



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Destination Archaeology! Resource Center to Participate in Blue Star Museums

Destination Archaeology is one of more than 1,800 museums across America to offer free admission to military personnel and their families this summer in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and the Department of Defense

Pensacola, FL – Today the Destination Archaeology Resource Center announced the launch of Blue Star Museums, a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense, and more than 1,800 museums across America to offer free admission to all active duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2013.

“Although our museum is always free we are excited to take part in the spirit of Blue Star Museums,” said Destination Archaeology Resource Center Manager Mike Thomin.

“Blue Star Museums is a collaboration between the arts and military communities,” said NEA Acting Chairman Joan Shigekawa. “Our work with Blue Star Families and with more than 1,800 museums ensures that we can reach out to military families and thank them for their service and sacrifice.” “Blue Star Museums is something that service members and their families look forward to every year and we are thrilled with the continued growth of the program,” said Blue Star Families CEO Kathy Roth-Douquet. “Through this distinctive collaboration between Blue Star Families, the National Endowment for the Arts and more than 1,800 museums across the United States, service members and their families can connect with our national treasures with this unparalleled opportunity to visit some of the country’s finest museums for free.”

This year, more than 1,800 (and counting) museums in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa are taking part in the initiative, including more than 450 new museums this year. Museums are welcome to join Blue Star Museums throughout the summer.

The effort to recruit museums has involved partnerships with the American Association of Museums, the Association of Art Museum Directors, the Association of Children’s Museums, the American Association of State and Local History, and the Association of Science-Technology Centers. This year’s Blue Star Museums represent not just fine arts museums, but also science museums, history museums, nature centers, and 75 children’s museums. Among this year’s new participants are the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, California, Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum in Northport, Michigan, the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan, Alaska, and the World Museum of Mining in Butte, Montana.

About Blue Star Museums

Blue Star Museums runs from Memorial Day, May 28, 2013 through to Labor Day, September 2, 2013. The free admission program is available to active-duty military and their immediate family members (military ID holder and five immediate family members). Active duty military include Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and active duty National Guard and active duty Reserve members. Some special or limited-time museum exhibits may not be included in this free admission program. For questions on particular exhibits or museums, please contact the museum directly. To find out which museums are participating, visit www.arts.gov/bluestarmuseums. The site includes a list of participating museums and a map to help with visit planning.

Museums that wish to participate in Blue Star Museums may contact bluestarmuseums@arts.gov, or Wendy Clark at 202-682-5451.

This is the latest NEA program to bring quality arts programs to the military, veterans and their families. Other NEA programs for the military have included Operation Homecoming: Writing the Wartime Experience; Great American Voices Military Base Tour; and Shakespeare in American Communities Military Base Tour.

About Destination Archaeology Resource Center and FPAN

Learn about the amazing archaeological sites that you can visit and experience throughout the state. With close to 500 years of European history and more than 10,000 years of Native American history, Florida is host to an array of cultural landmark sites on land and under water. Our exhibit, "A Roadtrip Through Florida Archaeology," showcases heritage sites open to the public within the eight regions of the Florida Public Archaeology Network.

The University of West Florida's Florida Public Archaeology Network is dedicated to the protection of cultural resources, both on land and underwater, and to involving the public in the study of their past. Regional centers around Florida serve as clearinghouses for information, institutions for learning and training, and headquarters for public participation in archaeology.

About Blue Star Families

Blue Star Families is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit network of military families from all ranks and services, including guard and reserve, with a mission to support, connect and empower military families. In addition to morale and empowerment programs, Blue Star Families raises awareness of the challenges and strengths of military family life and works to make military life more sustainable. Membership includes military spouses, children and parents as well as service members, veterans and civilians.

To learn more about Blue Star Families, visit www.blustarfam.org

About the National Endowment for the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov.

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