

Agenda Item			
Information/Action	Board Meeting Date	Regular/Executive Meeting	Agenda Item No.
Information	January 22, 2009	Regular	3.1

### **SUBJECT**

Freedom's Sisters Essay Contest Winners

# **CONTACT PERSON**

Mary Mijares, Marketing Manager, 264-2900

# **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Information only.

# **BACKGROUND**

The Sacramento Public Library hosted the *Freedom's Sisters* exhibition, a compelling interactive exhibition developed by the Cincinnati Museum Center, prepared for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), and funded by the Ford Motor Company Fund. The exhibition, which was on view at the Central Library from October 25, 2008 through January 4, 2009, presented an up-close look at a select group of twenty extraordinary African American women, both historic and living, who fought for freedom and changed the course of history.

The Sacramento Public Library had the honor of being the only West Coast venue to host the exhibition as it began its three-year nationwide tour, and is the only public library to be included among the many illustrious museums where it will be showcased.

The Ford Motor Company Fund, the philanthropic arm of the Ford Motor Company, and the Smithsonian Institution Community Grant program provided funds to support the presentation of the exhibition, for collateral programs for audiences of all ages at the Central Library and library branches, for essay contest awards, and for various operational expenses directly related to hosting the exhibition.

### FREEDOM'S SISTERS EXHIBIT REPORT

The *Freedom's Sisters* exhibition attracted 16,450 guests to the Central Library over a ten-week period. The audience was multi-generational and demographically diverse. The exhibition was extraordinarily successful in attracting African American families.

There were twenty formal tours of the exhibit, including groups from local schools, churches, and civic organizations. To support the themes of the exhibition, sixteen programs were presented in library branches, which attracted 480 attendees. Special programs scheduled in two area elementary schools, featuring an award-winning African American children's author, were enjoyed by 600 students.



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The library established a local community *Freedom's Sisters* planning committee that assisted in guiding the direction of the programming, was instrumental in promoting the exhibition to selected constituencies, agencies and organizations, coordinated various programs, helped host the gala opening reception, and participated in the essay contest judging. The members of the local planning committee included: Bonnie Bane, Carol Border, Patricia Canterbury, Vincene Jones, Bertha King, Pat Sandefur, Mardres Story, Jazelle Thomas, and Tommi R. Whitlowe. The *Freedom's Sisters* library project coordinators were Mary Mijares and Susan Benson.

#### FREEDOM'S SISTERS ESSAY CONTEST

A key component of the *Freedom's Sisters* exhibition was an essay contest that invited students in the fourth to eighth grades to submit essays answering the questions, "Who is Your Favorite Freedom Sister and why? What are you doing to continue her legacy?

The prizes are U.S. Savings bonds in the following amounts: 1<sup>st</sup> place: \$5,000; 2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$2,500; 3<sup>rd</sup> place: \$1,000; and three honorable mentions - \$500 each. Five of the winners are from Sacramento and one resides in Maryland.

The students who won the *Freedom's Sisters* essay contest are: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Mariah Thompson, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Bret Harte Elementary (Harriet Tubman); 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Morgan Parker, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Phyllis E. Williams Elementary School, Largo, Maryland (Ida B. Wells); 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Zaria Watkins, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Gloria Dei Lutheran School (Ida B. Wells); Honorable Mentions: Justine Cortez, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Samuel Jackman Middle School (Mary McLeod Bethune); Brittany Joe, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Horizon Charter School (Harriet Tubman); and Kymberly Chann, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Matsuyama Elementary School (Septima Poinsette Clark).

<b>FUTURE BOARD ACTIONS</b>		
None		
FISCAL IMPACT		
None		
POLICY ISSUES		
None		
Approved By	Prepared By	
Phil Batchelor	Mary Mijares	_
Interim Library Director	Marketing Manager	