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First Americans Museum announces 2023 Tribal Nation Gala Honorees

OKLAHOMA CITY (May 18, 2023) – First Americans Museum (FAM), an award-winning institution dedicated to sharing the collective stories of the 39 Tribal Nations in Oklahoma today, is thrilled to announce its second annual FAM Tribal Nations Gala scheduled for Friday, September 15, 2023. The Gala will be held at FAM in the Hall of The People from 6-9 p.m. The gala is a fundraiser benefitting ongoing operations, education and museum programming at FAM.

This momentous occasion will pay tribute to individuals who have made significant contributions to their respective Tribal nations, FAM, and the broader community. This year’s honorees are as follows:

- Gregg Wadley (Choctaw) will receive the Distinguished Service Award, acknowledging his remarkable dedication and significant contributions to promoting indigenous arts and culture.

- The Honorable Frank Keating and Former First Lady Cathy Keating will be honored with the Community Partner Award, celebrating their unwavering support and advocacy for First American communities, culture, and arts.

- Bill Glass Jr. and Demos Glass (Cherokee Nation) will receive the Creative Native Award, acknowledging their exceptional artistic contributions and commitment to preserving Cherokee heritage through their captivating artwork.
• Henrietta Mann, Ph.D. (Cheyenne) will be presented with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her lifelong dedication and pioneering work in advancing Indigenous education and cultural preservation.

• James Anquoe Sr. (Kiowa) will be presented with the Cultural Leadership Award, recognizing his outstanding efforts in promoting and preserving Native American cultural traditions and fostering community engagement.

Sponsorship packages are available now. Contact Jillian Helsley at jillianh@famok.org or J. Blake Wade at 405-919-2700 for more details. Sponsors are also able to visit famok.org/famgala2023/ to register. Tickets for the FAM Tribal Nations Gala will be priced at $200 per person and will go on sale on July 1, 2023.

This year’s theme and graphic design uplifts the artwork by Bill Glass Jr. and Demos glass (Cherokee National treasures) who created Touch to above and The Four Elements located in the entry courtyard at FAM. This inaugural art is a project of the Oklahoma Art Council’s Art in Public Places program in cooperation with Native American Cultural and Educational Authority at First Americans Museum.

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About First Americans Museum
The mission of FAM is to educate the broader public about the unique cultures, diversity, history, and contributions of the 39 Tribal Nations in Oklahoma today. FAM showcases state-of-the-art exhibitions in history, culture, and art; live public and education programs; a full-service restaurant presenting unique Native inspired cuisine; and a museum store featuring one-of-a-kind hand-made items created by Oklahoma’s premier Native American artists.