

National Gallery of Art News Release



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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART HONORS OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS

Washington, D.C. -- Jorge Luis Somarriba and Patricia E. Mitchell of the District of Columbia received special scholarships to the National Teachers Institute held July 14-21, 1991 at the National Gallery of Art, as part of its year-long 50th anniversary celebrations. They were among 114 scholarship recipients, representing each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, each of the U.S. Territories and U.S. Department of Defense Dependents Schools. The 50th anniversary scholars represented a wide variety of disciplines, experience, and administrative levels and were recognized for their outstanding contributions to arts education in their respective schools. They were selected by the chief school officer of their jurisdictions.

The special scholarship session of the Teacher Institute was made possible by generous support from the Hearst Foundation and The Circle of the National Gallery of Art.

The National Teacher Institute was initiated at the National Gallery three years ago to provide teachers with information about the visual arts and their cultural contexts and to expand existing resources for art education.

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The Teachers Institute follows the conviction that the finest teachers are those who know their discipline fully and keep up-to-date in their subjects, thereby maintaining the excitement, inspiration, and creativity that excellent teaching demands.

The topic for this year's Institute was the European Renaissance, focusing on the National Gallery's outstanding collection of Italian and northern European art. Participating teachers and administrators attended lectures, gallery tours, technique demonstrations, curriculum discussions, sessions on resource materials and funding opportunities, and a musical performance. In addition, they explored the Renaissance art collections of the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore and examined manuscripts and early printed books at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. On Thursday, July 18, all scholars were honored at a Congressional Reception at the Gallery.

A primary goal of the 50th Anniversary Scholarship program is to establish a national network of educators who integrate the visual arts into their classrooms. In an effort to involve other art institutions in this network, the Gallery is conducting a national survey of museums to discover which institutions provide teaching materials and teacher enrichment programs for their local jurisdictions.

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The survey information will be available to educators through a national directory. Some scholars expressed an interest in a computerized network which could quickly disseminate information on cultural resources.

There was agreement among the scholars that participation of administrators in addition to teachers would serve to heighten the impact of teacher training programs such as the National Gallery of Art's Teacher Institute. Scholars thought that the administrators' input was valuable because they set standards, control budgets, and are often in the best position to advocate quality education programs within an interdisciplinary curriculum.

Two regular sessions of the Teacher Institute were also held this summer for teachers across the nation who have been selected through an application process.

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Please find enclosed information about the scholarship recipients from your state. For further information, please call the Education department at (202) 842-6796 or (202) 842-6751.