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WILD WALK EXHIBIT WINS AWARD

Tupper Lake, NY – Wild Walk at The Wild Center won an Award of Merit in the ‘Innovation in Interpretation’ category from the Museum Association of New York. There was a large and diverse pool of nominations this year. These awards are presented annually by MANY to recognize outstanding work in the museum community, reward staff and volunteers, and provide encouragement for development of new and innovative projects.

A total of 10 projects, ranging from exhibitions to educational programs, received recognition. Eight of these received an Award of Merit, the highest honor, given to institutions or individuals whose projects represent outstanding contributions to the field and overall innovation and excellence. This year’s Awards will be presented during the breakfast at the Museum Association of New York’s Annual Conference in Lake Placid on Monday, April 18th.

Wild Walk takes visitors up bridges and platforms to breathtaking treetop vistas and into the Adirondack forest surrounding The Wild Center. Opened on July 4th, 2015, it includes a four-story treehouse, a human-sized spider’s web 24-feet up, a spiral walk inside a ‘dead’ tree’s thriving core, and an over-sized eagle’s nest. Dubbed “the Highline of the Forest,” Wild Walk transforms the forest into a living, breathing, learning landscape through nature-driven activities and carefully designed observation points.

The ‘Innovation in Interpretation’ category recognizes outstanding interpretive methods that forge emotional and intellectual connections between audiences and the meanings inherent in objects, artifacts, landscapes and place. Wild Walk, an elevated walkway that takes museum visitors up into the trees to change their perspective on nature uses innovative interpretation techniques through the 1,000 foot plus experiences. Visitors stroll along a gradually rising universally accessible boardwalk while encountering both active interpretation by staff and volunteers, as well as self-directed explorations into topics such as birds, trees, small mammals, succession forests, migration patterns, spiders and more.

“Wild Walk was in the works for over eight years and saw many iterations,” said Stephanie Ratcliffe, Executive Director of the Center. “The hundreds of thousands of visitors this past summer affirmed that we did something right, but to receive an Award of Merit from our fellow museum professionals at MANY signifies that we provide great educational opportunities as well as a fun day out. With Wild Walk we interpret what is right in front of the visitor. The cone crop on a conifer tree, the way flocks of birds protect each other from predators. We have
brought the museum outside and hope people take what they’ve learned on Wild Walk and look at the six million acres of the Adirondacks with fresh eyes.”

Museum Association of New York is a non-profit organization, which provides resources, training and expertise to New York’s heritage organizations, and museums, thereby strengthening their capacity to better serve their communities and meet their institutional missions. The Award of Merit program acknowledges outstanding programs and individuals who have made the state’s museum community richer and more relevant.

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