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**INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES FORMALIZES
PARTNERSHIP WITH SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION**

Formal signing ceremony, Jan. 28

SAN ANTONIO – The Institute of Texan Cultures has been accepted into the Smithsonian Affiliations program and will formalize the agreement at a signing ceremony on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 at 10 a.m.

As a Smithsonian Affiliate, the Institute of Texan Cultures will receive access to artifacts, education and performing arts programs, expert speakers as well as teacher workshops, along with resources to complement and broaden exhibitions.

UTSA President Ricardo Romo and Institute Executive Director Tim Gette, along with Harold A. Closter, director of Smithsonian Affiliations, will address Smithsonian officials, local civic leaders, UTSA personnel and friends of the Institute at the ceremony.

“The Smithsonian has a long and proud relationship with the ITC, going back to 1972 during the first Texas Folklife Festival and continuing right up to the present,” said Closter. “We are confident that the Affiliate relationship will enhance the work that both of our organizations are doing to understand, interpret and display the wonderful and diverse traditions of the American people.”

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Smithsonian Affiliation

Add one of two

“The Smithsonian Institution is synonymous with world class teaching and learning through its exhibits, programs and outreach and it is an honor to be included in the company of this national treasure,” said UTSA President Ricardo Romo.

The Smithsonian Affiliations program shares the rich knowledge of the Smithsonian Institution with a broader audience, adhering to the Smithsonian’s highest aesthetic, intellectual and professional standards. The program aspires to create experiences and opportunities to broaden perspectives on science, history, world cultures and the arts — goals that are directly compatible with the mission of UTSA and the Institute of Texan Cultures, as outlined in the university’s “UTSA 2016: A Shared Vision” strategic plan.

“It is a great privilege to enter into this affiliation,” said Gette. “I had the good fortune of establishing Smithsonian Affiliations at the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Dallas Museum of Natural History and the partnership impacted both museums in a very positive way. Now, we at the Institute are honored to have this opportunity to bring some of the greatest treasures and knowledge of our nation to the state of Texas.”

“As UTSA moves toward becoming a national research university, this affiliation helps propel the Institute of Texan Cultures onto the national stage as well,” said Romo, “With the opportunity to host traveling Smithsonian exhibits, the Institute will make the rich Smithsonian cultural experience available to many people who otherwise may never have the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C.”

The signing ceremony, 10 a.m. at the Zachry Flag Plaza, is the first event in a day of activities at the Institute. At 2 p.m., there will be a United States Immigration and

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Naturalization Services Naturalization Ceremony. Later in the evening, the Institute will celebrate the opening of its new traveling exhibits gallery. The first exhibit in this new area, "RACE: Are We So Different?" created by the Science Museum of Minnesota, in collaboration with the American Anthropological Association, explores the science, history, and everyday experience of race perceptions.

The Smithsonian partnership allows the Institute an opportunity to offer our institutional members a Smithsonian membership – two memberships in one. Benefits include a one-year subscription to *Smithsonian Magazine*, discounts at the Smithsonian and ITC museum stores, unlimited general admission at the ITC for two adults and children living in the household, invitations to members-only ITC events, discounts on Asian Festival and Texas Folklife Festival tickets, and more.

The Institute of Texan Cultures is located on the UTSA HemisFair Park Campus, 801 E. Durango Blvd., a short distance from the Alamo and the River Walk. Regular hours are 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday; noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$8 for adults (12-64); \$7 for seniors (65+); \$6 for children (3-11); free with membership, UTSA or Alamo Colleges identification. For additional information, call (210) 458-2300 or visit TexanCultures.com.

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The Institute of Texan Cultures is an agency of the Vice President for Community Services at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). The mission of the institute is to engage lifelong learners in the understanding and celebration of Texas cultural heritage. Located on the UTSA HemisFair Park Campus in downtown San Antonio, the 182,000-square-foot complex features 65,000 square feet of interactive exhibits and displays that tell the stories of Texans. The institute develops quality, accessible resources for educators and lifelong learners on topics of cultural heritage and strives to develop a rich and vibrant culture in the arts and humanities that will expand the community's awareness and appreciation of Texas through an engaging series of exhibits, programs, and special events. Resources for multiple audiences are available at the institute's Web site, TexanCultures.com.