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Southern Living home to showcase green residential development

As an indication of its commitment to environmental sustainability, Furman has been chosen as the site for a *Southern Living* Showcase Home that will be a model of green design, renewable energy and operating efficiency.

The university is partnering with *Southern Living* magazine and The Cliffs Communities, seven planned residential communities located north of Greenville, to construct a 3,000-square-foot home that will promote sustainable residential development. The home, which will open for tours next June, is expected to attract thousands of visitors to campus.

To be known as “The Cliffs Cottage,” it will be built near the Bell Tower at the site of the women’s tennis courts — adjacent to the Eco-Cottage, Hut, Shack and Cabin. It will be the first environmentally sustainable *Southern Living* Showcase Home. Guests will pay \$10 to tour the house and surrounding gardens, including an ornamental garden that will be named for Susan Thomson Shi ’71, Furman’s First Lady. The home will be open to the public for a year.

At the end of the public phase, Cliffs Cottage will be retrofitted as the Center for Sustainability, providing office and meeting space for the university’s sustainability initiatives. “It will be a physical resource, a model green building, and a place to learn and explore sustainability,” says James Wilkins, Furman’s environmental intern.

The home will feature exhibits and programs to educate visitors about sustainability and will include user-friendly interfaces that will promote green living and energy-saving operational systems. Exhibit areas will highlight campus projects such as the restoration of the lake and surrounding wetlands, the expansion of walking trails, and the development of the former Swamp Rabbit rail right-of-way into a walking and trail-tram line.

The house will be built of stone and will feature geothermal heat pumps, an automatic lighting system, solar hot water and electrical

supply, Energy Star-rated appliances, low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paints, sustainable flooring and other green products. The gardens will include native plants and organic vegetables and will be irrigated using a 12,000-gallon underground cistern that will collect runoff rainwater from the roof. Parking areas and sidewalks around the home will be designed and constructed to minimize storm water runoff.

Furman president David Shi says, “We want to create a learning lab where the public can tour and ask questions about how new energy-efficient systems can be adapted and implemented in their own homes.”

The home will be designed to receive full Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The LEED program promotes expertise in green building by emphasizing strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality. In keeping with the university’s strategic plan, all major construction on campus since 2002 has followed the LEED standard.

As part of the project, the Eco-Cottage and its companion houses will be renovated to improve their sustainable features and create a visual connection to the showcase home.

Southern Living magazine, which has a circulation of about 2.8 million, will feature the house and gardens in several issues. Based in Birmingham, Ala., *Southern Living* is the eighth largest monthly consumer magazine in the United States.

The Cliffs Cottage at Furman will be designed by the Johnston Design Group and built by Triangle Construction Company, both of Greenville. Additional partners are Innocenti & Webel, Caviness-Lambert Engineering, BLE–Bunnell-Lammons Engineering, Inc., PEA–Professional Engineering Associates, Postcard from Paris, McMillan Smith & Partners, The Carolina Foothills Garden Club and Park Seed.