



## National Canal Museum

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**National Canal Museum recognized for outstanding visitor experience**  
*Prestigious award from the Association of Science-Technology Centers*  
**Hands-on exhibits enjoyed by over 456,000 visitors since 2006**

The National Canal Museum has received the 2008 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award for Visitor Experience at a Small Institution given by the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC). The award was bestowed to honor the museum's new permanent exhibits, "The Science and Technology of Canals and Inland Waterways." Since opening in 2006, the exhibits have been enjoyed by over 456,000 visitors and have transformed the National Canal Museum into a hands-on center for learning about the science and technology of America's canals.

The Leading Edge Award was presented by Emily Fox, Chief Executive Officer of the Discovery Center of Springfield in Springfield, Missouri and Leading Edge Award Jury member. The presentation took place on Sunday, October 19 at the ASTC Annual Conference Banquet in Philadelphia.

Each year the ASTC awards are given in recognition of extraordinary accomplishments that enhance an institution's performance and promote the mission of science-technology centers and museums. The Leading Edge Awards are named in recognition of Roy L. Shafer, a legendary figure in science and technology circles.

Roy Shafer served as president and CEO of the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) in Columbus, Ohio and was a member of the ASTC board of directors. After his death, ASTC named the Leading Edge Awards for Mr. Shafer in tribute to his progressive thinking, dynamic leadership and devotion to the science center field.

The Association of Science-Technology Centers is an organization of science centers and museums dedicated to furthering the public understanding of science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC encourages excellence and innovation in informal science learning by serving and linking its members worldwide and advancing their common goals.

Founded in 1973, ASTC now numbers more than 540 members in 40 countries. Science Center and Museum Members include science-technology centers and science museums, nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, space theaters, and natural history and children's museums.

The National Canal Museum exhibits were funded in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation. Total project cost was \$2.1 million. The National Canal Museum contributed over \$500,000 to the project through donations to the Teaming Up for Kids and Science campaign.

The exhibits are the creation of the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM), the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), Vincent Cuilla Design, and the National Canal Museum.

The nation's top science advisors and institutions were recruited to design and fabricate the new exhibits. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, located in Portland and founded in 1944, is a world-class tourist attraction and educational resource. The OMSI exhibits staff has worked with museums all over the United States.

The Science Museum of Minnesota, founded in 1907, is a large regional science museum located on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown St. Paul and serving an audience of more than a million per year. The museum offers a complete package of exhibit services from design to fabrication to installation. Their in-house exhibits division has more than 65 full-time staff.

The National Canal Museum was founded in 1970. Together with The Crayola Factory, the museum contributes to the regional economy through visitor offsite spending, direct job creation, new business activity and increased tax revenue. The impact of Two Rivers Landing attendance and related revenue is \$11 million per year as estimated by the City of Easton and the Lehigh Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The National Canal Museum was first accredited by the American Association of Museums in 1992. In 2003 the museum became an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution.