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**Heritage museum kicks off adult education series with
interactive panel on public service**

OKLAHOMA CITY – The development of a free field trip program, Oklahoma history curriculum for the classroom and summer camps promoting pride in young Oklahomans have engaged thousands of under-18 participants in the mission of the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum and parent organization, the Oklahoma Heritage Association. But educational programming geared to an adult audience has been missing from the Museum and Association’s repertoire – until now.

A panel featuring Oklahoma business and government leaders discussing public service will kick off the Museum’s newest program series – the Oklahoma Institute – on Oct. 14.

“The Oklahoma Institute will provide engaging, interactive experiences through which community members can gain a greater understanding of our state’s history and future, as well as meet some of the people who’ve made Oklahoma what it is today,” said Shannon Nance, president of the Association and Museum. “Programming will be geared to an adult audience from young professionals to established community leaders.”

Titled *Public service in Oklahoma: A panel on championing community engagement*, the Oklahoma Institute’s first interactive panel will feature: Clayton I. Bennett, president of Dorchester Capital, a diversified private investment company, and chairman of the Professional Basketball Club, owner of the Thunder—Oklahoma City new NBA franchise; Kathy Taylor, current Tulsa mayor and former secretary of commerce and tourism, Mickey Edwards, former Oklahoma Congressman, author and lecturer; and John Tyler Hammons, current Muskogee mayor and one of the youngest mayors elected in United States history.

Moderator Renzi Stone will present questions from the audience to the panelists, giving participants the opportunity to make the experience their own.

“Though the panelists will each spend time discussing their own public service, the majority of the event will be question and answer between the audience and panelists,” said Nance. “We want each participant to feel that they’ve gotten to spend some quality time with these individuals and that they’ve had a chance to really pick their brains about topics they are interested in learning more about.”

The panel will be held on Oct. 14 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Kerr-McGee Auditorium at Oklahoma City University. Tickets are \$50 for members of the Association and Museum and \$75 for non-members. Seating is limited; to purchase tickets or sponsorships, contact Corie Baker

at 405.523.3212 or clb@oklahomaheritage.com. Three universities across the state – Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Enid, Cameron University in Lawton and OSU-Tulsa – will broadcast the panel via satellite.

The Oklahoma Heritage Association preserves Oklahoma's unique history and inspires pride in the state. Through each of its programs and the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum, named Oklahoma's best new attraction by the Department of Tourism and Recreation, the Association strives to tell Oklahoma's story through its people. To learn more about the Oklahoma Institute, Association or Museum, visit www.oklahomaheritage.com.

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