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## National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center *News*

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**Date: May 16, 2008**

### **Immigration project wins *Save Our History* Preservation Award**

**STATEN ISLAND, New York** — The History Channel has awarded the National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center the *Save Our History* Preservation Award. The \$2,500 award is bestowed upon the *Save Our History* grant recipient that preserves a significant aspect of community history or heritage and demonstrates the ability to engage students in preservation activities and educate them about the importance of historic preservation.

The original \$10,000 grant allowed the Education Center in Staten Island to partner with Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, College of Staten Island High School for International Studies, the College of Staten Island, and Save Ellis Island, Inc., to create **“Immigrant Reflections: From Ellis Island to Staten Island.”** The project was one of 27 selected for funding from a pool of more than 400 proposals last summer.

For this project, 100 high school juniors have spent the 2007-08 school year comparing and contrasting the experiences of recent immigrants to Staten Island, New York, with their predecessors who immigrated via Ellis Island almost a century ago. Students conducted oral history interviews of recent immigrants and researched those from the days of Ellis Island. Then they converted what they learned about past and present immigration into short video podcasts.

Aimee Horowitz, principal, College of Staten Island High School for International Studies, said, “The ‘Save Our History’ project has connected our junior students to their local and the international community as they are involved in learning about and preserving the history of recent immigrants to Staten Island. Our students work with the National Park Service, the College of Staten Island and Save Ellis Island as well as with their teachers, which has afforded them opportunities to learn how to take oral histories, to learn about the work the professionals at these partner organizations do to preserve history, and how to capture the history of their own communities while communicating and connecting with people from different cultural backgrounds.

“I know that all of us at College of Staten Island High School of International Studies are eagerly anticipating the exhibition of our students' completed video podcasts on Ellis Island. This project has been a wonderfully rich and authentic learning experience for our students.”

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NPNH Education Center Assistant Director Jeanette Parker said the prize money from the Preservation Award will be used to help create an exhibition about the project showcasing the student work and podcasts. The exhibit will be on display at Ellis Island near the information desk in June and July. An opening reception will be held for the students, the immigrant interviewees, CSI High School teachers, and other representatives from the project partner organizations, at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum on June 7.

Parker noted that for those who would not be able to visit the exhibition the podcasts would be posted on the National Park Service and CSI High School for International Studies Web sites. In addition, the podcasts will be shared with local historical institutions, which have agreed to receive and preserve copies: Ellis Island Archives, Staten Island Historical Society and Staten Island Museum.

### **PHOTO CAPTION**

Yuekeung Au (left), who emigrated from Hong Kong in the 1980s, is interviewed about his experiences as part of the “Save Our History” project beginning conducted by juniors at the College of Staten Island High School for International Studies in cooperation with the National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center and the College of Staten Island. His daughter, Loretta Au (foreground right), is one of the students participating in the project.

### **About *Save Our History***

*Save Our History* is an Emmy® Award-winning strategic philanthropic initiative of The History Channel that launched in 1998, designed to further historic preservation and history education. The program supplements the teaching of history in America’s classrooms, educates the public on the importance of historical preservation and motivates communities across the country to help save endangered local historic treasures.

### **About *The National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center***

The Education Center, in partnership with the College of Staten Island and Brooklyn College – CUNY, supports the National Parks in the New York Harbor area in delivering curriculum-based and educational materials to K - 12 students in New York and New Jersey. The National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center is located in Building 210 at historic Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, New York, where it offers hands-on workshops for students and professional development for teachers on natural and cultural history topics.

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