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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Help Santa Find the Perfect Real Tree" Contest Kicks Off

(Chesterfield, Mo.) – The National Christmas Tree Association will be sponsoring the third annual "Help Santa Find the Perfect Real Tree" national essay contest. By entering, kids ages 6 to 18 have the chance to win a \$5,000 or \$10,000 college scholarship, a trip for four to Orlando, Fla., or other great prizes.

In 2005, more than 5,000 kids participated by taking a photo of their family next to their Christmas Tree and explaining in a short essay "why the tree was perfect or special to them." This year's contest has new prizes and promises to be even bigger than before.

The winning entries in each age group are selected by a panel of celebrity judges. The 2005 celebrity judges were Jaclyn Smith, actress; Michael Peterson, singer; Edie Hand, author, speaker and TV personality; Jack Houston, children's home videos; Sandra Joseph, scrapbooker, author and speaker; and Kim Komando, radio host and syndicated columnist.

The 2005 grand prize winner was Katherine Hesterberg of Wasilla, AK. She addressed the NCTA 24th Biennial Convention attendees in August saying she would use the scholarship money to begin her college career in 2006.

Official entry forms, along with rules and regulations, are available at www.realchristmastrees.org. All entries for the 2006 contest must be received by December 31, 2006.