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Erie Canalway News Release

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2008 ERIE CANALWAY HERITAGE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Inaugural year of recipients offer successful models of heritage development

WATERFORD, NY - The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2008 Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence. The award honors and celebrates significant places of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and recognizes excellence in the implementation of the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan.

2008 Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence Recipients

- Canal Place, Little Falls
- School Street Hydroelectric Facility, Brookfield Renewable Power, Cohoes

2008 Honorable Mention

- Fort Plain Free Library, Fort Plain
- Historic Palmyra's Wm. Phelps General Store and Home, Palmyra

"This year's winners provide innovative models for preserving our heritage and stimulating community and economic revitalization," said Joe Callahan, Chair of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission. "We hope people will visit each of these sites to see for themselves what great places they are."

Award recipients will be recognized at an Award Luncheon Ceremony at 1 p.m. at the Bridie Manor in Oswego immediately following the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission meeting on Wednesday, October 15, 2008.

This is the first year of Erie Canalway's awards program. A five-person independent jury made its final selection based on a written application and site visit, which included meetings with officials at each site, as well as community leaders, municipal representatives, and other stakeholders.

"We found that it's not size or money that makes a place great, but rather leadership, vision, planning, respect for the area's heritage, and years of dedication by the people involved," said Juror Tania Werbizky, Regional Director of Technical and Grant Programs for the Preservation League of New York State.

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Alfred McDowell, President, Canal Place Development Association said, “It has taken much hard work over the last past 20 years to develop Canal Place into the interesting, attractive neighborhood it is today. We’re very pleased that the Commission is recognizing Canal Place as a model of success in the National Heritage Corridor.”

“We are proud of the preservation and enhancement work we've been able to achieve inside and nearby our historic School Street hydroelectric facility, including Overlook Park with enhanced views of the beautiful Cohoes Falls,” said Thomas Uncher, General Manager of Brookfield Renewable Power, Queensbury, New York. “We think the improvements add to the quality of life of Cohoes residents and visitors while protecting an important, clean hydropower resource.”

Applications for the 2009 Erie Canalway National Heritage Award of Excellence will be solicited in January and February 2009; recipients for the 2009 award will be announced in June.

For more information about the award and this year’s recipients, visit www.eriecanalway.org or see the attached PDF document.

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Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor preserves and interprets the New York State Canal System which has been in continuous operation from 1825 until today – longer than any other constructed transportation system on the continent. It is federally designated as nationally significant for its cultural and natural heritage and its collection of sites are operated, owned, or managed by a variety of local municipalities, state agencies, and federal entities. A federal commission provides oversight for the Corridor.