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For Immediate Release

**West Caldwell Resident Accepts Presentation of
Preserve America Presidential Award**

NEW YORK CITY - West Caldwell resident Mark Dremel recently participated in a special White House ceremony to accept a *Preserve America Presidential Award* for the U.S. General Services Administration's African Burial Ground Project. The project received one of four *Preserve America* awards presented on Monday, May 12 by First Lady Laura Bush. The awards recognize exemplary work in the preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets.

Dremel, who has worked for GSA's Northeast and Caribbean Region headquartered in New York City since the early 1990s, served as GSA's African Burial Ground Project Executive from 2003 to 2007, coordinating the collaborative partnership between the many parties involved including, the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Howard University, members of Congress, and the descendent community. It was during his tenure managing this complex project that significant accomplishments were achieved such as the reinterment of the 419 excavated human remains, the design and construction of the memorial at the site, completion of the historic and scientific research and reports, and the signing of a Presidential Proclamation designating the memorial as a National Monument.

Joining Dremel for the White House ceremony was his wife, Loretta Dremel. With over 15 years of historic preservation experience, Dremel and his family currently live in one of West Caldwell's historic homes, the Nathaniel Crane House.

GSA's African Burial Ground project began in 1991, when, during excavation for a new federal office building, workers discovered the skeletal remains of the first of more than 400 men, women and children. Further investigation revealed that during the 17th and 18th centuries, free and enslaved Africans were buried in a 6.6 acre burial ground in lower Manhattan. Over the decades, the unmarked cemetery was covered over by subsequent development.

Today the site is a National Monument featuring a distinctive memorial that commemorates and communicates the story of the African Burial Ground—the single-most important, historic urban archaeological project undertaken in the United States. More information about GSA's African Burial Ground Project can be found at www.africanburialground.gov. More information about the Preserve America Presidential Awards can be found at www.preserveamerica.gov.

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