



## PRESS RELEASE

# Josiah Enriquez Wins 34<sup>th</sup> Annual World Championship Hoop Dance Contest

The Heard Museum

Images available at: [Heard.org/Press](https://www.heard.org/press)

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**PHOENIX** – The Heard Museum is proud to announce the winners and runners-up of the 34<sup>th</sup> annual World Champions of the Hoop Dance Contest. Judged on precision, timing/rhythm, showmanship, creativity, and speed, 121 of the top Indigenous hoop dancers competed for the prestigious title and prizes totaling \$25,000 across multiple age divisions.

With a perfect score of 209, Josiah Enriquez was recognized as the 2024 Hoop Dance World Champion.

“Being the world hoop dance champion feels so surreal and still hasn’t sunk in yet,” Enriquez said. “It has been a long journey from when I began hoop dancing. I’m so thankful to be able to inspire and motivate the next generation of champions. I want to give special thanks to all who believe and support me. Huge thanks to my hoop dance community, Lightning Boy Foundation and the Larance family.”

Enriquez is a 21-year-old Navajo, Isleta and Pueblo Hoop dancer from the Pueblo of Pojoaque in New Mexico. He started dancing and participating in traditional ceremonies at three but didn’t start hoop dancing until the age of 8, inspired by his teacher, Valentino Rivera, and Nakotah Larance, his grandmother along with the kids of the Lightning Boy Foundation. Being able to teach has opened up a whole other level of understanding of the hoop dance for Enriquez.

The winners across the age divisions are:

### 2024 Heard Hoop Dance Contest Champion

- First Place: Josiah Enriquez (Pueblo of Pojoaque, Navajo, Isleta)
- First Runner-Up: Talon Duncan (Three Affiliated)
- Second Runner-Up: Tony Duncan (Apache, Arikara & Hidasta)
- Third Runner-Up: Scott Sixkiller Siquah (Gila River Pima, Hopi/Tewa, Cherokee, Choctaw)
- Fourth Runner-Up: Beany John (Taino/Plains Cree)
- Fifth Runner-Up: Sky Duncan (San Carlos Apache)

### **2023 Heard Hoop Dance Contest Senior Champion**

- First Place: Moontee Siquah (Hopi-Tewa, Choctaw)
- First Runner-Up: Terry Goedel (Yakama/Tulalip)
- Second Runner-Up: Jerry (JJ) First Charger Jr. (Blood Tribe)

### **2023 Heard Hoop Dance Contest Teen Champion**

- First Place: Mateo Ulibarri (Pueblos of Pojoaque and Santa Clara)
- First Runner-Up: Jerry Hunt (Diné)
- Second Runner-Up: Jerrhan First Charger (Blood Tribe, Blackfoot Confederacy)

### **2023 Heard Hoop Dance Contest Youth Champion**

- First Place: Anjalee Andrews (Hopi)
- First Runner-Up: Naiche Duncan (Plains Cree, Taino, Apache, Arikara, Hidasta, Mandan)
- Second Runner-Up: Isaiah George (Santa Clara Pueblo)

“The Heard is honored to be home to the World Championship Hoop Dance Contest,” said David M. Roche, Dickey Family Director and Heard Museum CEO. “We are so appreciative of the dancers who have invested so much time and practice to bring their talent to our stage.”

The art of hoop dance honors cultural practices shared by multiple Indigenous communities. With roots in healing ceremonies, traditions and practices, today’s hoop dance is shared as an artistic expression to honor Indigenous traditions throughout the U.S. and Canada.

For more information on the Heard Museum, visit <https://heard.org/>

*Above image: Josiah Enriquez, the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Hoop Dance Champion*

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### **Notes to Editors:**

The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual World Championship Hoop Contest took place on Feb. 17 through Feb. 18, 2024 at The Heard Museum.

The museum is open Monday to Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Ticket prices for the museum are as follows: adults are \$25 at the door, \$22.50 online; seniors (65+) are \$20 at the door, \$18 online; students with a valid ID are \$10 at the door, \$9 online; children (6-17) are \$10 at the door, \$9 online; all children five and under, American Indians (with Tribal ID or CIB) and Heard Museum Members are free.

Photography of any kind may not be used for publication without written permission from the museum and/or artists.

Credentialed members of the media may contact a member of the marketing staff for more information concerning photography of public events or museum galleries.

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### **About The Heard Museum:**

Since its founding in 1929, the Heard Museum, a private nonprofit organization, has grown in size and stature to become recognized internationally for the quality of its collections, world class exhibitions, educational programming and unmatched festivals. Dedicated to the advancement of American Indian art, the Heard successfully presents the stories of American Indian people from a first-person perspective as well as exhibitions that showcase the beauty and vitality of traditional and contemporary art. The Heard Museum is supported, in part, by the generosity of Heard Museum members and donors, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the City of Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture. In association with the Smithsonian, the Heard Museum is part of a select group of museums and cultural, educational and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation. For more information, please visit [heard.org](http://heard.org).

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<https://bit.ly/3yVh8ho>.