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The Mariners' Museum and Park Named Recipient of 2024 IMLS National Leadership Grants for Museums

NEWPORT NEWS, VA—The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) announced that The Mariners' Museum and Park is a recipient of the 2024 National Leadership Grants for Museums. This award provides \$654,308 to support groundbreaking research within The Mariners' Batten Conservation Complex, benefiting the broader museum field and addressing a conservation field-wide need for the development of improved treatment options for waterlogged organic materials, such as wood, leather, and textiles, excavated from maritime archaeological sites.

"I'm excited about the work we will be undertaking with this grant," said Mariners' Research Scientist Molly McGath, PhD. "The removal of embedded chemicals that degrade our archaeological objects is a major undertaking for Conservation and Conservation Science. Specifically archaeological objects made from wood, textiles, and other organic materials don't often survive, so what we have is treasured."

The Mariners' is also expanding the Batten Conservation Complex's analytical capabilities through this grant by purchasing a Scanning Electron Microscope. "This instrument will allow us to visualize our objects on a scale approaching the molecular level, increasing our understanding of the materials our objects are made from and how they have aged," said McGath. "This knowledge will help us improve the objects' conservation and learn about the people who made and used them."

The team will be bringing on two new and emerging scientists to focus on this project, providing them with a rare opportunity to work with archaeological cultural heritage objects. The project goal is to develop a new conservation technique for the removal of sulfur from organic objects excavated from underwater archaeological sites prior to the conclusion of conservation treatment.

To see the full list of grant recipients and learn more about the awarded projects, visit the [IMLS website](#). For interview requests or more information about The Mariners' Museum and Park and the awarded project, media should contact Senior Director of Advancement Sabrina Jones at sjones@MarinersMuseum.org or (757) 591-7708.

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 libraries and museums. We advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. IMLS envisions a nation where individuals and communities have access to museums and libraries to learn from and be inspired by the

trusted information, ideas, and stories they contain about our diverse natural and cultural heritage. To learn more, visit www.ims.gov.

About The Mariners' Museum and Park

The Mariners' Museum and Park connects people to the world's waters because through the water – through our shared maritime heritage – we are connected to one another. The organization is an educational, private 501(c)(3) nonprofit institution accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and preserves and interprets maritime history through an international collection of ship models, figureheads, paintings, and other maritime artifacts. The Mariners' Museum is home to the USS *Monitor* Center, and is surrounded by the 550-acre Mariners' Park, the largest privately owned and maintained park that is free and open to the public in North America. The Mariners' Museum Library is the largest maritime library in the Western hemisphere. Because of the Museum's world-class collection and its reputation for high-level exhibits and programs, in 1998, the U.S. Congress designated The Mariners' Museum as one of only two maritime museums that comprise America's National Maritime Museum. The Museum galleries are open to the general public with \$1 admission, and the Mariners' team will continue to offer FREE virtual programs for those who prefer to engage online with us or through our social media platforms and blog posts. The Mariners' Park and Noland Trail is open for daily use. For additional information, visit MarinersMuseum.org, call (757) 596-2222 or write to The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606.

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