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David Whitney Building renovation earns state historic preservation award

By **Beth Reeber Valone**

The \$92 million rehabilitation of the David Whitney Building in downtown Detroit has been recognized with a 2015 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation.

Developer **The Roxbury Group**, architect **Kraemer Design Group PLC** and construction company **Walbridge**, all based in Detroit, and Farmington Hills-based hotel investment firm **Trans Inns Management Inc.** were recognized for the rehabilitation of the iconic building at 1 Park Ave.

Award-winning projects around the state were recently announced by Gov. Rick Snyder and **Michigan State Housing Development Authority** Acting-Executive Director Wayne Workman.

"I applaud the great work that takes place across the state and recognize the people who preserve these places for all Michiganders," Snyder said in a news release. "The sites contribute to Michigan's uniqueness, teach us about the people who lived here in the past, and are important to a vibrant future."

After being left vacant for more than 12 years, restoration of the David Whitney Building started in March 2011, when **Whitney Partners LLC**, a joint venture between The Roxbury Group and Trans Inns Management, bought the building for \$3.3 million.

The project restored the 19-story building's historical touches, including its terra cotta, mahogany and marble surfaces. The building's exterior was also restored to bring its façade as close as possible to the original 1915 design.

The building reopened in December. It now includes apartments, the **Aloft Detroit** boutique hotel and a restaurant.

Other award recipients are:

- **Woda Group, Hooker DeJong Architects & Engineers** and the city of Menominee for the rehabilitation of **Lloyd's Department Store** in Menominee

- **Michigan Department of Transportation, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan and Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group Inc.** for the US-31/M-231 Holland to Grand Haven Archaeological Data Recoveries
- **Friends of the Bohm Theatre, Albion Community Foundation, the Greater Albion Community, Mitchell and Mouat Architects and Gordon Martin Builder Inc.** for the rehabilitation of the **Bohm Theatre**
- **Eyde Co., Quinn Evans Architects and Granger Construction** for the rehabilitation of the **J.W. Knapp Co. Building** in Lansing

The **State Historic Preservation Office** at MSHDA initiated the program in 2003 to recognize outstanding historic preservation achievements that reflect a commitment to the preservation of Michigan's unique character and the many archaeological sites and historic structures that document Michigan's past.

The awards will be presented at a public ceremony in the Michigan State Capitol Rotunda at 9 a.m. May 6.

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