



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FOUR BROWARD COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOLS TO “CONNECT TO THE OCEANS” AT 20TH ANNUAL WHEELABRATOR ENVIRONMENTAL SYMPOSIUM

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### *Sponsorship of Fabien Cousteau’s Mission 31 allows students to explore*

**FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – March 20, 2014** – Renewable energy provider Wheelabrator Technologies is partnering with third-generation ocean explorer Fabien Cousteau to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education, an innovative educational program that has inspired thousands of middle school students to become environmental leaders in their communities. Students from McNicol Middle School, New River Middle School, Sawgrass Springs Middle School and Westglades Middle School are among participants in the Symposium.

“The 20th anniversary of the Wheelabrator Symposium is a milestone that is truly worth commemorating, and I am thrilled to be a part of a program that recognizes the importance of environmental stewardship and encourages innovative thinking among young people,” said Cousteau, first grandson of legendary explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau. “I commend Wheelabrator and its employees for providing middle school students with the resources and opportunities to become active environmental leaders in their communities.”

The theme of the 2014 Wheelabrator Symposium, “Connecting to the Oceans,” is designed to engage students in research, scientific study and community projects linking the quality of the local environment to the health of the seas around us.

Under educators’ guidance and with the resources and support of Hampton, N.H.-based Wheelabrator and the local community, student teams at 15 participating schools from across the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Florida regions will identify an



environmental issue in their communities and then develop and implement long-term solutions.

As part of the program, students will follow Cousteau and his team during Mission 31, a month-long research mission in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary aboard Aquarius, the only underwater marine habitat and lab in the world. Students will also be able to participate in online science sessions on ocean conservation led by renowned scientists.

“This program underscores Wheelabrator’s long-standing dedication to sustainability and helps to ensure a future where the environment benefits from the next generation’s balanced decision-making, ground-breaking ideas and community outreach,” Cousteau said. “I look forward to sharing my enthusiasm for the environment from Aquarius with the students during Mission 31.”

Some 150 students will travel to South Florida in May to present their projects to a panel of Wheelabrator employees, educators and environmental experts at the annual 4-day Symposium. Cousteau will serve as a guest speaker at the Symposium’s 20th anniversary celebration. Past student projects have covered a diverse array of environmental issues, including air quality, the impact of climate change and wildlife habitat preservation.

Over the past two decades, the Wheelabrator Symposium has empowered more than 3,000 middle school students throughout the U.S. to create innovative solutions to environmental issues, become leaders in their communities, and build their interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) concepts. Because of their involvement in the Symposium, a number of students have gone on to pursue environmental-related degrees and careers.

“Our commitment to sustainability goes beyond our day-to-day operations and includes corporate social responsibility programs designed to foster environmental awareness, education and active community engagement,” said Mark Weidman, president of Wheelabrator Technologies. “For 20 years, the Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education has been a cornerstone of our efforts to help build sustainable communities and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders. We applaud the work of our employees on this program and we look forward to following Fabien Cousteau on his pioneering Mission 31 exploration this year.”



The Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Sunrise – Sawgrass Mills is a partner sponsor of the Symposium event, providing the accommodations for the anniversary celebration, set to be held in Broward County, Fla., the week of May 5, 2014.

#### **ABOUT WHEELABRATOR TECHNOLOGIES INC.**

A wholly owned subsidiary of Waste Management, Wheelabrator Technologies Inc. is a leader in the safe and environmentally sound conversion of municipal solid waste and other renewable waste fuels into clean energy. Wheelabrator owns or operates 17 waste-to-energy facilities that provide safe waste disposal for towns and cities across the U.S. Wheelabrator also operates four independent power plants designed to generate electricity using an assortment of fuels, including waste wood, waste coal, and natural gas. In addition to producing electricity, some of these facilities also produce steam sold to nearby government and commercial establishments. Wheelabrator's 21 facilities have a combined electric generating capacity of 853 megawatts, enough energy to power more than 900,000 homes. To learn more, visit [www.wheelabratortechnologies.com](http://www.wheelabratortechnologies.com). Tweet @WM\_WTI.

#### **ABOUT WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Waste Management, Inc., based in Houston, Texas, is the leading provider of comprehensive waste management services in North America. Through its subsidiaries, the company provides collection, transfer, recycling and resource recovery, and disposal services. It is also a leading developer, operator and owner of waste-to-energy and landfill gas-to-energy facilities in the United States. The company's customers include residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal customers throughout North America. To learn more information about Waste Management, visit [www.wm.com](http://www.wm.com) or [www.thinkgreen.com](http://www.thinkgreen.com).

#### **ABOUT FABIEN COUSTEAU/MISSION 31**

Fabien Cousteau is an oceanographic explorer, conservationist and documentary filmmaker. As the first grandson of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Cousteau spent his early years aboard his famous grandfather's ships, Calypso and Alcione; and learned how to scuba dive on his fourth birthday. Today, he continues to fulfill his family's legacy to protect and preserve the planet's extensive and endangered marine inhabitants and habitats. To learn more, visit [www.fabiencousteau.org](http://www.fabiencousteau.org). Cousteau's nonprofit organization, Plant A Fish is designed to empower communities and children to help restore local water ecosystems through the healthy "replanting" of key marine species with the ultimate goal of planting 1 billion "fish" worldwide. To learn more, visit [www.plantafish.org](http://www.plantafish.org). Cousteau's Mission 31 expedition, commencing in 2014, will that break new ground in ocean exploration and also coincides with the 50th anniversary of a monumental legacy left by his grandfather, who is also credited with creating the first underwater habitats for humans and leading a team of ocean explorers on the first attempt to



live and work underwater. Mission 31 will go deeper, longer and further while broadcasting each moment on multiple channels exposing the world to the adventure, risk and mystique of what lies beneath. To learn more, visit [www.mission-31.com](http://www.mission-31.com).

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