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Museum Services Act (1984): Speech 05

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INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM SERVICES ANNOUNCES OVER
\$17 MILLION IN GRANT SUPPORT FOR U.S. MUSEUM OPERATIONS
ON INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY

Washington, D.C. --- Lois Burke Shepard, Director of the Institute of Museum Services, today announced the 400 museums receiving Fiscal Year 1989 General Operating Support grants. Funds are awarded through a very stiff competition that focuses on the quality of the museums' operations, and are provided to assist museums in supporting basic services and programs.

In announcing the awards, Mrs. Shepard said, "I am particularly pleased to announce the IMS General Operating Support awards on International Museum Day. It is fitting that grants under this program, which rewards and showcases the highest quality museums in our nation, are announced on the day that celebrates the efforts of museums around the world. In this time of increased concern about educational attainment, museums play an exceedingly important role in supplementing the more formal educational system. They are unique forums for presenting and communicating our cultural, historic and scientific heritage to people of all ages."

Grants are made to museums of all types and sizes throughout the United States. Aquariums, arboretums and botanical gardens, children's and junior museums, general museums, historic houses and sites, history museums, nature centers, natural history and anthropology museums, planetariums, science and technology centers, specialized museums, and zoological parks all receive funding. Grantees include museums with from one staff member to more than 2,000 employees, with annual operating budgets from less than \$10,000 to over \$70 million. The competition is national, including museums in urban, suburban and rural areas.

In 1989, 1,355 museums applied for General Operating Support grants. The program is extremely competitive: only 30 percent of the applicants receive funding. Grants are for 10 percent of the museum's operating budget, up to a maximum of \$75,000.

The IMS General Operating Support award is based on the strength and quality of the applicant museum as demonstrated by its responses to application questions. The competition considers whether the museum's resources are managed so as to provide the best possible services to its community and the general public.

Examples of the variety of museums funded in the 1989 competition are:

- o The Austin Children's Museum (\$46,804) in Texas, which provides participatory, educational exhibits and programs for children and families.
- o The Detroit Institute of Arts (\$75,000) in Michigan preserves, displays, and promotes understanding and appreciation of the visual arts.
- o The Grout Museum of History and Science (\$11,579) in Iowa focuses on the history of both human events and natural development in the region.
- o The New England Aquarium (\$75,000) in Massachusetts, whose mission is to enhance knowledge of aquatic life through education, research, conservation and exhibition.
- o The Mt. Pisgah Arboretum (\$8,991) in Oregon is devoted to maintaining plant specimens and encouraging awareness of the natural sciences and ecology.
- o The Spanish Point at the Oaks (\$15,579) in Florida, which restores, develops, interprets and preserves its historic site and environs.

First established in 1976, IMS is the primary Federal agency responsible for supporting the basic operations of all types of museums. Policy for agency programs is established by the fifteen-member National Museum Services Board, whose members are appointed by the President with Senate confirmation. The current Chairman is Willard Boyd, President of the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois.