



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**SECRETARY GALVIN TO PRESENT 2011 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO
WELLESLEY COLLEGE ALUMNAE HALL, WELLESLEY**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of the Wellesley College Alumnae Hall in Wellesely, to receive a 2011 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The projects the Commission is recognizing this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. Wellesley College is to be commended for restoring and preserving this significant building for future generations.”

Wellesley College’s Alumnae Hall, recently re-dedicated and re-named in honor of the school’s former president Diana Chapman Walsh, was constructed in 1922. Designed by the notable Boston architectural firm Cram and Ferguson, the Jacobean-style building has a limestone and brick exterior and a vaulted interior with a 1,000-seat main stage theater and several program and gathering spaces. Alumnae Hall has always played an important role as the College’s main venue for performances and ceremonial events. Over time, however, the building’s interior had seen many changes, and the hall did not meet the needs of contemporary performance due to poor acoustics and limited sightlines, minimal lobby and rehearsal spaces, and severely limited accessibility. The LEED Gold restoration and rehabilitation project began with extensive research to ensure the preservation of Alumnae Hall’s historic integrity. The building now has a restored slate and copper gambrel roof, and exterior brick and limestone masonry has been cleaned, repaired, and repointed. The former lower-level ballroom was converted into a flexible rehearsal and performance area. Despite its new functions, this space still retains its original wood flooring, marbleized columns, wall paneling, wood doors, and coffered ceiling. In the auditorium, original oculus windows were reopened, lost historic panel paintings were researched and recreated, and the original chandeliers were refurbished. With a repoured concrete floor, new technology and control systems, and improved sight lines, circulation, comfort, and accessibility, the main auditorium has been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility, and the continued central role of the hall as a performance and special event space for the College has been assured.

This is the 33rd year of MHC’s Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin will present the awards at an afternoon ceremony on May 25, 2011, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The Wellesley College Alumnae Hall restoration project is one of 9 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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