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University Park, Illinois, September 10, 2010 - With a visit by a nationally renowned art conservation specialist, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park (NMSP) at Governors State University has taken a significant step toward museum accreditation.

Robert Lodge, a specialist in coatings and sculpture projects, examined the NMSP artworks during a recent two-day visit. The visit was funded through a grant by Heritage Preservation, a national non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the United States.

"Bob Lodge's extensive experience with painted metal sculpture, combined with his thorough analysis of each of the works in our collection, will result in a 'road map' which museum staff will be able to follow in their approach to revitalizing several sculptures in need of restoration," said Geoff Bates, NMSP curator.

The NMSP, recognized as one of the nation's premier collections of public art, is home to more than two dozen works by some of the modern era's most prominent sculptors. Bates said Lodge's visit, along with financial support from Heritage Preservation, represent important milestones for the sculpture park. "Clearly, a national agency dedicated to the preservation of our cultural heritage recognizes the importance of this collection and is willing to invest in its assessment," he said.

Lodge's examination, when compared to an assessment conducted 10 years ago, will assist the NMSP in determining the condition of various sculptures and prioritizing future renovations.

"Once these priorities for treatment are identified, a schedule for conservation can be created," Bates said. "Taken together, these steps provide a significant step toward museum accreditation."

Lodge's firm, McKay Lodge Conservation Laboratory, Inc., is a large and diverse art conservation company operating the Ohio Conservation Center near Oberlin, Ohio. The center manages large government art conservation contracts and serves Midwest museums, as well as providing limited services to the public.

In 2008, McKay Lodge was selected as the bronze and stone conservator for the design, specifications, contract documents, and administration of the major renovation of Chicago's Buckingham Fountain.

Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park is located at Governors State University's main campus in University Park. The park is free of charge and open from dawn to dusk 365 days a year. For more information about the sculpture park, visit www.govst.edu/sculpture or call (708) 534-4486.