., Charlotte, N.C. and Houston. Coalition members include actor Lance Gross, environmental advocates Earthseed, SMB Essentials CEO Lake Louise, green blogger Yoli Ouyi, environmentalist and former NFL player Will Witherspoon, and student ambassador and TGI Campus Contest Winner Stephen Graddick.

The State Farm Magic City Classic is the largest HBCU football event with a cultural tradition of pageantry and fellowship that has continued for generations. The classic is typically a week-long affair. It includes community outreach events, parades, step-shows, tailgating, and half-time shows that include the battle of the bands.

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