



Fine Arts Center

COLORADO SPRINGS

Taylor Museum
Bemis School of Art
Performing Arts

30 West Dale Street
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
tel: 719.634.5581 fax: 719.634.0570
www.csfineartscenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Charlie Snyder, Director of Communications
719.477.4316; csnyder@csfineartscenter.org

BLUE STAR MUSEUMS **FAC one of more than 650 museums to offer free admission** **to military personnel and their families this summer**

COLORADO SPRINGS (May 27, 2010) – The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center announces the launch of Blue Star Museums, a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and more than 650 museums across America to offer free gallery admission to all active duty military personnel and their families from today through Sunday, Sept. 5, 2010.

The FAC is open Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. The FAC is not open on Memorial Day, Monday, May 31.

“The Fine Arts Center is pleased to join the NEA and museums across the country to offer free gallery admission to the men and women of the military,” said Sam Gappmayer, FAC President and CEO. “The FAC has supported the military community in Colorado Springs with our art therapy program for Wounded Warriors (*Military Creative Expressions*) and the exhibition of the *Lost Heroes Art Quilt* and we are happy to participate in the Blue Star Museum program.”

(The Lost Heroes Art Quilt is completing its run at the FAC on Saturday, May 29. The quilt is moving from the FAC earlier than schedule so that the quilt can be on display at Fort Carson on Memorial Day.)

“America’s museums are proud to join the rest of the country in thanking our military personnel and their families for their service and sacrifice,” said NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman. “I cannot imagine a better way to do that than welcoming them in to explore and enjoy the extraordinary cultural heritage our museums present.”

“There have always been wonderful examples of partnerships between museums and military installations, but the scale of this gift from the museum communities to military families is thrilling,” said Blue Star Families Chairman Kathy Roth-Douquet. “We anticipate that thousands of military families will participate in the program and visit museums this summer – many of them for the first time.”

In addition to being Chairman of Blue Star Families, Ms. Roth-Douquet is married to a Marine Corps officer, who is currently deployed to Afghanistan. They have two children, and Ms. Roth-Douquet and the children plan to take a road trip this summer to visit Blue Star Museums up and down the East Coast.

More than 650 museums in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are taking part in the initiative. The American Association of Museums, the Association of Art Museum Directors, and the Association of Children's Museums each sent a letter from NEA Chairman Landesman inviting museums to participate in this program. In addition to 30 children's museums across the country, participating museums represent a broad range of art, history, science, and cultural topics -- from the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, to the California Surf Museum in Oceanside, to the Mission San Luis, a living history site and historic landmark in Tallahassee, Florida, to the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, and the Seacoast Science Center in Rye, N.H.

Blue Star Details

Blue Star Museum program will run at the FAC today through Sunday, Sept. 5. The free admission program is available to active duty military and their immediate family members (military ID holder and five immediate family members), which includes active duty Reserve and active duty National Guard. Some special or limited-time museum exhibits may not be included in this free admission program. For questions on particular exhibits or museums, please contact the museum directly. To find out which museums are participating, visit www.arts.gov/bluestarmuseums.

Blue Star Families

Blue Star Families is a national, non-partisan, non-profit network of military families from all ranks and services including guard and reserve, with a mission to support, connect and empower military families. In addition to morale and empowerment programs, Blue Star Families raises awareness of the challenges and strengths of military family life with civilian community and leaders. Membership includes spouses, kids, parents, service members, veterans and civilians.

Operation Appreciation is an initiative of Blue Star Families that seeks to connect military families to the larger community. Blue Star Families 2009 annual survey shows that 94 percent of military families feel that the larger community doesn't truly understand or appreciate the sacrifices we make for the country. Through initiatives such as Blue Star Museums, Blue Star Families provides avenues for the larger community to show that they do understand, in meaningful ways that enrich the lives of military service members, spouses, children and parents. For more information, please visit www.BlueStarFam.org.

National Endowment for the Arts

The NEA is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts – both new and established – bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Arts Endowment is the largest annual national funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases. For more information, please visit www.arts.gov.

Fine Arts Center

The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, established in 1936, is a privately funded, non-profit art museum, performing arts theatre and arts education center. Built on the foundation of the prestigious Broadmoor Art Academy, the FAC carries the legacy of Colorado's arts and cultural heritage. One of 16 charter members of the American Association of Museums, the FAC offers the best in the world of visual arts via its permanent collection and travelling exhibitions, performing arts through the FAC Theatre Company, and arts education with the Bemis School of Art. The FAC building is considered an architectural landmark in the Rocky Mountain region, designed by John Gaw Meem, and is listed on the National Register for Historical Places. In 2007, the FAC unveiled a \$28.6 million renovation and expansion. For information, visit csfineartscenter.org.

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