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White House Names
Cornerstones Community Partnerships
a Preserve America Steward

SANTA FE, NM—Cornerstones Community Partnerships, based in Santa Fe, NM, has been named one of eleven Preserve America Stewards officially designated and recognized for their exemplary volunteer efforts to care for historic resources around the country.

The Preserve America Stewards program recognizes programs that encourage individuals, families, non-governmental organizations, and businesses to get involved in preserving and promoting our heritage in a direct and tangible way; fill a significant need in heritage preservation and education through the use of volunteers of all backgrounds, levels of commitment, and abilities; and, demonstrate innovative and creative use of volunteer assistance in areas such as youth involvement, volunteer training, public education, and public/private partnerships.

"This recognition is a tribute to Cornerstones' volunteers, supporters and donors of the last 23 years," said James Hare, executive director of Cornerstones, of the designation. Cornerstones has worked to preserve architectural heritage and community traditions at more than 300 locations in New Mexico and the Greater Southwest.

Preserve America is a White House initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation; U.S. General Services Administration; National Endowment for the Humanities; President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; Institute of Museum and Library Services; and the President's Council on Environmental Quality.

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The Preserve America tribute comes at a challenging time for Cornerstones, which has, like many non-profits, had to reassess it priorities and organizational structure to remain viable in a tough economic climate. Cornerstones is currently focusing its efforts on critical projects in New Mexico, including phase one of the implementation of a preservation plan for San Miguel Chapel—known as the oldest church in the U.S. Other projects on Cornerstones roster in 2009 include: preservation of the Sala de San Jose, a late-19th century community hall in Galisteo; the installation of the earthen roof on the nave of San Esteban del Rey at Acoma Pueblo; stabilization in advance of adaptive use of the Domingo Trading Post on the New Mexico Rail Runner Line outside Santa Domingo Pueblo, community outreach and technical assistance for historic Santa Fe Trail resources in villages near Fort Union, and a conditions assessment and maintenance plan for the Branigan Cultural Center in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

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Established in 1986, Cornerstones Community Partnerships assists communities in the preservation of historic structures, promotes the use of centuries old building practices, and supports the continuum of cultural values and heritage unique to this region. The work is carried out in partnership with Hispanic and Native American communities throughout New Mexico, neighboring southwestern states, and northern Mexico. Cornerstones' community-based approach fosters the involvement of youth, supports strong, unified communities, and helps insure that cultural traditions and heritage are passed on to future generations.