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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Restoration of William S. Hackett Middle School in Albany to be honored

ALBANY, NY – April 16, 2010 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the restoration of **Hackett Middle School** on Delaware Avenue in Albany to receive an award for Excellence in Historic Preservation.

The League's statewide awards program honors notable achievements in retaining, promoting and reusing New York State's irreplaceable architectural heritage.

"The Awards Jury was particularly impressed with the respect given to the primary spaces of the building, including the grand stairwell and auditorium, and the restoration of stained glass elements," said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. "While many new school buildings house their athletic programs in nondescript boxes, the Hackett rehabilitation kept the magnificent gym intact, cleaning the terra cotta frieze at the top of the brick walls. Further, a NYSERDA grant supported upgrades to the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems and has resulted in greatly increased energy efficiency."

Contributing to the success of this project were the City School District of Albany; ENVISION Architects, PC of Albany; Excel Engineering, PC of Latham; Klepper, Hahn & Hyatt Structural Engineers of Syracuse; and Sano Ruben Construction Co. of Albany.

Built from 1925-27 from the 1924 design of Marcus T. Reynolds, the exterior facades and interior grand spaces of the school appear to be patterned on 18th century English country estates. The primary interior spaces, including the lobby, grand stair, and auditorium, are eligible for National Historic Landmark Designation. According to Sandra M. Baptie, AIA LEED AP, Principal-in-Charge at ENVISION Architects, "The most significant challenge was determining a fixed scope for bidding a public project, and investigating and applying correct preservation techniques. Our intent was to preserve, and to restore to the greatest extent possible, the historic

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fabric while carefully concealing and integrating the necessary interventions for building systems work.”

The award will be presented at the Preservation League’s Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony in New York City at 6:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 12th** at the historic **New York Yacht Club, 37 West 44th Street**.

The complete list of award winners is: William S. Hackett Middle School, Albany; The Belmont Hotel, Allegany County; Walkway over the Hudson, Poughkeepsie; The Guaranty Building, Buffalo; The American Museum of Natural History, 77th Street Façades, New York; Empire State Building Lobby Restoration, New York; Oswego Public Library, Oswego; West Hall at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy. ***Looking for Work: Industrial Archeology in Columbia County, New York*** by Peter H. Stott (Syracuse University Press, 2007) will be honored as an outstanding publication. Senator David Valesky and Assemblymember Sam Hoyt, Legislative sponsors of the New York State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, will be honored for individual excellence.

“Excellence in Preservation Awards are our principal means of honoring the preservation community and educating the public about the important contribution that historic preservation projects make to our quality of life throughout New York State,” said DiLorenzo. “Each year, we are impressed by the number and variety of laudable projects, and this year was no exception. We are delighted to give the restoration of Hackett Middle School in Albany the statewide recognition it deserves.”

The Preservation League’s Excellence in Historic Preservation awards program is funded by a generous grant from the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation of Miami, Florida.

By leading a statewide preservation movement, sharing information and expertise and raising a unified voice, the Preservation League of New York State promotes historic preservation as a tool to revitalize our neighborhoods and communities, honor our heritage and enrich our lives.

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