

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT

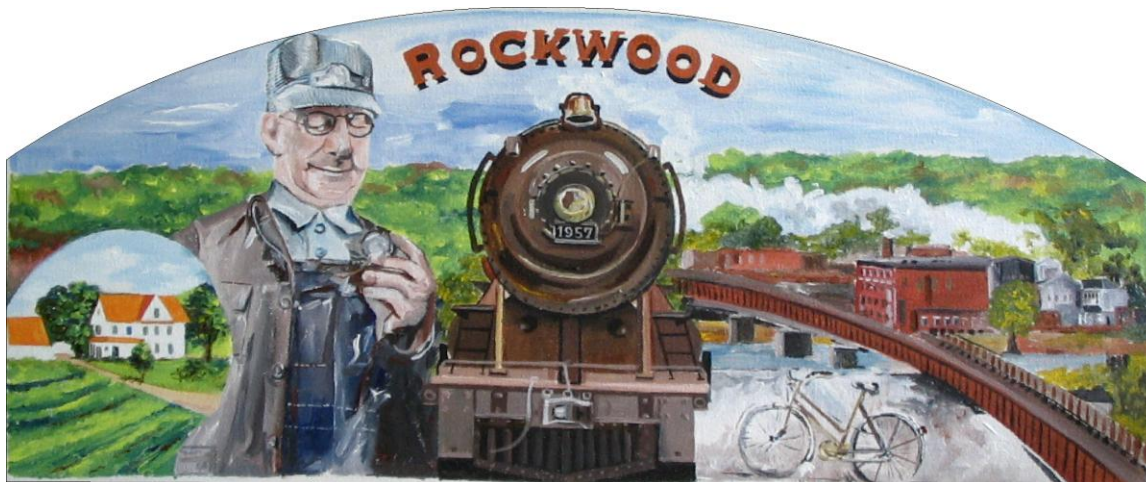
Cathy McCollom

Regional Director, Trail Town Program

(724) 216-9160, ext. 319 (office)

(724) 216-7420 (mobile)

cmccollom@progressfund.org



Pittsburgh, PA – July 24, 2008 -- The Trail Town Program, an economic development initiative of The Progress Fund, in conjunction with Pittsburgh 250 Community Connections and The Sprout Fund, proudly announces the artists that have been selected to participate in the inaugural Trail Town Public Art Program.

Cathy McCollom, regional director of the Trail Town Program explained that the purpose of the art is to “both celebrate the Great Allegheny Passage and the heritage of the communities that border it. Created by local artists, these will be placed in locations near the trail so that they can be enjoyed by community residents as well as trail users.”

The art works selected represent both three-dimensional sculpture and two-dimensional murals.

In **West Newton**, Metal sculptor Bill Secunda will create a sculpture to commemorate the town’s pioneering roots.

In **Connellsville**, at Stewart's Crossing sculptor Steven Fiscus will create a metal and glass archway over the trail. In a separate project, Meeghan Triggs and Chris Galiyas will paint a mural on the silos of Youghiogheny Glass Factory. The mural will include glass pieces from the factory.

In **Ohiopyle**, Laura DeFazio will carve petroglyphs, images carved into stone, on four boulders that depict creatures of the water, land, and air, as well as constellations of the sky.

In **Confluence**, Rick Rhodes will carve wood benches; Martha Murphey will carve a metal bench and create an interpretive sign, and Stone Art Designs will carve into stones a drawing by Confluence high school art teacher Mack Beal.

In **Rockwood**, Diane Adams will paint a mural that pays homage to the town's railroading heritage and celebrates biking as part of its present livelihood. Scott Hostettler will create a sculpture of a steam locomotive with metals donated by Rockwood Manufacturing, bike parts donated by Bike Pittsburgh, and donated train parts.

In **Meyersdale**, artist Carolyn Quinn will paint a mural celebrating the town's founders and agricultural history.

The art is to be installed in time for Celebration Saturday, on September 27 from noon – 4 p.m. along the Great Allegheny Passage and the Trail Towns. Festivities are planned in West Newton, Connellsville, Ohioopyle, Confluence, Rockwood, and Meyersdale.

In conjunction with the public art installation on Celebration Saturday, Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania and The Progress Fund will announce the unveiling of new informational kiosks in West Newton, Connellsville, and Meyersdale. The kiosks will serve as a guide for trail users regarding the amenities and services available along the trail, with the goal of driving economic development to each Trail Town community. Additional kiosks are planned for the city of Pittsburgh and Frostburg, MD. The kiosk project was underwritten by a grant from Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania / the NiSource Charitable Foundation.

Celebration Saturday will coincide with the start of the PNC Legacy Trail Ride, from Washington, D.C. to Pittsburgh the week of September 27. The community trail ride from McKeesport to Point State Park will be held on October 4. To learn more about these and other Pittsburgh 250 events, visit www.imaginepittsburgh.com.

Project Background

The Trail Town Public Art Program is supported in part by Pittsburgh 250 Community Connections, The Sprout Fund, and the Community Foundation of Fayette County. In

December 2007, the project was selected by Pittsburgh 250 as one of 12 Regional Connections projects from a field of 235 regional applicants.

The Trail Town Program convened a Regional Committee in February, which determined the regional theme "Cycle of Renewal." Local committees in each town worked to incorporate this theme into their public art pieces.

After preliminary submissions of qualifications and work samples, artists made detailed proposals to the local committees. The public was then invited to vote and/or comment before the committees made final selections.

Public Art Coordinator Christina Lee comments, "The experience and enthusiasm of the artists, the quality and variety of their work, along with the support of the communities involved, have already generated great interest and excitement for the program. Some of the towns are already interested in future installments of additional public art."

About the Trail Town Program

The Trail Town Program is an economic development initiative of The Progress Fund. The Trail Town concept was developed by the Allegheny Trail Alliance in conjunction with The Progress Fund and other key partners to realize the economic benefit of the Great Allegheny Passage. To learn more, please visit www.trailtowns.org.

About Pittsburgh 250:

Pittsburgh 250 is the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the naming of the region in 1758. With the support of business, government and civic leaders from across the region, Pittsburgh 250 has set three goals: Improve awareness of Southwestern Pennsylvania as a global leader in arts, science and quality of life through an integrated regional marketing effort; support the completion of lasting signature projects that connect the region's past to its future; and improve the region's competitiveness for future generations by encouraging grassroots participation in improving communities, attracting visitors, and living healthier lives.

The Progress Fund is a vigorous non-profit loan fund that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital to small businesses in the travel & tourism industry. The Progress Fund serves 39 counties in Pennsylvania and the entire state of West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has made 255 loans totaling more than \$23.5 million to 164 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 1,816 jobs.

The Progress Fund is an equal opportunity provider and employer.