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FORD'S MODEL U CONCEPT CAR GOOD FOR INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENT

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, 20 January 2003 -- "The exciting thing about the new Ford Model U is that it opens the door to an innovative new type of automotive construction, just as the Model T did," said architect and environmental designer William McDonough, co-founder of MBDC, about the new Ford Motor Company concept car that the Charlottesville-based firm helped design.

"Ford's vision in creating the Model U is entirely positive. Instead of trying to minimize environmental harm, the Model U identifies ways to be recreational and regenerative – to design in a way that is fun and creates environmental benefits at the same time. It offers a totally new vision for the auto industry," McDonough said.

Ford unveiled its new, environmentally intelligent concept car on January 5 at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, positioning it as a "model for change." Inspired by how its Model T revolutionized personal transportation in the last century, a team of Ford researchers and designers worked collaboratively with MBDC, co-founded by McDonough and German chemist Dr. Michael Braungart, and with BP to adopt environmental design concepts into plans for the hallmark new car model commemorating Ford's centennial. The goal was to create the Model T of the 21st century – a new type of vehicle specifically designed to be good to you and good for the world.

The Model U car features the world's first supercharged hydrogen internal combustion engine equipped with a hybrid electric transmission, pioneering green materials and processes, advanced safety and communications technologies and inventive design items that make the car not only environmentally friendly, but also adaptable and fun to drive. A modular interior allows for upgrades by permitting component parts to be mounted, moved or added.

Environmentally healthy materials include Milliken & Co. polyester upholstery fabric, a "technical nutrient" made from chemicals chosen for their human and environmental health qualities, and capable of perpetual recycling. The car top is made from a potential "biological nutrient," a corn-based biopolymer from Cargill Dow that can be composted after use. Both are examples of materials designed for "cradle-to-cradle" life cycles, emulating nature's patterns of renewal and eliminating the concept of waste.

"*Waste equals food* is such a key principle for environmentally intelligent materials," says Braungart. "The materials on the Model U are a step toward implementing this in car design and manufacture."

Ford Research Laboratories and its partners also outfitted the Model U with low environmental impact materials they developed together including, among others, soy-based resins for body panels, soy-based foams for seating, and sunflower oils for lubricants.

MBDC and William McDonough + Partners have worked with the Ford Motor Company since 1999. MBDC applies innovative design ideas to a variety of the automaker's research projects, while William McDonough's architecture firm, McDonough + Partners, leads in the redesign of Ford's historic River Rouge manufacturing complex. MBDC, the product and process design firm established by McDonough and Braungart in 1995, provides environmentally intelligent product research and development, education and training, and design and business tools to companies of all sizes. In addition to Ford, MBDC clients include Visteon, BASF, BP, Nike, Herman Miller, Milliken & Company, DesignTex and Shaw Industries.

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