



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

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CONTACT: Jeff Simmons (212) 835-2759

jsimmons@downtownny.com

Downtown Alliance Presents New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver with David Rockefeller Downtown Leadership Award



New York, NY (May 12, 2011) - Alliance for Downtown New York Chairman Robert R. Douglass and President Elizabeth H. Berger today presented the David Rockefeller Lower Manhattan Leadership Award to New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver for his unwavering commitment to Lower Manhattan.

“Shelly once said that rebuilding Lower Manhattan transcends partisanship and political legacy and rises to the level of moral obligation,” Douglass said. “No so long ago—when reconstruction of the World Trade Center seemed hopelessly mired in delay—it was Shelly who spoke out with the strongest voice. He reminded us that we are building not just for today but for tomorrow—to give Lower Manhattan the economy it deserves. He was a tremendous catalyst for the progress that is now in full swing.”

“I was born in Lower Manhattan. Lower Manhattan has always been my home. I love this community,” Silver said when accepting the award. “I am committed as ever to giving

back to it all that I can. We are taking this vibrant, 24-hour, mixed-use community to new heights. Thank you for the beautiful award.”

The awards recognize individuals who have exercised extraordinary leadership, vision and commitment to improve the quality of life for Lower Manhattan’s workers, residents and visitors.

You can view photographs of the event – which took place at the Digital Sandbox at 55 Broad Street - at the Downtown Alliance’s Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/downtownny/5714335784/>

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.

Last year, David Rockefeller joined the Downtown Alliance to present the inaugural 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 cited their roles 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 21st 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.

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. 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.

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