



FROM: Preservation League of New York State
44 Central Avenue
Albany NY 12206-3002
www.preservenys.org

CONTACTS: Colleen M. Ryan, Director of Communications
Preservation League of New York State
518-462-5658, ext. 17; cryan@preservenys.org

Elizabeth F. Nguyen, John G. Waite Associates
518-449-5440; enguyen@jgwaarchitects.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Restoration of West Hall at RPI to be honored

ALBANY, NY – April 16, 2010 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the restoration of **West Hall** on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute campus in Troy 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 restoration of the once decrepit West Hall, one of the oldest buildings on the RPI campus, is a remarkable rebirth for this structure which is visible from much of the city," said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. "Owned by the college for more than 40 years with little exterior maintenance, we applaud RPI's decision to accept the architects' recommendation to repair and restore the existing wood windows. Too many colleges and universities have chosen the path of least resistance in restoring their facilities, and historic windows are often lost. The Jury was also impressed that the slate roof, gutters, and challenging cornice were all repaired and replaced in-kind."

Contributing to the success of this project were Shirley Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Claude Rounds, Vice President for Administration, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; John G. Waite Associates Architects, PLLC of Albany; Ryan-Biggs Associates of Clifton Park; and Sweet Associates/VMJR Companies of Glens Falls.

The earliest section of West Hall was built between 1869 and 1873 as the Troy Hospital, established to treat working class women in the industrial city. According to John G. Waite, AIA, Senior Principal at John G. Waite Associates, "This project involved a multi-phased effort extending over half a dozen years. The restoration was comprehensive and complex, encompassing everything from the roof down through the landscaping. West Hall, along with the

(more)

new, avant-garde Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center building are the most visible RPI buildings from downtown Troy. Together they demonstrate RPI's commitment to its 'arts quarter' and interaction with the city. The restoration of West Hall proves that RPI cares about its past as an integral part of its future."

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 rehabilitation of West Hall at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 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.

###