



Alliance for Downtown New York, Inc.  
120 Broadway, Suite 3340  
New York, NY 10271  
212 566-6700 Fax 212 566-6707  
www.DowntownNY.com

PRESS CONTACTS: Downtown Alliance, James Yolles (212) 835-2763, (202) 997-4559  
Shea Communications, George Shea, Mark Faris (212) 627-5766

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **David Rockefeller and Downtown Alliance Present Amanda Burden, Madelyn Wils with David Rockefeller Downtown Leadership Awards**



Madelyn Wils, David Rockefeller, Amanda Burden, Elizabeth H. Berger and Robert R. Douglass Tuesday at 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza.

**New York, NY (April 21, 2010)** – David Rockefeller joined [Alliance for Downtown New York](#) Chairman [Robert R. Douglass](#) and President [Elizabeth H. Berger](#) Tuesday to present the inaugural David Rockefeller Downtown Leadership Awards to Amanda Burden, Chair of the [New York City Planning Commission](#), and Madelyn Wils, Executive Vice President of the [New York City Economic Development Corporation](#).

The awards recognized their leadership in the development of the [East River Waterfront Esplanade](#), which is destined to improve waterfront access, enhance pedestrian connectivity, and provide amenities for public use and recreation along a long-neglected

stretch of land spanning the Battery Maritime Building to East River Park. The project is part of Mayor Bloomberg's Vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Lower Manhattan. The East River Waterfront Esplanade was initiated in 2004 by the Department of City Planning in cooperation with the Economic Development Corporation. Its first phase is expected to conclude by the end of 2011.

"The Esplanade will turn two miles of underused waterfront into pedestrian-friendly, publicly accessible open space that will make Downtown even more dynamic and livable," Douglass said.

"This is an award about leadership, and throughout her career Amanda Burden has led the charge to make New York City – the creative capital of the world – a city of green, sustainable and dynamic communities," said Berger, who presented the awards at the Downtown Alliance's annual meeting at 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza. "Madelyn Wils, one of Lower Manhattan's most visionary and effective community leaders, has an unerring sense of what we need and the tenacity to get it done."

The awards are framed black-and-white photographs of Jean Dubuffet's [Group of Four Trees](#) sculpture, which was commissioned by David Rockefeller and today stands in front of 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza. You can view photographs of the event at the Downtown Alliance's Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/downtownny/sets/72157623778530097/>

David Rockefeller founded the Downtown Alliance's parent organization, the [Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association](#), in 1958 with a vision for rebirth of Lower Manhattan. At the time, the area had not seen a major burst of new construction in decades and its streets were largely empty after work hours. Rockefeller sought to reverse that by first proposing 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza, and he later fostered the development of Battery Park City and the World Trade Center.

Today, more than 55,000 people live in Lower Manhattan, one of the city's fastest-growing neighborhoods. Rockefeller also served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Chase Manhattan Bank from 1969 to 1980 and has worked with a host of other business, cultural and educational organizations.

Rockefeller said he was thrilled to be back Downtown.

"I can't think of anything," he told the crowd, "that I would be happier to be doing at this moment."

*The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to be the principal organization that provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.*

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