

News Release



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National Trust for Historic Preservation Presents Its National Trust/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation for the Preservation of the Last Remnants of the World Trade Center Site

WTC Remnants Survive as Haunting Reminder of Tragedy, Heroism and Hope

Nashville, Tenn. (October 15, 2009)—Today, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** presented the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Lower Manhattan Recovery Office in **New York, N.Y.**, its National Trust/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation for the preservation of the last remnants of the World Trade Center site. The project was one of 23 award winners honored by the National Trust during its **2009 National Preservation Conference** in Nashville, Tenn.

On September 11, 2001, a stone and steel staircase on Vesey Street in Lower Manhattan was forever immortalized by an untold number of people who used the stairs to flee the blazing towers on that tragic day. After the massive cleanup of the World Trade Center site, the battered staircase and portions of underground walls and column bases outlining the footprint of the Twin Towers were all that survived.

Despite the historic and emotional significance of the “Survivors’ Staircase” and other remnants, their future was jeopardized by planned redevelopment, and in 2006, the National Trust placed the Vesey Street Staircase on its annual list of *America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places*. Today – just three years later – the National Trust is honoring the Federal Transit Administration for the role it played in saving both the staircase and the other evocative links with 9/11.

First, the World Trade Center site was declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Then, under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, more than 70 consulting parties worked through an exhaustive and sometimes contentious process of negotiation, collaboration and innovation. A major challenge was the Vesey Street staircase. Early proposals called for saving only a few token steps, but the FTA spearheaded efforts that moved an entire 57-ton run of stairs and eventually installed it at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, now under construction.

“Just three years ago, the Vesey Street staircase was named one of *America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places*,” said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Now, thanks to FTA’s leadership and the work of a dedicated coalition, this and other Ground Zero remnants will endure as compelling reminders of a day that cannot – must not – be forgotten.”

The award presented to the Federal Transit Administration is bestowed jointly by the National Trust and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), which advises the President and the Congress on national historic preservation policy.

Along with the Federal Transit Administration, co-recipients honored today for the preservation of last remnants of the World Trade Center site are: Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; Lower Manhattan Development Corporation; and the National September 11 Memorial and Museum.

Also honored today were Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Chairman John Nau, III, and former First Lady Mrs. Laura W. Bush who received the John H. Chafee Trustees Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy for their joint work on developing and promoting the Preserve America program.

The National Preservation Awards are bestowed on distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through preservation of our architectural and cultural heritage. These efforts include citizen attempts to save and maintain important landmarks; companies and craftsmen whose work restores the richness of the past; the vision of public officials who support preservation projects and legislation in their communities; and educators and journalists who help Americans understand the value of preservation. The winners of the National Preservation Awards will appear in the November/December issue of *Preservation Magazine* and online at www.PreservationNation.org/awards.

To download high resolution images of this year's National Preservation Award winners, visit www.PreservationNation.org/press

THE 2009 NATIONAL PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS:

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The National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.PreservationNation.org) is a non-profit membership organization bringing people together to protect, enhance and enjoy the places that matter to them. By saving the places where great moments from history – and the important moments of everyday life – took place, the National Trust for Historic Preservation helps revitalize neighborhoods and communities, spark economic development and promote environmental sustainability. With headquarters in Washington, DC, 9 regional and field offices, 29 historic sites, and partner organizations in all 50 states, the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education, advocacy and resources to a national network of people, organizations and local communities committed to saving places, connecting us to our history and collectively shaping the future of America's stories.

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