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Clean Jordan Lake, Glaxo team up on cleanup

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From staff reports

PITTSBORO -- Clean Jordan Lake has announced a new partnership with GlaxoSmithKline aimed at accelerating removal of litter being deposited into Jordan Lake.

GSK is one of the world's leading research-based pharmaceutical and health care companies. One program that demonstrates its contribution to the communities in which it operates is "Orange Day," during which all GSK employees do community service on an annual paid day off. The total volunteer time for the global company -- 106,000 employees for one day each -- is the rough equivalent of 300 people volunteering full-time for an entire year.

Employees may volunteer individually or through team-building opportunities. The hope is to create a culture of volunteerism at GSK and to inspire employees to form long-term volunteer relationships with nonprofits. Building on the strong number of active volunteers currently within GSK, Orange Day has developed volunteering within the company to substantial levels. Not only do GSK employees benefit from the team-building experience, but the organization receives help with projects at no cost.

Recent events that have been supported include distributing rice to the homeless in North Carolina, volunteering in charity shops in the United Kingdom, refurbishing nursing homes in Sri Lanka, planting trees in Mexico and donating books to children in China. GSK hopes this is a way to encourage employees' interest in long-term volunteering.

More than 150 Triangle-based GSK employees will dedicate their paid day off to the difficult task of removing litter from Jordan Lake. With the support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission, the N.C. Division of Forest Resources and Chatham County government, GSK employees will be focusing on three heavily littered sites within the lake area on Sept. 14.

Fran DiGiano, co-founder of Clean Jordan Lake, speaks highly of the commitment that GSK has offered to the non-profit.

"GlaxoSmithKline has been a stable supporter of the Triangle community for some time now engaging in various local projects with the Ronald McDonald House and Habitat for Humanity," DiGiano said. "Their leading position in the healthcare market allows them to make available to us the types of people that are concerned about the environmental health of this lake and, ultimately, the health of the communities that depend upon it for a source of drinking water."

NAME THE PLAYERS

Clean Jordan Lake is a newly formed nonprofit whose aim is to eradicate the accumulation of litter carried into the lake from feeder streams during storm events and left behind by careless recreational users of the lake's shoreline. The GSK Orange Day event is limited to participation by GSK employees only. An Oct. 9 lake clean up also sponsored by Clean Jordan Lake is open to the public. Details are available at www.cleanjordanlake.org.

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