



News Release

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Editor's Note: Test image is available at www.rit.edu/news/pics/museum.jpg

RIT Heads to the Nation's Capital for its 25th Big Shot Photography Project, Sept. 26

Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian is subject of photograph

A longtime Rochester Institute of Technology event that highlights the spirit of community and volunteerism while generating a spectacular nighttime photograph heads to Washington, D.C., next month.

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian will be the subject of RIT's 25th Big Shot photograph on Saturday, Sept. 26. The Big Shot photography project relies on the participation of hundreds of volunteers to provide the primary light source for the image while photographers shoot an extended exposure. Past Big Shot projects have attracted up to 1,200 volunteers. Faculty members from RIT's School of Photographic Arts and Sciences and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf are the main organizers of the event.

RIT students, faculty, staff and alumni will join the Washington, D.C., community and museum members in this volunteer effort. **Volunteers will meet outside the museum at 7:45 p.m. There is no pre-registration required. Volunteers need to bring either a flashlight or camera flash unit and are asked to wear dark clothing. Participants will receive a memento print of the final photograph compliments of Nikon Inc.**

The museum will be the subject of the Big Shot photograph with the Washington Monument in the background. The National Museum of the American Indian is celebrating the fifth anniversary of its opening on the National Mall, which is located just south of the U.S. Capitol. The unique architecture of the building is the culmination of many discussions and meetings with Native communities and individuals throughout the Western hemisphere. The museum's unique curvilinear design evokes the mesas and canyons of the Southwest and gives the appearance of being weathered by wind and water. The exterior is clad in a Kasota limestone quarried from Minnesota and is a warm buff color that has several finishes to suggest the building grew out of the landscape.

"I can't think of a more fun way to celebrate," says Kevin Gover (Pawnee/Comanche), director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. "I hope everyone in the Washington Metropolitan area shows up and participates."

RIT faculty and students, including those of Native American descent, are looking forward to participating in this milestone event. Jason Younker (Coquille Indian Tribe), assistant to the provost for Native American Relations and RIT assistant professor of anthropology, says the Big Shot will be one of the highlights of his academic career.

"The Big Shot will recognize the contributions of Native Americans both past and present," adds Younker. "It will bring together current and former students from RIT and emphasize the university's commitment to indigenous peoples of North America. For the Big Shot to be held at the Smithsonian's Museum of the American Indian is significant and will certainly be a pinnacle for this RIT tradition."

Since RIT started its Big Shot project in 1987, the event has hopped to several national landmarks and twice crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Through their viewfinders, Big Shot photographers have captured such landmarks as the U.S.S. Intrepid, the Royal Palace in Stockholm, Sweden, and George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film, while drawing in thousands of volunteers and spectators throughout the past two decades.

"For me the project is about challenges, teamwork and community. At our very first Big Shot at Rochester's Highland Hospital in 1987 we had about 35 people come out in below-freezing temperatures," says Dawn Tower DuBois, professor at RIT's National Technical Institute for the Deaf and one of the Big Shot organizers. "Last year, The Big Shot along the historic Erie Canal drew a crowd of about 700 people. The community response is really something special."

Anyone is welcome to participate in the Big Shot event. There will be a reception at the museum immediately following the making of the photograph. To register for the reception, visit www.rit.edu/alumni/bigshot09. To learn more about the project and view photographs of past Big Shot photos, go to www.rit.edu/bigshot.

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