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**NEWS RELEASE** CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**Annual Women of Discovery Honorees are Leaders in Environmental Conservation**

New York, NY— In anticipation of Earth Day on April 22, some of the most progressive and accomplished environmental protectionists in the field sciences today have been selected and announced as the 2016 Women of Discovery honorees. They include: Juliana Machado Ferreira, a conservation geneticist using DNA analysis and forensics to end wildlife trafficking and preserve biodiversity; Beate Liepert, a climatologist who discovered the climate change phenomenon of global dimming; Kristen Marhaver, a marine biologist studying the reproduction of threatened coral species; Sheila Ochugboju, a genetic virologist advocating for science communication and leading the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network initiative; and Marla Spivak, an entomologist protecting and enhancing the health and diversity of the world’s declining honeybee population.

These five intrepid women will be inducted into WINGS WorldQuest’s international community of Fellows and recognized for their bold scientific research, activism, and discoveries that catalyze solutions to global conservation issues.

“To build a healthy and sustainable environment and conserve our Earth for future generations, we must access 100 percent of the greatest minds in science and exploration. WINGS WorldQuest ensures that women’s voices are heard, revered and funded. The 2016 Women of Discovery honorees are confronting some of Earth’s most pressing current threats with progressive initiatives and cutting-edge research,” said Yael Jekogian, Managing Director of WINGS WorldQuest.

The awardees will be honored and celebrated later this year at the organization’s biggest annual event: The Women of Discovery Awards Gala, which will be held on October 25, 2016 in New York City.

The WINGS WorldQuest Women of Discovery awards span seven categories: Air & Space, Courage, Earth, Conservation, Humanity, Sea, and Lifetime Achievement. The honorees are nominated and chosen by the WINGS WorldQuest Fellows network, Board of Directors, and Advisory Committee, which is composed of accomplished public and private sector experts in the sciences and exploration. To date, the organization has granted over $500,000 to 73 Fellows from across the globe and published and showcased the findings of more than 30 women-led expeditions across all of the world’s continents and oceans.

WINGS WorldQuest™ is a registered nonprofit organization founded in 2003 to recognize and support extraordinary women in science and exploration.  It is the only organization of its kind, awarding unrestricted funding to women in scientific field endeavors.  WINGS’ support knows no boundaries—women of all races, nationalities, ages, and cultures who show initiative, passion, and promise toward future scientific advancement have been granted funds that are often critical to seeing their ambitious ideas through. In return, they have become part of the WINGS community, and strengthen the organization’s mission to inspire the next generation of intrepid explorers and global problem-solvers through various outreach programs. For more information, visit www.wingsworldquest.org.

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