



Keeping Watch Over Our Waters

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Riot Atlanta Named “River Rock Star” by Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper

Atlanta, GA - May 11, 2009- Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (UCR) will be presenting its first ever River Rock Star Award to local design and broadcast studio RIOT Atlanta on Thursday, May 14, during the nonprofit’s annual party and fundraiser, River Revival, at Park Tavern in Atlanta.

RIOT employees participated in a river cleanup last year and undertook an art project turning river trash and eco-friendly materials into a 5x10 mural with 200 free-standing sections. Of these, 180 were sent to Riot’s clients as holiday gifts along with a message about UCR and the Chattahoochee. The 20 remaining sections were auctioned off on eBay this spring, raising more than \$1500 for UCR.

While pursuing this innovative art project, Riot staff were also providing UCR with in-kind support valued at more than \$50,000 by creating a 30-second television PSA and two short videos about UCR’s work. These films have helped UCR reach and ever-widening audience at a critical time.

“The people at RIOT Atlanta inspired us to create the River Rock Star award because of the way they’ve helped us cast a spotlight on the challenges facing our river,” said Sally Bethea, UCR’s Executive Director and Riverkeeper. “This year’s party, *The River Revival Watershed Sessions*, is the perfect venue for naming RIOT as our River Rock Star - they’ve shown passion and creativity, and they’re making a difference. That’s what this party’s about.”

The stated purpose of the award is to honor a company, group, or individual that has used creative and innovative means to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the Chattahoochee River, drinking water source for 3.5 million Georgians. One of the videos RIOT created will be shown prior to the award presentation on May 14th, at approximately 9:00 pm. RIOT’s Managing Director Buddy Hall will accept the award and share a video montage depicting the creation of the “Water is Life” mural.

“At RIOT have always been big fans of UCR, and considering the city’s current water crisis, we couldn’t think of a better non-profit to partner with,” says Hall. “Although our original goal was simply to help with video projects, the clean-up and art project took on a life of their own, and our entire crew got involved. From the initial concept through the final creation, everyone on staff had their hands on this.”

The videos RIOT created were possible due to support from several videographers and photographers, including Fran Burst, Bob Selwyn, James Cool, Tom Wilson, and Joe Cook.

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UCR was founded in 1994 by Laura Turner Seydel and Rutherford Seydel. Guided by Executive Director and Riverkeeper Sally Bethea, the fledgling group took legal action against the city of Atlanta for violations of the Clean Water Act, forcing an overhaul of the city’s sewage system. Since then the group has grown to more than 5000 members and has fought vigilantly to protect the river for the millions of Georgians who depend on it for drinking water, recreation, wildlife habitat and many other uses.