

About the National Medal for Museum and Library Service

National Medal for Museum and Library Service

- The National Medal for Museum and Library Service is the United States' highest honor for institutions that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. The National Medal awards are presented annually by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).
- Recipient institutions receive the National Medal at a ceremony held in Washington, D.C. and a \$5,000 award in recognition of their extraordinary civic, educational, economic, environmental, and social contributions.
- After the ceremony, StoryCorps—a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of Americans—visits each institution to provide an opportunity for community members to share the stories of their lives. These stories are preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.
- Including 2012 winners, 122 institutions have received this honor.
- All types of museums, from anthropological to zoological, fine art to folk art, urban and rural, large and small, are eligible for this award.
- Public or private nonprofit libraries of all sizes and types are eligible to receive this award.

National Medal Selection Process

- This year, 33 institutions were named National Medal for Museum and Library Service finalists. IMLS highlighted each of them in the six weeks leading to the announcement of the winners with photos and stories from their communities on the IMLS Facebook page.
- Any individual may nominate a museum and/or library in the United States and its territories for the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.
- Members of the National Museum and Library Services Board, the IMLS's presidentially appointed policy advisory board, review the nominations and make recommendations to the Institute Director who selects the winners.
- To learn more about nominations, please visit www.ims.gov/medals.

Institute of Museum and Library Service

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums.
- Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive.
- Through grants and information resources, IMLS annually reaches thousands of museums and libraries in various ways – providing technical assistance for small institutions to establishing national and replicable models, strengthening state networks, and supporting professional development.
- Funding from IMLS helps museums and libraries operate effectively and give value to their communities. It also leverages additional public and private support.