



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum**

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**For Immediate Release**

**Large community art installation created by volunteers**

Ann Arbor, Mich. (March 11, 2008) – An eight-panel mosaic featuring native Michigan ecosystems is scheduled for installation at Matthaei Botanical Gardens this May. The mosaics were designed by acclaimed mosaic artist Yulia Hanansen of Mosaic Sphere Studios. Volunteer groups of all ages have been hard at work this winter helping to construct the mosaic with vitreous and stained glass tiles and smalti. Volunteers have been helping to glue the tiles to cement boards, grout the tiles and insert the mosaics into metal frames, using Ms. Hanansen’s stunning designs.

“This installation will be a lovely splash of color in every season,” says MBGNA associate director Karen Sikkenga. “The designs showcase the natural beauty of our own Michigan ecosystems.”

Ms. Hanansen’s studio, Mosaic Sphere, is located in Ann Arbor. The studio produces fine art mosaics in a variety of traditional and experimental techniques. The mission of the studio is to raise public awareness about the fine art mosaics and to demonstrate superb quality of mosaic techniques. Mosaic Sphere mosaics have been installed in various locations across the United States. Mosaic Spheres welcomes volunteers of all ages, Tuesday evenings from 6 – 8 p.m.

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*The Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum (MBGNA) is 720 combined acres of gardens, trails, woods and prairie. With events, programs, classes, and activities, MBGNA is open every day of the year for visitors, with the Matthaei Botanical Garden visitor center closed on Mondays, and the Reader Center at the Nichols Arboretum closed Saturdays and Sundays. The Gardens are located at 1800 N. Dixboro Road. The Arboretum is located at 1610 Washington Heights.*

*Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum is owned by the University of Michigan, and celebrated its centennial anniversary last year. The mission of MBGNA is to promote environmental enjoyment, stewardship, and sustainability through education, research, and interaction with the natural world.*