

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Pamela Christensen, Library Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Phone: (906) 228-7434

Email: pamc@pwpl.info

IMLS Press Contact: Gina White, gwhite@imls.gov, 202-653-4745,

www.imls.gov/news/11610.shtm

PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY WINS HIGHEST NATIONAL HONOR

WASHINGTON D.C. (November 16, 2010) - Peter White Public Library of Marquette, Michigan has won the 2010 National Medal for Museum and Library Service from The Institute of Museum and Library Service (IMLS). IMLS has selected five museums and five libraries to receive the 2010 National Medal. The National Medal is the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries that make extraordinary civic, educational, economic, environmental, and social contributions.

"This year's National Medal winners are serving their communities with innovative and creative new approaches to lifelong learning, commitment to addressing diverse community needs, plain old hard work, and a lot of heart," said IMLS Acting Director Marsha L. Semmel. "Many of our winners have evolved and grown despite tremendous challenges – all to empower and enrich the lives of their community members by cultivating collaboration and openness. I am deeply appreciative of their efforts to make a difference. They serve as the nation's role models."

Peter White Public Library (PWPL) is a learning hub for Marquette's residents and boasts circulation and attendance figures that are three times higher than other libraries its size in Michigan. PWPL serves the City of Marquette and nine surrounding townships for a total service area of 36,145 people.

"For 120 years, the Peter White Public Library has provided quality library service to the residents of the Marquette area," states Toni Eppensteiner, PWPL Board of Trustees President. "Our customers know we strive to exceed expectations in meeting their needs. We are fortunate to have a strong network of partners, an excellent staff and technology to assist us in delivering more than our users expect. We are so pleased that the Institute of Museum and Library Service has recognized that the Peter White Public Library is exceptional by honoring us with the National Medal."

Through strategic partnerships and fundraising, PWPL provides programs to promote acceptance and engage people from all walks of life. The library's mission is to inform the community, and it does not retreat from sensitive topics. For example, *Fine Line*, photographer Michael Nye's powerful black and white portraits of people affected by mental illness, an overwhelming success, inspiring PWPL staff to create a three-month mental health series attracting health organizations as partners across Marquette.

The PWPL is also a huge advocate for the arts, strategically partnering with its building-mate, the City of Marquette Arts and Culture Center, to sponsor youth theater, festivals, and battle-of-the-bands shows. The creativity of Marquette's youth is encouraged while providing entertainment to the community.

- MORE -

**PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY
PRESS RELEASE
NOVEMBER 16, 2010
PAGE 2 OF 3**

As the primary source of federal funding for the nation's museums and libraries, the IMLS has a unique perspective on the vital role these institutions play in American society. The National Medal for Museum and Library Service was created to underscore that role. The winners are as diverse as the nation's cultural landscape: small and large, urban and rural. They have one thing in common: they have developed innovative ways to serve their communities. Winners of the 2010 National Medal for Museum and Library Service are:

- Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, Fishers, Indiana
- Explora, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles, California
- Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, Mississippi
- Nashville Public Library, Nashville, Tennessee
- The New York Botanical Garden, New York, New York
- Patchogue-Medford Library, Patchogue, New York
- Peter White Public Library, Marquette, Michigan
- Rangeview Library District and Anythink Libraries, Adams County, Colorado
- West Bloomfield Township Public Library, West Bloomfield Township, Michigan

In addition to the National Medal, which will be awarded in an upcoming Washington, D.C. ceremony, each institution receives a \$10,000 award and visit from Public Radio's StoryCorps. The winners of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service are selected each year by the Director of IMLS, following an open nomination process and based on the recommendations of the National Museum and Library Services Board.

U.S. Senator Carl Levin (MI) - "For all that it has done to bring the world to Marquette, the Peter White Public Library is deserving of this great award, giving it the recognition as one of the nation's top public libraries that it has earned. Marquette is fortunate to have this public library leader right in its own downtown, and it is clear from the library's data that residents are taking full advantage of this great resource. I applaud the library for its achievement and thank it for its service to the community."

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI) - "The Peter White Public Library of Marquette is a jewel of the community and truly merits the recognition of the 2010 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The library not only serves the City of Marquette but also nine surrounding townships, providing books for over 36,000 people. Their educational and musical programs create a venue where families can continue to enjoy the arts, and I am pleased that this award recognizes all of their hard-earned efforts."

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services - The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.imls.gov.

About the City of Marquette, Michigan - Marquette (Pop. 20,714) is nestled along the shoreline of Lake Superior in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Its rich history—throughout the 19th and 20th centuries it attracted immigrants from over 40 nations to work in the shipping, mining and timber industries—can be seen along the well-preserved streets of its downtown. The city's collection of magnificent red sandstone

- MORE -

**PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY
PRESS RELEASE
NOVEMBER 16, 2010
PAGE 3 OF 3**

situated to provide breathtaking views of the waterfront. The city boasts a total of 27 nationally and buildings now houses a dynamic array of retail shops, galleries, and restaurants, many of which are state- designated historic sites. Events at Northern Michigan University, which is located in Marquette, also contribute to the city's vibrancy. Among the noted gems in Marquette are a city park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, a nationally-recognized non-motorized use trail system and the world's largest wooden domed stadium.

The City of Marquette was recently named one of Forbes top five Best Cities to Raise a Family, 2010 Five-Star Top Performing Entrepreneurial Community, Bicycle Friendly Community Award – Bronze Level, National Trust for Historic Preservation Dozen Distinctive Destinations Fan Favorite, University of Michigan-Dearborn College of Business eCities 2009 Top Performing Entrepreneurial City, Michigan State Housing Development Authority 2004 Cool Cities Award, and the National Civic League 2003 All-American City.

###