



For Immediate Release
July 18, 2017



RICHLAND LIBRARY RECEIVES NATION'S HIGHEST HONOR

IMLS Awards 2017 National Medal Recipients in Washington, DC

*Columbia, S.C.- Gaining nationwide recognition for the distinctive resources, services and programs that it provides the community, **Richland Library officially received the 2017 National Medal for Museum and Library Service during a ceremony at the National Archives Museum in Washington, D.C. on Monday, July 17, 2017.***

Executive Director Melanie Huggins joined the director from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Kathryn K. Matthew, and renowned journalist Cokie Roberts for the award, the nation's highest honor given to museums and libraries for their service and dedication to the community.

"Libraries aren't amenities; we're necessities," said Huggins. "And we are continuing to move our community forward, making sure our residents are prepared for the future. We are breaking down barriers - not only providing people access to information and connecting them to local experts but also offering spaces where people can learn from each other, create and share."



Accompanying Huggins was local teen Josiah Washington, who shared how Richland Library has impacted his life from an early age.

"Ever since before I was born, I've been coming here - since my mom was carrying me," said Washington. "She'd always come to the library to get books... it's almost like a second home."

For 23 years, the National Medal for Museum and Library Service has recognized and celebrated institutions demonstrating extraordinary and innovative approaches to public service that are also making a difference for individuals, families and entire communities. **Specifically, IMLS highlighted Richland Library's response to the October 2015 historic flood, development of a social awareness task force and involvement in the White House's ConnectED Challenge.**

The 10 winners of the 2017 National Medal - five libraries and five museums - emerged from 30 national finalists, which IMLS announced back in May 2017.

For questions, please contact Emily Stoll at 803-587-3637 or email estoll@richlandlibrary.com.

About Richland Library

Richland Library is a vibrant, contemporary organization that provides resources and information that advance the Midlands. Offering state-of-the-art technology, a variety of literary and cultural programs and 11 bustling facilities located throughout the county, Richland Library offers a truly customizable, modern library experience for residents and visitors alike.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is celebrating its 20th Anniversary. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and approximately 35,000 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 www.imls.gov and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.