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NEWS RELEASE

El Paso Museum of Art Awarded 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Services

EL PASO, Texas - The City of El Paso is pleased to announce the El Paso Museum of Art (EPMA) was selected as one of 10 recipients of the 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Services presented by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The National Medal is the nation's highest honor given to museums and libraries for service to their communities that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. Over the past 24 years, the award has celebrated 182 institutions that are making a difference for individuals, families, and communities.

"This recognition demonstrates the significance investing in quality of life and quality of place has on our community. Spaces like the El Paso Museum of Art play a crucial role in providing arts and cultural opportunities to our residents as well as our visitors from across the region and around the country," said City of El Paso Mayor Dee Margo.

The El Paso Museum of Art uses services, programs, and art exhibits celebrate the diversity and cultural pride of the city. Through domestic and international outreach, EPMA builds community cohesion in both the United States and Mexico, demonstrating that cultural understanding and celebration are paramount for change and growth.

"EPMA's location on the border provides us an opportunity to create a multicultural dialogue using our permanent collection and traveling exhibitions as a starting point. This focus has encouraged us as museum professionals to look at new ways to engage our audiences through programming and educational opportunities," said El Paso Museum of Art Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez. "This has helped us become a place where diverse groups can come together through art to respect other perspectives and find a common ground."

Since its founding in 1959, the Museum has been a major cultural resource for West Texas, New Mexico and Mexico. The Museum's permanent collection of American, European and Mexican work includes the second largest collection of Mexican retablos in the world. Through special programming and the Art School, EPMA provides hands on art experiences to visitors of different ages and abilities. It is the only American Alliance of Museums accredited art museum within a 200-mile radius and welcomes nearly 100,000 visitors each year. General admission, school tours, and nearly all of its high-quality educational programming is free.

Selected from 29 national finalists, the 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winners represent institutions that provide dynamic programming and services that exceed expected levels of service. Through their community outreach, these institutions bring about change that touches the lives of individuals and helps communities thrive.

"It is a pleasure to recognize the 10 distinctive recipients of the National Medal of Museum and Library Service," said IMLS Director Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew. "Through their programs, services, and partnerships, these institutions exemplify the many ways that libraries and museums are positively transforming communities across the nation."

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. IMLS advances, supports and empowers America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.

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Media Contact: Rick Isaias
Lead Public Affairs Coordinator
915.212.1077

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