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Alaska State Museums Nominated for National Award

JUNEAU – The Alaska State Museums are among 30 finalists for the 2017 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The prestigious award, the nation’s highest for museums and libraries, is given by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. The institute also has named the Haines Borough Public Library as a finalist.

The Alaska State Museums are composed of the Alaska State Museum in Juneau, the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, and their services to local museums statewide.

The finalists “represent the leading museums and libraries that serve as catalysts for change in their communities,” said Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

“This honor means much to the staff of the Alaska State Museums and to their colleagues in the State Library and State Archives,” said Patience Frederiksen, Director of the Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums. “Innovation in museum services, the passion to tell Alaska’s fascinating story through objects, and devotion to assisting all of Alaska’s museums to develop programs for their communities – the State Museums’ staff exhibit all of these characteristics in their daily work. This honor validates years of effort by the State Museums.”

The institute is encouraging community members who have visited the museums or used their services to share their story on its Facebook page, www.facebook.com/USIMLS.

“All of Alaska is the Alaska State Museums’ community. This nomination is a well-deserved honor,” said Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Learning, which includes the State Library, the State Archives, and the State Museums.

During fiscal year 2016, the Alaska State Museums answered 3,100 reference questions and trained more than 500 museum staff from other institutions. The State Museums hold 39,000

natural history and cultural objects that delineate Alaska history. The State Museums hosted 175,000 visitors that year.

As well, the Alaska State Museums support the growth, development, and excellence of museums and tribal cultural centers by providing advanced technical support, onsite consultations and assessments; administering grants; writing grants to support professional development; coordinating an internship program; and continuously engaging constituents through online media.

The institute will announce the National Medal winners later this spring. Representatives from winning institutions will travel to Washington, D.C. to be honored at an award ceremony.

To learn more about the institute, see <http://www.ims.gov>

For more about the Alaska state Museums, see <http://museums.alaska.gov/>

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