



For Immediate Release: February 1, 2016

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Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board Recommends Funding for General Mills and Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology

The Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board (WNYPPAB) today voted to recommend nearly \$900,000 in funding to General Mills Operations LLC and the Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT). The funding would pay for a portion of the costs associated with business investment and workforce development projects. WNYPPAB's recommendation is expected to be considered by the New York Power Authority Board of Trustees at a future date.

"The projects recommended today for funding from the power proceeds will support jobs in food manufacturing and healthcare, two industry sectors important to the Western New York economy," said Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board Chairman Anthony J. Colucci III. "We continue to welcome additional applications for funding awards, especially those that create new, well-paying job opportunities in the region."

Details on the projects recommended today by the Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board include:

General Mills Operations, LLC

Recommended Award Amount: \$500,000

General Mills' Buffalo plant, which is its oldest plant in the United States, is vying for additional cereal production business with more modern sister facilities in four out-of-state locations. To present a more competitive package to corporate headquarters, the Buffalo plant seeks to purchase new cereal processing and packaging equipment; upgrade ingredient unloading, large packaging and handling systems; and upgrade employee skills. The WNYPPAB award recommendation will allow the Buffalo plant to present a more compelling basis for the parent company to shift production of Rice and Wheat Chex to the Buffalo plant, thereby retaining full time positions and securing the long-term viability of the plant in Western New York. The total project cost is \$25 million.

Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT)

Recommended Award Amount: \$380,000

BCAT assists unemployed and underemployed adults with securing employment by providing New York State licensed career training in the medical field. The organization's two workforce development programs, Medical Coding and Pharmacy Technician, provide training for skilled positions projected to be in strong demand in Western New York over the next decade. The project directly promotes workforce development by providing training for people in Western New York's healthcare industry, which is a strategic sector identified by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council. BCAT maintains partnerships with the biggest healthcare employers in the region in order to make certain that training provided will lead to employment for BCAT's adult graduates. The WNYPPAB award recommendation would help support three years of programming costs. The total project cost is just over \$2 million.

In total, the projects recommended for funding awards are expected to result in investments that exceed \$27 million.

The latest recommendations for proceeds awards stem from legislation signed into law by Governor Cuomo, known as the Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Act. The legislation authorizes net earnings from the sale of unused hydropower from the NYPAs Niagara Hydroelectric Power Plant to be deposited into the Western New York Economic Development Fund (Fund) to support economic development in Western New York. The Fund has accrued approximately \$41 million to date. Approximately \$29 million from that amount has been approved for awards by the NYPA Trustees on the basis of earlier recommendations by the proceeds Allocation Board. These earnings are designated to spur capital investments and job growth.

The Western New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board reviewed these and other applications for fund proceeds in accordance with requirements of the act. For example, eligible projects must be located within a 30-mile radius of NYPA's Niagara Power Project. The Allocation Board also considers the extent to which an award would be consistent with the strategies and priorities of the area New York regional economic development councils. Contracts with awardees will include provisions for periodic audits to ensure that the funds are utilized for agreed-upon purposes. Some projects are subject to legal requirements that must be satisfied before an award of Fund proceeds can be made.

The power proceeds board is comprised of the following members, appointed by Governor Cuomo: Chairman Anthony Colucci III, managing attorney of the law firm of Colucci & Gallaher in Buffalo; Deanna Alterio Brennan, president of the Niagara USA Chamber of Commerce; Brenda Williams McDuffie, president of the Buffalo Urban League; Dennis W. Elsenbeck, regional executive of National Grid Western Division; and Henry F. Wojtaszek, an attorney with the law firm of Harris Beach in Buffalo.

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