



Media Invitation

Date: 22nd October 2021

Nelson Mandela Museum, Michigan State University Museum and U.S. Consulate General to unveil newly curated *“Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks: Children’s Letters, Global Lessons”*

Mthatha, South Africa- The United States Consulate General in Cape Town, South Africa, Michigan State University Museum and Nelson Mandela Museum will officially unveil the newly curated *“Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks: Children’s Letters, Global Lessons”*. The newly curated exhibition will be officially unveiled at the Nelson Mandela Museum Bhunga Building site in Mthatha, Corner Owen Street and Nelson Mandela Drive. The launch will take place on the 27th of October 2021 at 15h00.

The newly curated exhibition will be unveiled by the Chairperson of the Museum Council Dr Songelwa, Ms. Ndileka Mandela of Thembekile Mandela Foundation and Acting Public Affairs Officer, Ms. Jehan Jones-Radgowski

The newly curated *Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks: Children’s Letters, Global Lessons,*” has been funded by a grant from the United States Consulate General in Cape Town to the Nelson Mandela Museum in Mthatha, South Africa. The grant was utilized to update the popular traveling exhibition, *“Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks: Children’s Letters, Global Lessons,”* that was first created in 2008 by the Nelson Mandela Museum in partnership with the Michigan State University Museum to honor Mr. Mandela’s 90th birthday. The original version of the exhibition has since been touring to museums and cultural venues in South Africa and there is a waiting list for the new refreshed version.

The U.S. federal grant is designed to strengthen ties between the U.S. and South Africa through projects that promote shared histories and highlight shared values, goals, and cooperation. The grant further supported the creation of a new online version of the exhibition and the development of associated educational materials.

"The United States Consulate General in Cape Town has had a long friendship with the Nelson Mandela Museum, and we have been impressed with their work over the years. We are therefore thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate on this project, which creatively illustrates the enduring relevance of the human

rights principals espoused by President Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks. In addition, we have been pleased with how this project has strengthened relationships between the Mandela Museum and several American institutions, including Michigan State University and the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute," - Will Stevens, Acting Consul General at the U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town.

MSU Museum curator, C. Kurt Dewhurst, one of the project team members and one of the exhibit's original organizers views "*Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks: Children's Letters, Global Lessons,*" travelling exhibition as an exhibition inspired by hundreds of children around the world who have written letters to the late Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks. Mr. Mandela and Mrs. Parks are internationally known for their work in human rights.

"The exhibit encourages visitors--especially youth--to understand and be tolerant of diverse cultures and traditions, become aware of the ongoing struggle for human rights around the world, and honor individuals in their own families and communities who--like Mandela and Parks--have contributed, in large and small ways, to making a better world," MSU Museum curator, C. Kurt Dewhurst.

"The exhibit highlights two remarkable individuals who dedicated their lives to human rights and did so with great sacrifice. Both individuals are important examples of how individuals can make a real difference in the world, " said Marsha MacDowell, MSU Museum curator.

"It is an honour and privilege to be associated with the United States Consulate Cape Town offices and the Michigan State University. The newly curated travelling exhibition will help enhance existing synergies between Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela. This exhibition will further strengthen existing relations between the museum and its International partners.

"I would further extend our words of gratitude to the Mind Builders (New York City); the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute (Detroit/Washington); O Street Museum (Washington); City College of New York (New York City); Robben Island Museum (Cape Town); Stellenbosch University Museum (Stellenbosch); and MSU University Outreach and Engagement for their contribution towards the expansion of this Exhibition," said Nelson Mandela Museum CEO Bonke Tyhulu.

Media is invited to attend

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