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Seneca Park Zoo Society Announces 2024 Environmental Innovation Award Winners

Winners from five categories were honored at the Environmental Innovation Awards and Symposium on March 28, 2024.

Rochester, N.Y. – Seneca Park Zoo Society is proud to announce the 2024 winners for this year’s Environmental Innovation Awards. Seneca Park Zoo Society’s Environmental Innovation Awards honor local and regional innovators working to create solutions to current environmental issues facing our region and our planet. The awards celebrate leadership in environmental stewardship and brings together people seeking sustainable solutions and working for a greener tomorrow.

“Action is spurred by the hope that our actions will make a difference – for our own health and the health of the plants and animals with which we share this planet,” stated Zoo Society President and CEO Pamela Reed Sanchez at the event. “Action is also spurred by knowing we are not alone in our efforts, but that there are individuals of all ages, companies of all sizes, and civic and nonprofit organizations all working toward a more sustainable planet.”

Winners were honored in the following categories:

Civic/Nonprofit Award

Rochester ENergy Efficiency and Weatherization (RENEW)

RENEW is a community investment engine that has developed an integrated, efficient approach to working with multiple community partners in housing, energy-efficiency, and environmental health by braiding and leveraging funding sources to address unmet need and make critical energy, health, and safety improvements in the homes of hundreds of income-eligible Monroe County homeowners.

Youth Award

Noah Moretter, 'Noah's Recycling'

Noah started “Noah’s Recycling” in 2020, at age 12. He donates his time to collect recyclables and has expanded his business to include more residences, local businesses, country clubs, and senior living facilities across the east side of Rochester.

Individual Award

Kyra Stephenson

Nature-Based Learning Coach at Anna Murray Douglass Academy School No. 12

Kyra has built out a program that leads classes in nature-based learning, provides an in-school nature center for learning, manages two partnerships, and collaborates with teachers to empower them to use nature-based learning as a core strategy in their pedagogy.

Small Business Category

Broccolo Lawn & Landscape

Laurie Broccolo & Jessica Demasio

Broccolo is a pioneer of environmental approaches and has helped set evolving standards in the lawn and landscape industry, visible in projects like green roof installations at Fredrick Douglas Library, I-Square in Irondequoit, and Cornell University, as well as Ecoswales at Seneca Park and RIT and Rochester Museum and Science Center’s rain garden. They prioritize innovative and environmentally sound approaches to lawn and landscaping.

Large Business Award

Rochester Regional Health

Decarbonization Programs

Following Rochester Region Health’s 100% renewable electricity pledge, they have now committed to the decarbonization of the entire organization. This includes site-specific energy efficiency and/or renewable energy deployment opportunities across the multitude of systems and buildings owned by RRH, modeling decarbonization pathways for others to emulate.

In addition, a special Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Lisa Baron of Greentopia, whose tireless advocacy to protect Rochester’s urban green spaces and expand access to parks and open space was a pivotal force behind the creation of a new New York State Park at High Falls.



A thoughtfully selected team of national experts were chosen to judge this event to ensure an impartial, objective outcome using a rigorous scoring process. You can learn more about the selection committee members, event committee, and all nominees on the event program site: senecaparkzoo.org/eias24program. The event was made possible through corporate support from WM, CooperVision, Cascades, Staples, and GreenSpark Solar.

For more information, and for video of all winners, please visit:

senecaparkzoo.org/2024-environmental-innovation-awards-symposium-winners

Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.