



Arizona Museum for Youth

For Release: September 9, 2008
Contact: Latonya S. Jordan-Smith
Community Arts Coordinator
(480) 644-4129
latonya.smith@cityofmesa.org

News Release

Arizona Museum for Youth's Partnership with the City A Success. Presents \$110,000 Check to Mesa Mayor Scott Smith.

Mesa, AZ – September 9, 2008. "Arts and Culture breeds imagination, creativity, and renaissance into the humanity and development of the young minds of our society," says Sunnee Spencer, Executive Director of the Arizona Museum for Youth. "Art saves lives by allowing for true self expression. We support by offering experiences from birth onward."

Yet, the past couple of years have been a challenging reality for the arts and culture community, especially, for the Arizona Museum for Youth. The museum serves 70,000 visitors, annually, and has over 1,000 family-member households. This year was marked by the successful presentation of "Jim Henson's Fantastic World" to Valley residents and visitors. In fact, the interactives that our staff designed have actually been on display in Washington D.C. at the renowned Smithsonian International Gallery. Still, as necessary budget crunches have taken place in the city, the museum has found it difficult, at times, to keep pace with the community's growing need for increased services and programs.

In response, the Arizona Museum for Youth Friends, Inc. [AMYF], a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the museum, has risen to meet the financial challenge of raising over \$300,00, annually, to replace 50% of the \$635,000 cut from the budget in 2005.

"We're proud to be a financial partner with the City of Mesa and share in the success and posterity of the Arizona Museum for Youth," remarks AMFY Board Chair Deb Dahl. "The development of our youth is pivotal to the heartbeat of our society. We feel it necessary to keep the museum's hours of service broad enough to meet the communities' needs. Our commitment helps to support that effort."

Tuesday marked AMYF's successful achievement in raising the more than \$100,000 it committed to support the museum's efforts and city budget. Exactly **\$109,563.36** was presented to Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, which is the second of two installments for 2007-2008.

"Thanks to AMYF, the museum will continue to be at the forefront in sowing into today's youth, the reflections of our past and the possibilities of tomorrow," says Spencer.

AMYF has already begun tackling the task of raising \$150K for the next six months to sustain its impact on the lives of children and families in the community. If you or your organization is interested in ways you can contribute to the Arizona Museum for Youth, please contact Lindsay Hochhalter at 480.644.5564, Darlene Zajda at 480.644.3689 or visit us online at <http://www.arizonamuseumforyouth.com>.

The Arizona Museum for Youth (AMY) is a fine arts museum for children and families and serves as a terrific place to introduce life-changing art. The museum hosts 6 world-class exhibitions, annually, and features ArtVille, a special art township for kids under 4 years of age. As part of the exhibitions, a dynamic array of art classes, fun workshops, and family programs are available to teach basic art principles and techniques. Located at 35 N.

Robson in downtown Mesa, AMY is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. AMY is closed most government holidays. Please visit www.arizonamuseumforyouth.com or call 480.644.2467 for current information.

“Inspiring children of all ages to view the world differently through art, creativity and imagination.”

Photo Opp Details:

Date: 9/9/08

Time: 2-2:15pm

Location: Lobby of the Arizona Museum for Youth | 35 N. Robson St | Mesa, AZ 85201

Contact: Latonya S. Jordan-Smith, Community Arts Coordinator | Arizona Museum for Youth | 480.644.4129 | Latonya.Smith@cityofmesa.org

Attendees:

Mayor Scott Smith, City of Mesa

Johann Zietsman, Mesa Arts Center Executive Director

Karolyn Kent, Deputy City Manager for the City of Mesa

Deb Dahl, Board Chair for the Arizona Museum for Youth Friends, Inc.

Sunnee Spencer, Executive Director of the Arizona Museum for Youth

Beth Bartholow, Senior Business Manager of the Arizona Museum for Youth

Scott Jochim, Technology Officer for the Arizona Museum for Youth Friends, Inc.

Lindsay Hochhalter, Development Assistant of the Arizona Museum for Youth Friends, Inc.

Gary Selinger, Gallery Educator for the Arizona Museum for Youth

Sarah Hobbs, Gallery Educator for the Arizona Museum for Youth