



**destiny usa**

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## **ROBERT CONGEL NAMED HIAWATHA SEAWAY COUNCIL'S 2008 DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN HONOREE**

**Destiny USA Founder and Chairman to be Honored at Boypower Dinner**

**Syracuse, New York** – Destiny USA officials announced today that Robert J. Congel has been named by the Hiawatha Seaway Council Boy Scouts of America as the 2008 Distinguished Citizen Honoree. The award will be presented to Mr. Congel at the Council's Boypower Dinner, which will be held on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Nicholas J. Pirro Convention Center at OnCenter, Syracuse, New York.

This prestigious award recognizes Mr. Congel for the initiatives he has implemented over the past several decades through the Pyramid Companies and Destiny USA, resulting in significant contributions to New York State's fiscal health; providing meaningful employment opportunities for thousands of people and several billion dollars of investment.

Over the past seven years Mr. Congel's primary focus has been on Destiny USA serving as its Founder and Chairman. Destiny USA is being developed as a transformational initiative, designed to stimulate a new economy within Upstate New York centered on renewable energy, technology, and tourism.

Mr. Congel has been affiliated with many community organizations throughout his career. He has served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Christian Brothers Academy, on the Board of Trustees at Syracuse University, and as a strong advocate of former Mayor Thomas G. Young's affordable housing initiative, The Syracuse Housing Project.

On Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup> Mr. Congel received the Environmental Quality Award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for his commitment towards protecting and enhancing environmental quality in our region. This award is the highest recognition presented to the public by the EPA. It follows his receipt of an Advocacy Award for Excellence and leadership in promoting and facilitating green construction practices, which was presented to him on Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> by Greening USA.

“People often ask me about my inspiration for creating Destiny USA – aside from my desire to give back to my hometown and improve the economy of Central New York, there’s a much deeper motivation — to help cure our Country’s dependence on foreign oil and to improve the inefficiencies in the construction industry,” said Robert Congel. “While it is a tall order, working collaboratively it is within reach.”

The Hiawatha Seaway Council is one of the geographically largest Councils in the country, serving five counties in central and northern New York. During 2007, the Hiawatha Seaway Council continued to serve over 20,000 youth and adults with a continued growth in membership. Last year, the Hiawatha Seaway Council was the first Council in New York State to introduce the new Lions Cub program for kindergarten age youth. The total Scout youth membership contributed over 34,000 hours of community service last year just with the Hiawatha Seaway Council. The average Scout volunteer gives approximately three hours a week towards the program; with over 5,200 volunteers, this equates to over 15,600 hours donated per week, and 811,200 hours per year. During 2007, 140 boys in the Hiawatha Seaway Council earned the Eagle award. This is Scouting’s highest youth recognition, earned nationally by only 4% of all Scouts.

“Congratulations on being named the Hiawatha Seaway Council’s 2008 Distinguished Citizen Honoree. This recognition reflects your untiring desire to be of service to your community through your entrepreneurial and philanthropic undertakings,” said Dr. Neil Murphy, Jr., President, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and 2008 Boypower Dinner Chairperson. “As a result of your leadership, commitment, and innovative strategies, the Syracuse region now has a viable blueprint for a sustainable future through the formation of collaborative programs among the private, public, and educational sectors, which could easily be replicated in many regions throughout the country.”

Mr. Congel has been married to Suzanne M. Congel for 47 years, is the father of five children and has 22 grandchildren. Mr. Congel considers his greatest accomplishment to be his family.

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