

Two Pennsylvania Foundations Win National Honors for Website

Two Pittsburgh foundations have received top honors for the excellence of their websites in a national competition designed to promote effective communications by America's philanthropic organizations.

The Heinz Endowments received the gold award and the Roy A. Hunt Foundation the bronze in the Wilmer Shields Rich Awards Program, which is sponsored annually by the Washington, D.C.-based Council on Foundations, a national organization made up of nearly 2,000 private and corporate philanthropic organizations. The Seattle-based Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, created by Microsoft founder and CEO Bill Gates, received the silver award.

"It's amusing to have two Pittsburgh foundations surround the Gates Foundation on what is arguably Microsoft's home turf, but it shouldn't come as a surprise," commented Maxwell King, executive director of The Heinz Endowments. "Pittsburgh is rapidly emerging as a national leader in the social application of cutting-edge technology, and this is just one more expression of that direction."

Tod Hunt, president of the Hunt Foundation, agrees. "This is a great symbol for Pittsburgh of the work that foundations and nonprofits are doing here to put technology to positive social use," he said. "The Internet is an excellent tool for grantmakers to use to present their funding interests and application guidelines in a clear and concise manner. It really streamlines the process and gives nonprofits a glimpse into the history of a particular foundation, especially if it's a family one."

Website addresses for the winners are www.heinz.org, www.gatesfoundation.org and www.rahuntfdn.org.

here&there

New Website Maps Green Pittsburgh

Want to learn more about southwestern Pennsylvania's environmental and recreational treasures?

At www.greenpittsburgh.net, you'll be introduced to an abundance of great places, from secluded fishing spots to locations for hiking, rafting, climbing and dozens of other recreational favorites. Supported in part with funding from The Heinz Endowments, the site helps residents and visitors alike see why the environment is such an important part of what makes this region a fun place in which to live and work.



At left: A decaying section of downtown Pittsburgh's central retail core where Fifth Avenue runs into historic Market Square. **At right:** The Plan C consultant's vision of the same corner revitalized with a mix of local and national ground-floor retail stores with below-ground parking. On upper floors, loft-style apartments overlook the square.

Hunter Interests, Inc. of Annapolis



Plan C Downtown Renovation Held to Civic Design Standards

When Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy decided to pull back on a massive redevelopment plan for the central downtown retail core because of community opposition and the retreat of a key anchor store, many believed the chance for revitalization was lost.

Few development experts expected a 13-member task force created by the mayor more than a year ago to generate enough consensus to come up with an acceptable replacement plan. That may be why the mayor's recent announcement of a new \$363 million blueprint for redevelopment from the task force was front-page news and cause for renewed hopes among those who believe in the importance of thriving city centers.

The report on development of the steadily decaying retail corridor bounded by Fifth and Forbes Avenues and Market Square, a historic city landmark, calls for a



mix of national and local retail stores, loft-style apartments, a showcase hotel at the city's western gateway, a new public market and a re-design of the square. The new plan, developed with the help of urban development consultant Don Hunter of Annapolis, Md., is \$158 million cheaper than the original. Although it does not now have a private developer signed on, the mayor has publicly embraced the plan and announced a process for soliciting developer proposals. Despite private developer participation, there will almost certainly be some public subsidies and a multi-million-dollar contribution from private and corporate foundations.

Task force members, who represent merchant businesses, corporations, the real estate market, city government, preservation groups and the foundation community, surprised observers with their ability to develop general agreement on elements that had caused the Murphy Administration plan to stumble. These include embracing sustainable development principles such as saving architecturally significant buildings rather than leveling entire blocks. Also,

members developed a list of incentives for local merchants to participate in the plan that ideally would prevent property from having to be purchased under the city's eminent domain powers.

"While we weren't able to get complete consensus on the eminent domain issue, I think we came the closest that any group has come to moving it aside as an obstacle," says Caren Glotfelty, Environment Program director for The Heinz Endowments and a task force member. "It is critically important to the success of the Endowments' organizational goals that this renewal project for the city center get under way," says Glotfelty. "But at the same time, we want to ensure that any investment we make is returned to the public through good civic design."

The Endowments participated in Plan C as part of its Civic Design Initiative, a multi-disciplinary effort to promote superior urban planning in the region.

Among the civic design standards that would be applied to the new development: historic preservation; new construction that meets green design certification; a competitive, juried selection process for new building design; and recreational amenities, public spaces and a process for acquiring public art.

National Sustainable Conference in Pittsburgh

Southwestern Pennsylvania became a national teaching laboratory for the country in March, when the Urban Land Institute hosted a two-day symposium on "The Practice of Sustainable Development." About 150 leaders in the fields of architecture, Smart Growth economics, private development, the environment and business came together to explore trends in sustainable development and to see Pittsburgh's successes in brownfield transformation, green building design and urban green space protection.

Participants visited PNC Firstside Center (shown here). Other sites profiled by the conference, which was sponsored in part by The Heinz Endowments, included: Summerset at Frick Park, Pittsburgh Technology Center South Side Works, and the housing and business community of Washington's Landing, built on what was once one of the most polluted land parcels in the city.



Members of the Nego Gato group perform at the Multi-Cultural Arts Initiative's re-defining event downtown.



Multi-Cultural Arts Initiative Gets Multi-Faceted Makeover

The regional organization responsible for promoting African-American artists has stepped out of the shadows to show off a new logo and a re-charged effort to build audiences for diverse arts groups.

The Multi-Cultural Arts Initiative, a long-term funding project of The Heinz Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation, recently launched a high-energy kickoff for the campaign at Bosa Nova. The public event, says Initiative Senior Program Officer Beverly Portis, is designed to reach further into Pittsburgh's

African-American community groups—clergy, media, business and youth leaders among them—to use them as eyes and ears for Initiative staff. The campaign's call to action is also matched by increased foundation funding—more than \$800,000 will be available this year for grants distribution to artists and group performers, a nearly \$160,000 increase over last year's budget.

Retired Pittsburgh Cultural Trust President Carol Brown, now a board member of The Howard Heinz Endowment, told a diverse audience of several hundred that the original funding strategy behind the Endowments' support of the Initiative was basic cataloging—to learn more about the numbers and types of African-American artists and performance groups. In the years since, she said, expectations have grown.

"Cultural diversity is essential to the future prosperity of this region; that is a simple fact. In order for our region to grow, it must be able to speak to people from a broad range of cultures, nationalities and backgrounds," Brown said. "A region that celebrates the arts of diverse cultures signals itself as a welcoming home for all those would do business here, build companies here or simply apply their skills here."

Since 1990, the Initiative has awarded more than 300 grants totaling \$4 million in theater, dance, poetry, music, photography and art.

Creative Heights Grantees Announced

A robust cultural environment affords artists opportunities to be paid for producing new work. To help foster that sort of environment in Pittsburgh, the Endowments have launched the Creative Heights Initiative, an innovative grants program that encourages professional arts organizations and individual artists to partner on the production of new work. Their joint proposals are considered by a panel of arts administrators, artists and Endowments' staff who award as much as \$40,000 to ensure each project's completion. At least two-thirds of each award must go directly to the artist and be directed to project-related costs. Creative Heights is based on a similar program operated by the Haas Funds in San Francisco.

This year's first competition resulted in five awardees being chosen from proposals submitted by 29 arts organizations:

- The Pittsburgh Children's Museum and artist Tim Kaulen, for the creation and installation of interactive artwork for the expanded and re-designed museum. During

a year-long residency, Kaulen will produce a work around the concept of "Fantastic Inflatable Menagerie," large, air-filled sculptures that move through the manipulation of elastic cords.

- Srishti Dances of India and Indian classical musician—composer—vocalist Charu Collur, for a residency program that will allow Collur to develop new musical pieces for Srishti's repertoire of Classical Odissi dance. The program will culminate in a performance at the Kelly-Strayhorn Theater in East Liberty later this year.

- The Pittsburgh Symphony Society and composer Leonardo Balada, to create a new orchestral work.

Based on the composer's initial vision of a planned "Symphony No. 5," the piece will have

its world premiere in September 2003.

Balada plans to involve Carnegie Mellon University student musicians and software engineers in its development.

- Pittsburgh Filmmakers and Carolyn Speranza, for an eight-month collaborative project to create "Sight of Stillness," a video exploring meditation from artistic and scientific perspectives. Pittsburgh Filmmakers will host a symposium to publicize the finished work.

- The Pittsburgh Film Office and film director— animator Tom Megalis, for a six-month project to develop "Pieces of Jo," a video-film project combining real film footage and stop-motion re-creations. The piece, which will feature a Greek family in Pittsburgh coping with the mental breakdown of one of its members, is expected to be entered in the 2003 Sundance Film Festival competition.



"Stay Puff," an inflatable sculpture by Creative Heights awardee Tim Kaulen.



Arts-and-Literacy Mini-Grants Awarded for Reading Partnerships

In a comfortable corner in one of the Pittsburgh Public School's four Head Start classrooms, a pack of preschool children sit cross-legged and wide-eyed. A new visitor, a librarian from the Carnegie Library, reads a story carefully selected to connect with the theme of a featured work of art from the Carnegie Museum of Art. Following the reading session, the librarian and a specially trained local artist lead the children in a song, game or other group activity also linked to the art theme. After seven weeks, the Head Start children visit the Carnegie Library and Museum of Art to search out the works they have been introduced to in the reading sessions.



This is *Stories in Art, Junior* — one example from this year's group of 10 recipients of The Heinz Endowments' Ready for Life ... Arts-and-Literacy Mini-Grants. The program, with awards averaging \$5,000, attempts to build partnerships among professional artists, community organizations and schools

around the goal of literacy development. Recent independent studies confirm that the arts can enhance a child's communication ability by promoting memory retention and understanding.

The preschool program is a spin-off of *Stories in Art*, a 7-year-old museum-library collaborative, which has introduced about 3,000 Pittsburgh school-aged children to the literacy benefits possible in combining books with art. This year's preschool adaptation will extend the reach to about 80 city Head Start students. All the early literacy program winners emphasize parental involvement in programming, especially in the development of student art and picture book projects to be exhibited at a final public reception.

The mini-grant program, administered through Gateway to the Arts, made 11 awards last year. More than 500 children benefited from teaching partnerships among 43 organizations and 27 local artists.