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Seneca Park Zoo Society Announces Six Environmental Innovation Award Winners

Winners announced at inaugural Environmental Innovation Awards and Symposium

Rochester, NY – Seneca Park Zoo Society reported that six award-winners were announced at the inaugural Environmental Innovation Awards and Symposium, which was held Thursday, October 25 at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

The event, which was attended by approximately 200 people, was developed to recognize innovators creating solutions to environmental challenges in our region. It was followed by a symposium led by one of the green building industry's foremost strategists, **Bill Browning**.

"I have found this community to be filled with like-minded people who are passionate about the environment, and who are taking action on behalf of cleaner air, better water quality, lowering their carbon footprint, protecting the biodiversity of our region, and more," commented Seneca Park Zoo Society President and CEO, **Pamela Reed Sanchez**. "What I have not found is a forum in which to highlight and honor the tremendous work happening, and the remarkable people behind that work. I'm honored to be part of the team to bring it to fruition."

Dozens of nominations were submitted. Judging was conducted by a panel of 13 nationally-known leaders in environmental issues.

Award winners included:

- **Youth Award:** Six members of the Harley School's biomimicry team were recognized for their huMANGROVE project. The students sought to create a solution that could mitigate the effects increases in storm intensity and

frequency have on coastline erosion. huMANGROVE was inspired by the roots of mangrove trees, using biomimicry to mitigate coastline erosion.

- Nonprofit Award: The Honeoye Inlet Restoration Partnership was recognized for their efforts to create a water quality solution for Honeoye Lake in a sustainable way, without creating a reservoir that would subsume natural habitat. This partnership involved seven diverse organizations, including the Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force, Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District, The Nature Conservancy, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Finger Lakes Community College, and Honeoye Valley Association.
- Large Business Award: There was a tie in the Large Business Award category, and both Diamond Packaging and HARBEC, Inc. were awarded. Both were recognized for their longstanding commitment to green practices, their very measurable results, and the adoption of environmental awareness in every aspect of their businesses.
- Small Business Award: I-Square was recognized with the Small Business Award. I-Square is a pedestrian-friendly, community-oriented, mixed-use town center in Irondequoit. They have been recognized for their creativity in finding sustainable solutions and their efforts to educate the public about sustainability.
- Individual Award: Kimie Romeo was recognized with the Individual Award based on her efforts with the Coastal Cleanup Project, which for over 26 years has engaged thousands of volunteers to pick up millions of pounds of garbage on regional shorelines.

The Environmental Innovation Awards and Symposium was created and produced by Seneca Park Zoo Society with support by presenting sponsor CPL. It has been steered by a committee of environmental experts from the region, including committee chair **Suzanne Hunt**, founder of HuntGreen LLC.

“By shining a spotlight on our region’s top environmental innovators, we are helping to attract investment and expertise from around the country to Rochester and the Finger Lakes,” commented Hunt. “Already one of the private equity investors among the judges has reached out to one of the nominees.”

Learn more about the awards, the judges and the award winners at senecaparkzoo.org/innovation.
