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Contact: Anat Gerstein, 718-793-2211, x100; anat@anatgerstein.com

**Three Outstanding New York Nonprofits**

**Win 2014 New York Community Trust Nonprofit Excellence Awards**

*Leake & Watts, Row New York, and Graham Windham Win for Exemplary Management Practices*

*Row New York is First Queens-Based Nonprofit to Win Award*

*All Winners Focus on Improving Lives of New York City Children*

(New York, Nov. 20, 2014) – Today, three New York City nonprofits won the 8th annual New York Community Trust Nonprofit Excellence Awards, which recognize outstanding management practices of nonprofits in New York City, Long Island, and Westchester.

The three winning organizations – Leake & Watts, Row New York, and Graham Windham – were selected for their use of excellent management practices to turn around a failing organization, to strategically manage growth of a young organization, and to review and improve an organization’s ability to realize its mission, respectively. The winners were selected by a panel of 30 nonprofit management experts.

Leake & Watts won the Gold Prize for Overall Management Excellence, Row New York and Graham Windham won the Silver Prize and Bronze Prize for Management Excellence, respectively. The winners were announced today at a Best Practices Workshop, Awards Presentation, and reception held at Citi’s auditorium in Manhattan.

“We’re thrilled to present these three incredible organizations with this year's Award,” said **Michael Clark, President of the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York**, which manages the Awards program along with The Trust and Philanthropy New York. “These exemplary nonprofits have really invested enormous resources and time into honing their management practices, which translate to results that fulfill their missions."

All three winners serve New York City’s at-risk youth, the first time in the program’s eight year history that all three winners serve a similar population, although with different services and goals. The organizations range in size, budget and age. Row New York is the smallest and youngest with a budget of $1.8 million, and 24 full time staff members. It was founded in 2002. Graham Windham, founded in 1806, is the oldest. Leake & Watts has the largest budget, at nearly $75 million. A total of 77 organizations applied for this year’s Awards, up 25 percent from 2013.

“We’re glad to show that nonprofits can teach each other ways to be effective, even as their lessons help businesses as well,” said **Lorie Slutsky, President of The New York Community Trust**.

About the winning organizations:

Founded as an orphanage in 1831, [**Leake & Watts**](http://www.leakeandwatts.org/) continues to provide support today to thousands of children, adults and families each day so they can achieve success tomorrow through a wide variety of early childhood, child welfare, developmental disabilities, special education, and juvenile justice programs.

[**Row New York**](http://rownewyork.org/), based in Queens and Manhattan, empowers youth from under-resourced communities to build strength, gain confidence, and pursue excellence through the competitive sport of rowing, paired with academic support. Row New York is the first Queens-based nonprofit to win this Award.

Since its founding in 1806, [**Graham Windham**](http://www.graham-windham.org/) has been a vital force in providing innovative child welfare, educational, vocational, youth development and other social service programs that help New York City children and families achieve life-changing outcomes.

About the Winners’ Excellent Management Practices:

*Gold Prize Winner* Leake & Watts: Five years ago, this organization was operating with a multi-million dollar deficit and 80 percent of its programs were in Corrective Action, as identified by the Administration of Children’s Services. Today, it operates with a surplus, has had clean audits for the past two years, and is routinely cited for its excellent program practices and outcomes. This remarkable turnaround is the result of implementing robust management practices across the board, including financial management that focuses on rate maximization and program utilization; competency-based hiring and focus on employee satisfaction; strong collaboration among the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and staff; employing performance effectiveness indicators beyond those prescribed by grants; and, developing an agency-wide culture focused on results.

*Silver Prize Winner* Row New York: This organization has seen tremendous growth in the last few years, but its expansion has been thoughtful, analytic, and strategic. It has also included having the organization say “no” when the opportunity for growth threatened their strength and sustainability. Today it not only serves more teens, but also has stronger outcomes thanks to its commitment to and culture of continuous learning, focus on results, and use of strategic partnerships. Its action plans for participating youth incorporate metrics on academics, physical fitness, and social emotional learning and have led to the hiring of a Director of Academics and College Readiness to ensure that program graduates complete college. Although Row New York is a small organization with 16 full time employees, it has effectively engaged strategic consultants to: improve program goals and develop metrics; enhance the board’s committee structure and board expectations; and develop a financial model for expansion.

*Bronze Prize Winner* Graham Windham: In 2009, the board and senior management of this nearly 220-year-old organization began a re-visioning process informed by its deep ongoing review of the organization’s performance, impact and outcomes. As a result of this process, Graham Windham refreshed its mission, clarifying its fundamental aspirations and commitments to children who have experienced childhood neglect and trauma and their families.  To advance this mission, Graham Windham phased out programs that were deemed off-mission, assessed the effectiveness of each of its core approaches, integrated its work across programs, and implemented a series of major practice advancements.  Informed by advisory groups of those it serves, and co-led by staff and a very strong and involved board, Graham Windham sets annually almost fifty mission-aligned goals and over 100 targets to assess performance. The board has an impressive committee structure, including a Program Performance Committee, designed to ensure intense board member participation. Each board member serves as an ambassador for Graham Windham, and many participate in campaigns to shape policy at the local level.

The winners received cash awards of $30,000, $20,000, and $10,000, respectively, as well as scholarships for Columbia Business School Executive Education Programs in Social Enterprise.

“Every year I talk to funders at the Nonprofit Excellent Awards program who say they come away inspired by the innovation and integrity of the amazing nominees,” said **Ronna Brown, President of Philanthropy New York**. “The management practices that are the core of this program are so immensely important and these award winners have so much to teach the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors.”

The Awards program is designed to be an opportunity for nonprofits to improve their management practices in eight areas: focus on results; governance structure; financial management; human resources; diversity and responsiveness; information technology; communications; and fundraising. All applicants were eligible to receive 360-degree feedback on their management practices from the expert Selection Committee, with the goal of helping them improve organizational performance.

[NPCC](http://www.npccny.org) created the Nonprofit Excellence Awards in 2007 and serves as the program’s tax-exempt manager, in collaboration with [The New York Community Trust](http://www.nycommunitytrust.org/) and [Philanthropy New York](https://www.philanthropynewyork.org/s_nyrag/index.asp). Along with sponsor [WNYC](http://www.wnyc.org/), the program is also supported by The Clark Foundation, the [Ford Foundation](http://www.fordfoundation.org), [Google](https://www.google.com/), Taconic Foundation, [McGladrey LLP](http://mcgladrey.com/), [Fund for the City of New York](https://www.fcny.org/fcny/), and [Columbia Business School Executive Education Programs in Social Enterprise](http://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/execed/social-enterprise/programs-for-individuals) .

A list of past winners is available at <http://npexcellence.fcny.org/npea/winners/>. More information about the Awards, including the Awards' guiding *Eight Key Areas of Nonprofit Excellence* and a list of its Selection Committee members, can be found at [www.npccny.org/info/awards.htm](http://www.npccny.org/info/awards.htm).

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**Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York** (NPCC) is an umbrella organization representing and serving some 1,500-member nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations throughout New York City, Long Island and Westchester. Established in 1984, NPCC informs and connects nonprofit leaders, saves nonprofits money, helps them manage and govern themselves better, and protects and strengthens the nonprofit community’s relations with government. ([www.npccny.org](http://www.npccny.org))

**New York Community Trust.** Since 1924, The New York Community Trust has been the home of charitable New Yorkers who share a passion for the City and its suburbs—and who are committed to improving them. The Trust supports an array of effective nonprofits that help make the City a vital and secure place to live, learn, work, and play, while building permanent resources for the future. The New York Community Trust ended 2013 with assets of $2.4 billion in more than 2,000 charitable funds, and made grants totaling $141 million. The Trust welcomes new donors. ([nycommunitytrust.org](http://www.nycommunitytrust.org/))

**Philanthropy New York** is the primary membership organization for private, family, corporate and public foundations based in the tri-state New York area. Its 285 member organizations—including some of the leading private, corporate, family and public grantmaking foundations in the world—recognize that a vibrant and well-managed nonprofit sector is fundamental to healthy communities. Philanthropy New York is the principal professional community of philanthropic foundations based in the New York City region with a mission of enhancing the ability of philanthropists to serve the public good. Philanthropy New York members recognize that without extraordinary grantees, there would be no effective grantmaking programs. ([www.philanthropynewyork.org](http://www.philanthropynewyork.org))

**WNYC** is the most listened-to public radio station in the country, reaching over 1.1 million listeners each week. Consisting of FM 93.9, AM 820 and wnyc.org, WNYC aims to inform the public locally and globally on current events, politics, and civic affairs; export New York’s arts and cultural riches to the rest of the world; and, give voice to diverse audiences. WNYC produces signature programs including *The Brian Lehrer Show, The Leonard Lopate Show,* and *Radiolab,* among others, and also broadcasts the best offerings from NPR, American Public Media, the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), and Public Radio International. With more than 100,000 members, the station operates as an independent non-profit and has one of the largest membership bases of any institution in the city. ([www.wnyc.org](http://www.wnyc.org))