

## 2008 Planet Defender Awards Announced

In conjunction with their national Rock the Earth Day celebration. Virginia-based musicians Dave Matthews Band, Andrew Winston Strategies Founder Andrew Winston, and Executive Director of Riverlink Karen Cragolin were selected as the winners in three categories. Planet Defender recipients are nominated by Rock the Earth members and chosen by Rock the Earth's national Volunteer Staff.

Dave Matthews Band, winners in the Artist category, have long advocated for environmental sustainability through their words and actions. Touring for more than 17 years, the Dave Matthews Band has promoted their environmental ethic through their tour practices and by collaborating with a host of environmental organizations. Stefan Lessard, DMB bass player, has helped the band form a partnership with the non-profit environmental group Reverb in an effort to educate fans as well as other musicians to promote environmental sustainability by offsetting their tour by using Biodiesel in their tour busses, reducing the Band's carbon footprint by purchasing carbon credits, offering eco-friendly merchandise to their fans and reducing the amount of waste they produce at shows by recycling and utilizing biodegradable utensils and plates for their catering. The Band has also been involved in numerous benefit concerts and environmental initiatives over the years, including a partnership with the Nature Conservancy to plant 900 trees in Band's hometown of Charlottesville, VA, on the Conservancy's land and working with Ben & Jerry's to offer a flavor of ice cream that supports global warming relief. The Band's charity, the Bama Works Foundation, has also distributed millions of dollars in grants to environmental organizations. Dave Matthews sits on the board of Farm Aid and recently performed an acoustic show for the nonprofit, Seeds of Change, with the Dalai Lama.

" Dave Matthews Band is in a fortunate position to play to many fans on tour," says Lessard. "This allows us to spread a positive environmental message to hundreds of thousands of people in a fun concert setting."

Andrew Winston, founder of Winston Eco-Strategies, is co-author of Green to Gold , the best-selling book offering advice to companies on how to go green. Andrew is a globally recognized expert on green business, and has written for or appeared in Time, BusinessWeek, Forbes, The New York Times, ABC News, National Public Radio, and CNBC. After a career in business, Andrew pursued his passion to find the overlap between business and environment. In his talks to thousands of people around the world, Andrew speaks the language of business as an evangelist for the benefits of going green. He also served as the Director of the Corporate Environmental Strategy Project at Yale's renowned School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Andrew is dedicated to helping companies both large and small use environmental strategy to grow, create enduring value, and build stronger relationships with employees, customers, and other stakeholders. His work in addressing environmental pressures on the marketplace and working with corporations to develop eco-strategies has earned him the Planet Defender as Community Leader.

"I am honored to receive the Planet Defender Award as a Community Leader from Rock the Earth. I consider myself an evangelist for green business, helping companies see that environmental protection and a strong, thriving business community are no longer at odds - in fact, they depend on each other. Businesses that solve environmental challenges for themselves and their customers will be the ultimate winners...and they will lead the creation of a healthier, more sustainable planet."

Karen Cragnolin, executive director of RiverLink, was selected as the winner of the Grassroots Activist award. Riverlink is a regional non-profit spearheading the economic and environmental revitalization of the French Broad River and its tributaries in Asheville, NC. Through her efforts, the organization is engaged in simultaneous efforts to address water quality concerns throughout the French Broad River basin, expand public opportunities for access and recreation, and promote the economic revitalization of Asheville's dilapidated riverfront district. She currently serves as the acquisitions chair for the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Buncombe County's Conservation and Environmental Boards, the City of Asheville's Watershed Advisory Board and ex-officio member of the Asheville Tree and Greenway Commission, the French Broad River Garden Club and Foundation Board, and the Warren Wilson College Board of Visitors. Her actions in preserving open space and developing greenways along the river corridors for all to enjoy makes her a wonderful choice for the Planet Defender Award in Grassroots Activism.

"I am honored that my work to protect the environment has been recognized with a Planet Defender award and support what Rock the Earth is doing 100%. Clean water and clean air are neither a democrat or a republican issue - it is all of us. We have to work together to make sure our children and grandchildren and their children and grandchildren can drink the water and breathe the air, too. We have rights as individuals, but also have a clear collective responsibility to make sure that Mother Earth can continue to support us all, no matter what our political affiliation. There is nothing either conservative or progressive about breathing clean air and drinking clean water. The environment is the ultimate bipartisan issue."

Rock the Earth is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, national public interest environmental advocacy organization, committed to protecting and defending America's natural resources through partnerships with the music industry and the worldwide environmental community. Rock the Earth represents those individuals and communities whose environment or natural surroundings are directly and adversely affected by the actions of others. Through partnerships with artists as diverse as Bonnie Raitt, Jack Johnson, Dave Matthews, and Bon Jovi, Rock the Earth educates and activates fans to pursue a vision of global sustainability and environmental responsibility. Previous winners of the Planet Defender Awards have included Jack Johnson, the Barenaked Ladies, Blue Ocean Institute's Carl Safina, Salt Lake City's Mayor Rocky Anderson, Karen Dolan of the Illick's Mill Project, and Jason Rutledge of the Healing Harvest Forest Foundation.