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Heart of Los Angeles Awarded National Endowment for the Humanities Grant for Public Exhibitions Project Examining History of Lafayette Park

For Immediate Release: May 4, 2021

LOS ANGELES, CA - A prestigious National Endowment for the Humanities grant has been awarded to Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), in partnership with the University of California Los Angeles' (UCLA) cityLAB, the Los Angeles Public Library and multi-disciplinary curator Hannah Kim Varamini, to lead the creation of a project called "Reflections in Lafayette: Reimagining an Urban Oasis." The project will be composed of three temporary exhibitions within a neglected garden behind the historic Felipe de Neve Library in Lafayette Park, with public programs examining the park's history. The goals of this project include creating a platform for artists/curators, scholars, and community members to come together for free high-caliber humanities-themed educational programs in a neighborhood that has historically had very limited access to such resources. Through these exhibitions, HOLA and its community partners aim to provide the local community with the opportunity to learn about, remember, celebrate and contribute to the future narratives of their neighborhood. Planning stages for the project begin this month in May of 2021, during which the Project team will host community focus groups to introduce the project to the community and garner input and participation in the design of the Project.

"Safe communal greenspace and accessible quality arts programming are essential. With the support of NEH and in partnership with UCLA cityLAB and Los Angeles Public Libraries, HOLA will reinvigorate a neglected garden in the middle of our City. This artist-driven, collaborative project will explore various historical narratives through three site-specific exhibitions, along with unique public programming. We are thrilled to create opportunities to welcome the community back to this historic oasis to explore its evolution through the lenses of art and history." - Nara Hernandez, Visual Arts Program Director at Heart of Los Angeles

"We at cityLAB/coLAB are incredibly excited to participate in this important collaborative project with HOLA and the Felipe de Neve Public Library. Excavating and reclaiming the forgotten social and cultural histories of Lafayette Park and expressing those histories through art forms and educational programs will engage the community and provide a new vision for Lafayette Park. This vision will reflect the diversity of people's experiences in the Westlake neighborhood." - Gustavo Leclerc, Associate Director of cityLAB/Urban Humanities Initiative

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For additional information and to schedule interviews with any of the parties listed in this press release, please contact Janel Pineda, HOLA's Communications and Marketing Coordinator at jdpineda@heartofla.org or (213) 389-1148 x 243.

About Heart of Los Angeles: HOLA provides underserved youth with free, exceptional programs in academics, arts and athletics within a nurturing environment, empowering them to develop their potential, pursue their education and strengthen their communities. During its three decades of serving this community, HOLA has grown to serve 2,100 youth each year through innovative and transformational afterschool programs, has a 91-member staff and a professional and dedicated volunteer corps of over 300. Throughout its tenure, and even now in the midst of the current pandemic, HOLA has continued to adapt and develop its programs and services in response to the growing and changing needs of the community. Learn more at: www.heartofla.org



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About the NEH: Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: www.neh.gov.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this press release do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.