



Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy News
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

media contact:

Scott Roller

(412) 682-7275 ext. 220

OR (412)-725-0023 (mobile)

sroller@pittsburghparks.org

Mellon Square Receives 2014 Placemaking Award for Excellence Presented by Urban Land Institute Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH (October 14, 2014) -- The Urban Land Institute Pittsburgh has presented the newly restored Mellon Square with its **2014 Placemaking Award for Excellence** in the **Visual Place** category. As defined by the Institute, "placemaking" embraces the creation of public spaces that promote people's health, happiness and well-being through planning, design and management.

In a ceremony held October 7, 2014, the group presented Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy President and CEO Meg Cheever with the award, in recognition of the Parks Conservancy's role in initiating and leading efforts to revitalize the midtown park and restore it to its original design.

"In the few short months since its reopening and rededication, Mellon Square has become a true destination and a 'place' for downtown workers and visitors alike," says Cheever. "Working in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, we have not only restored an iconic modern landscape, we have brought to life a space important to the downtown experience and made it once again an oasis of beauty and refreshment for the people of Pittsburgh to enjoy."

The five-year effort to restore Mellon Square took formal shape beginning in 2009, with the development of the *Preservation, Interpretation & Management Plan*, created under the leadership of the Parks Conservancy, in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, and with a team headed by Patricia O'Donnell, FASLA, Heritage Landscapes. Today the Square's magnificent Central Fountain and Cascade

Fountains are restored, and together with the canopy of trees emerging from newly restored planters, sparkling Terrazzo paving, and thriving flowers and grasses, this once deteriorating park has become a welcome escape amidst the towering concrete skyscrapers that rise along its border.

In adding a new elevated Terrace overlooking Smithfield Street, the Square has gained usable public space and yet another urban space for a quiet lunch or concert. Principal funders of the Mellon Square construction project included The Richard King Mellon Foundation, The Colcom Foundation and The Eden Hall Foundation, along with corporate and private donors.

About the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

A nonprofit organization, the Parks Conservancy has worked closely with the City of Pittsburgh since 1998 under an official public-private partnership agreement to restore and improve the city's park system to its full potential. Originally including Highland, Schenley, Frick, and Riverview Parks, the scope of the Park Conservancy's work now includes Schenley Plaza, Mellon Park, Cliffside Park, and The Frick Environmental Center.

To date, the Parks Conservancy has raised over \$75 million toward park improvements. In addition to completing 14 capital projects, stewarding over 1,700 acres, and working with thousands of volunteers annually, the Parks Conservancy has expanded into community and neighborhood parks as time and resources have permitted.

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Pittsburgh by restoring the park system to excellence in partnership with government and the community. Projects and programs are conducted with respect for the environment, historic design, and the needs of our diverse region.

About the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute is an international, non-profit organization that explores a variety of land use issues, impartially reports findings, and convenes forums to find solutions. Established in 1936, the Institute has more than 30,000 members from 92 countries representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines. ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

###