



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **HEARD MUSEUM RECEIVES**

### **\$1.1 million from the NINA MASON PULLIAM CHARITABLE TRUST**

#### ***The grant will fund the Boarding School Remodel and the Crosswalk Expansion***

**PHOENIX** – The Heard Museum gained more support for its strategic initiatives with a \$1.1 million grant from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. The grant will fund two of the Heard’s major initiatives: refreshing and updating the museum’s long-term exhibit *Remembering Our Indian School Days: The Boarding School Experience* and a new second-floor crosswalk to connect two formerly separate upstairs areas.

The crosswalk is an integral component of the Heard’s interior reconfiguration plan. The Heard has undergone several expansions over its 86-year history, which resulted in two unconnected second-story areas. This has long posed a challenge for visitors in navigating the spaces, especially visitors searching for the *Boarding School Experience* exhibit. When complete, the second-floor walkway will run from the Berlin Mezzanine to connect with the *Boarding School* exhibit entrance via the Virginia G. Piper Gallery. This project will connect the two second-floor spaces, providing direct interior access to the *Boarding School* exhibit and a greatly enhanced wayfinding experience.

The *Boarding School Experience* exhibit has received much acclaim over its 15-year run for its groundbreaking retelling of one of the United States’ most tragic chapters, the establishment of off-reservation boarding schools for Indian children in a misguided attempt to “Americanize” them. The *Boarding School* exhibit will be refreshed, and new materials added to update the story of the schools and the students who survived the experience. In addition, two smaller traveling exhibits will be created for use by smaller museums and institutions.

“I would like to thank the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust for this generous grant,” said Heard Museum Interim Director and CEO John R. Bulla. “This grant demonstrates the continued support of our strategic initiatives to enhance and enrich the visitor experience. We look forward to

presenting new exhibits, events and programming that will engage the community and educate the public about the rich cultures of the Southwest.”

During her career, Nina Mason Pulliam shared her financial success and business leadership skills with many charities. She was particularly sensitive to human needs, animal welfare and environmental issues. "She had a keen awareness of challenges that face our community and would take great pride in the outstanding work being done by organizations like (name of agency)," said Carol Schilling, Trustee chairman. "Through her Trust, we continue to build on her legacy which clearly reflects her heart for philanthropy."

The grant to the Heard Museum represents one of 21 awarded to nonprofit organizations in Arizona by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust during the second of two grant cycles this year. Since the Trust began its grant making in 1998, it has awarded more than \$252 million to nonprofit organizations in Arizona and Indiana.

As of September 30, 2015, the Trust had assets of approximately \$364 million. Visit [www.ninapulliamtrust.org](http://www.ninapulliamtrust.org).

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### **About the Heard**

Since 1929, the Heard Museum, a private non-profit organization, has enchanted visitors from around the world with the art, culture and history of indigenous peoples of the Americas with an emphasis on tribes and other cultures of the Southwest. With more than 40,000 fine artworks and cultural artifacts in its permanent collection, 12 long-term and changing exhibit galleries, an education center, an award-winning Shop, the Books & More boutique bookstore, Coffee Cantina and Courtyard Café, the Heard Museum is a place of learning, discovery and unforgettable experiences.

*Exhibit, event and program funding are provided in part by the Arizona Commission on the Arts, the Arizona Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture.*

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