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**INDEPENDENCE SEAPORT MUSEUM**

**RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT GRANTS AND AWARDS IN SUMMER 2023**

Philadelphia, PA (September 28, 2023)—Independence Seaport Museum (ISM) of Philadelphia is the recipient of two substantial grants to fund new research and a notable honor in recent weeks in recognition of its work in preserving and sharing the history of the Delaware River waterfront. Grants from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage (the Center) and the William Penn Foundation will support ISM’s forthcoming African-American oral history project. Additionally, the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) awarded ISM its 2022-2023 Maintenance Excellence Pennant for work done to preserve Cruiser *Olympia*.

“We are thrilled to receive this funding from both foundations in support of this incredible project,” states Peter S. Seibert, president and CEO of ISM. “Their commitment to this project will ensure that we can document and preserve the stories of our waterfront for future generations.”

On September 14, the Center announced ISM will receive a $240,500 grant as part of its 2023 grants and fellowships to Philadelphia-area cultural organizations and artists to fund public events and programs that celebrate the diverse and creative contributions of local artists and tell personal stories of prominent Philadelphians. The grant includes both project funding and an additional 20 percent in unrestricted, general operating support. Additionally, a $100,000 grant from the William Penn Foundation’s Creative Communities program was awarded to ISM on August 25. These major grants will support a new multi-year project, “Breaking Uncommon Ground on the Delaware River,” an initiative that will collect oral histories from African-American Philadelphians who lived and worked along the Delaware River in the mid to the late 20th-and 21st-centuries. These stories will guide the reinstallation in 2024 of the museum’s flagship exhibition, *Tides of Freedom: The African Presence on the Delaware River*, in its new gallery space and will include an audio/video component, an online presence through the museum’s YouTube channel and an online archive of the stories in the J. Welles Henderson Research Center at ISM. “Breaking Uncommon Ground on the Delaware River” will further ISM’s mission as a maritime museum focused on the Delaware River, its people and the environment and how it connects to the larger world.

ISM also was a recent recipient of the Maintenance Excellence Pennant as part of NHHC’s 2022-2023 Museum Excellence Awards, the United States Navy’s official history branch recognizes non-federal organizations, including museums and individuals for incorporating the history and heritage of the Navy into their publications, documents and artifacts at their facilities. The award to ISM was announced on August 11 at NHHC’s annual awards program at the Washington Navy Yard in recognition of the cofferdam work done to preserve the hull of Cruiser *Olympia*, the oldest floating steel warship in the world. Maintenance Excellence Pennants are awarded to organizations that have demonstrated outstanding improvement of the condition of an artifact over the past year. ISM and its fellow award recipients will be presented with a plaque and pennant commemorating their achievement on September 21 during the annual meeting of the Historic Naval Ships Association in Albany, New York, aboard museum ship, USS Slater.

“We are truly honored that the Navy has recognized the decades-long efforts that the ISM has made to preserve this national treasure. For nearly a century, *Olympia* has been part of Philadelphia’s riverfront and we look forward to sharing her stories for years to come,” says Seibert.

*About Independence Seaport Museum*

*The Independence Seaport Museum (ISM), founded in 1960 as the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, encourages visitors to discover Philadelphia's river of history and world of connections. Stewards of Cruiser Olympia and World War II-era Submarine Becuna, ISM is home to interactive and award-winning exhibitions, one of the largest collections of historic maritime artifacts in the world and a boatbuilding workshop. Accredited by the American Association of Museums since the 1970s, it is a premier, year-round destination on the Penn's Landing waterfront. Visit daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and see our full schedule of programs and events at phillyseaport.org.  Visit* [*https://www.phillyseaport.org/admissons-hours-of-operation/*](https://www.phillyseaport.org/admissons-hours-of-operation/) *to learn about ticket packages and guided tour options.*

*About The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage*

*The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is a multidisciplinary grant maker and hub for knowledge-sharing, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, dedicated to fostering a vibrant cultural community in Greater Philadelphia. The Center invests in ambitious, imaginative, and catalytic work that showcases the region’s cultural vitality and enhances public life, and engages in an exchange of ideas concerning artistic and interpretive practice with a broad network of cultural practitioners and leaders.*

*About William Penn Foundation*

*The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low-income families, ensure a sustainable environment, provide inclusive and equitable public spaces and arts and culture experiences, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region. Learn more at* [*www.williampennfoundation.org*](http://www.williampennfoundation.org)*.*

*About Naval History and Heritage Command*

*NHHC, located at the Washington Navy Yard, is responsible for preserving, analyzing, and disseminating U.S. naval history and heritage. It provides the knowledge foundation for the Navy by maintaining historically relevant resources and products that reflect the Navy's unique and enduring contributions through our nation's history and supports the fleet by assisting with and delivering professional research, analysis, and interpretive services. NHHC comprises many activities, including the Navy Department Library, the Navy Operational Archives, the Navy art and artifact collections, underwater archeology, Navy histories, ten museums, USS Constitution repair facility, and the historic ship Nautilus.*

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