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Institute of Museum and Library Services Announces the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art as a Finalist for the 2013 National Medal for Museum and Library Service

HARTFORD, Conn., February 14, 2013 – The Institute of Museum and Library Services today announced the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art as a National Medal for Museum and Library Service finalist. The National Medal is the nation’s highest honor conferred on museums and libraries for service to the community and celebrates institutions that make a difference for individuals, families, and communities. Two other Connecticut organizations were also named finalists, the Hartford Public Library and the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History in New Haven.

Medal finalists are selected from nationwide nominations of institutions that demonstrate innovative approaches to public service, exceeding the expected levels of community outreach.

“Museums and libraries serve as community gathering places and centers for lifelong learning, and we are very proud to announce the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art as a finalist for the 2013 National Medal,” said Susan Hildreth, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. “This year’s finalists exemplify the many wonderful ways museums and libraries can respond to the needs and wants of the communities they serve.”

“We are so proud and honored that the museum’s ongoing Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) – aimed at transforming our relationship with our visitors and surrounding communities – has been recognized in such a profound way by the Institute of Museum and Library Services,” said Susan L. Talbott, Director & CEO Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. “Since the inception of CEI in 2008 the museum has implemented numerous new programs in response to community feedback and has collaborated with more than 70 new partners such as area social service agencies, the Boys & Girls Club, and local artists.”

In addition to the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, this year’s finalists exemplify the nation’s great diversity of libraries and museums and include an aquarium and marine science center, conservatory and botanical gardens, county library systems, individual libraries, children’s museums, science centers, and more, hailing from across the country.

Finalists are chosen because of their significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. IMLS is encouraging community members who have visited the finalist institutions to share their story on the IMLS Facebook page, www.facebook.com/USIMLS. Visit the IMLS Facebook page to learn more about how these institutions make an impact. National Medal for Museum and Library Service winners will be announced this spring.

To *Share Your Story*, please visit www.facebook.com/USIMLS. To learn more about the 2013 National Medal finalists, visit www.ims.gov/medals.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

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. To learn more, visit <http://www.ims.gov> and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is America's first public art museum, founded in 1842. The museum is located at 600 Main St., Hartford, Connecticut and is open Wednesdays to Fridays, 11 am – 5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am – 5 pm, and the first Thursday of every month 11 am – 8 pm. Please visit www.wadsworthatheneum.org for more information.

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