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NEW SMITHSONIAN COLLECTING INITIATIVE COMES TO THE KANSAS CITY MUSEUM

(KANSAS CITY, Mo.) — The Kansas City Museum is one of ten partner organizations in the United States to participate in “Latinos and Baseball: In the Barrios and the Big Leagues,” a new multiyear collecting initiative launched by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History to identify artifacts that reflect the social and cultural influence of the game on Latino communities. The Kansas City Museum will host special events on Friday, August 12 and Saturday, August 13 at the Kansas City Museum and at Penn Valley Park to identify objects for the collections of the Kansas City Museum and the Smithsonian. A complete list of events may be found at <http://kcmo.gov/kansascitymuseum/latinos-and-baseball-in-the-barrios-and-the-big-leagues/>.

The Smithsonian’s collecting initiative seeks to document stories from the U.S. and Puerto Rico and to collect a number of objects that could include baseball equipment, stadium signs, game memorabilia, food vendor signs, home movies, period photographs, and more. Curators will select objects based on the stories they represent as well as insight into personal, community, and national narratives involving the national pastime. In addition to the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, other Smithsonian participation includes the Smithsonian Latino Center, Smithsonian Affiliations, and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture. The goal of the Smithsonian’s collecting initiative is to work towards the development of a traveling exhibition centered on Latinos and baseball by 2020.

“Baseball has played a major role in everyday American life since the 1800s, providing a means of celebrating both national and ethnic identities and building communities,” John Gray, Director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, said. “Through the lens of baseball, the Smithsonian seeks to illuminate the rich history and culture of Latinos and their impact on American culture and society.”

“Kansas City has long been a baseball town, and Latinos have had a tremendous role in the game. It is time to share their contributions with the nation,” Dr. Gene T. Chávez, Curator for the Kansas City Museum, said.

Kansas City Museum Executive Director Anna Marie Tuter said, “With Kansas City’s World Series status, the Kansas City Museum is proud to showcase Kansas City through this new partnership with the Smithsonian. Our 2015 exhibition, *Mexican American Fast Pitch Softball Leagues: Connecting Communities Across State Lines*, has inspired us to contribute local stories to a national narrative.”

(more)

BACKGROUND ON THE KANSAS CITY MUSEUM

Located at 3218 Gladstone Boulevard in the Historic Northeast community of Kansas City, Missouri, the Kansas City Museum is comprised of five original buildings, including the mansion Corinthian Hall, which was built in 1910 by Robert Alexander Long. The estate became a public museum in 1940. It is owned by the City of Kansas City, Missouri and operated and managed by the City of Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Department. The Collection contains more than 100,000 artifacts and several thousand more archival materials that interpret Kansas City's local and regional history.

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