Arnold P. Wendroff, Ph.D.
Brooklyn, New York

While teaching a special education class in 1989, Arnold Wendroff learned from a student that his mother was in the habit of sprinkling elemental mercury on their apartment floor to ward off witches. He investigated the assertion and learned about the widespread, ritualistic use of mercury in many Caribbean and Hispanic communities—a use that causes exposure to developmentally neurotoxic levels of mercury vapor. Since then he has called upon EPA and other government entities to address the problem. His leading role in the cause is documented in the EPA Task Force on Ritualistic Uses of Mercury Report: “We acknowledge with gratitude the hard work of Dr. Arnold Wendroff...who first brought national attention to this issue; without him this Task Force would not have existed.”

Carol Cramer-Burke
St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

After Hurricane Hugo hit St. Croix in 1989, an old growth mangrove forest of Sugar Bay was almost entirely wiped out. Faced with this ecological disaster, Carol Cramer-Burke and the St. Croix Environmental Association undertook a three-year replanting project. Using federal funds and more than 500 local volunteers, they planted 14,500 red mangrove and 3,000 black mangrove seedlings, using tubes to protect the small plants from predators, waves and wind. Last year, a year after the end of the planting program, Cramer-Burke found that it had achieved an 82 percent survival rate, considerably higher than the 50 percent survival rate originally anticipated.

Federal, State, Local, or Tribal Government or Agency

Nicholas DeCarlo
U.S. Postal Service
New York, New York

Nicholas DeCarlo, an Environmental Specialist for the U.S. Postal Service, is responsible for all energy and environmental issues for the 134 US Postal Service facilities in the Bronx and Manhattan District. Thanks to upgrades at more than 100 of these facilities, the U.S. Postal Service has saved more than $2 million annually on energy costs since 1999. Mr. DeCarlo worked closely with Con Edison Solutions to accomplish these savings, which also helped to significantly reduce pollutant emissions from these facilities. In addition, Mr. DeCarlo developed operational procedures to ensure the proper disposal of PCB ballasts and fluorescent lamps. With the U.S. Postal Service since 1982, he has demonstrated leadership, determination and innovation in the realm of environmental concerns.

Phil DeGaetano
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Albany, New York

Phil DeGaetano, a winner in 1994, is being recognized this year for his efforts in supporting the regional estuary, freshwater, water quality standards and total maximum daily loads (TMDL) programs. Mr. DeGaetano has been a willing partner to EPA in his nearly three decades with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, ensuring a close working relationship between the two agencies. His recent achievements include overseeing development of a TMDL to control nitrogen in Long Island Sound; approved by EPA in 2001, it is arguably the nation’s most complex and expansive in scope. Last year under his leadership, DEC signed a consent agreement with the City of New York to upgrade four upper East River sewage treatment plants for