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2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards Presented

May 12, 2008--WASHINGTON, D.C.— Mrs. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States and Honorary Chair of Preserve America, today announced and presented the 2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards at a White House ceremony. This is the highest national award for historic preservation achievement.

The Presidential Award winners are the following: African Burial Ground Project, New York, New York; Corinth and Alcorn County Mississippi Heritage Tourism Initiative; Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, New York; and Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

“This year’s honorees each represent a significant period in our nation’s history. Their preservation efforts ensure Americans gain a greater knowledge of our nation’s past while impacting the economic vitality of their communities, states and the nation,” said John L. Nau, III, chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), which administers the award program on behalf of the White House.

Receiving the award for the African Burial Ground Project were Mark Dremel, Project Executive, U.S. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service and Howard Dodson, Chief, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library. Accepting on behalf of the Corinth and Alcorn County Mississippi Heritage Tourism Initiative were Rosemary Williams, Chairperson, Siege and Battle of Corinth Commission and Gary Hendrix Chandler, President of the Alliance.

Accepting on behalf of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum were Renee Epps, Executive Vice President, and Steve Long, Vice President of Education and Collections. Accepting for the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program were F. Lawrence Oaks, Executive Director, Texas Historical Commission and David Gravelle, Vice Chairman, Texas Historical Commission.

The Presidential Awards are one component of Preserve America, a White House initiative that highlights the efforts of President and Mrs. Bush to celebrate and preserve our nation’s cultural heritage assets. This is the fifth year the Preserve America Presidential Awards have been conferred in May, which is National Preservation Month.

The Preserve America Presidential Awards are given annually to organizations, businesses and government entities for:

- exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets;
- demonstrated commitment to the protection and interpretation of America’s cultural or natural heritage assets; and
- integration of these assets into contemporary community life, combining innovative, creative and responsible approaches to showcasing historic local resources.

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ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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The recipients are chosen through a national competition administered by the ACHP in cooperation with the Executive Office of the President, and in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior. For high resolution photographs and information on the 2008 Preserve America Presidential Award winners, please visit www.preserveamerica.gov/news-08paawards.