



ARIZONA-SONORA  
DESERT  
MUSEUM

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM ANNOUNCES GRANT FROM THE NINA MASON PULLIAM CHARITABLE TRUST

**Tucson, AZ – June 1, 2015** The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum has received a grant totaling \$300,000 from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust.

This significant award from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust will support the creation of “*Hidden in the Midden*,” a new conservation exhibition and education program at the Desert Museum. “*Hidden in the Midden*,” an artificial, human-sized packrat midden, is a project that will allow individuals and families with children a fun, hands-on, applied learning experience. This exhibit and learning space is a natural extension of the Museum’s existing award-winning Desert Loop Trail and will deepen the interpretive learning experience in this core area of the Museum grounds.

Packrats build middens, large messy “houses,” woven from sticks and cactus parts which are also home to geckos, snakes, kissing bugs, Gila monsters, and many other inhabitants of the Sonoran Desert region. By studying their content scientists can determine what plants and animals existed thousands of years ago.

“We are both grateful and honored to receive this grant from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust,” said Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Executive Director Craig Ivanyi. “Their support will enable the Desert Museum to develop learning tools that not only provide multi-faceted natural history and science learning, but also provide an evidence-based opportunity to foster understanding of conservation and the interdependence of all living things.”

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During her career, Nina Mason Pulliam shared her financial success and business leadership skills with many charities. She was particularly sensitive to human needs, animal welfare and environmental issues. "She had a keen awareness of challenges that face our community and would take great pride in the outstanding work being done by organizations like the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum," said Carol Schilling, Trustee chairman. "Through her Trust, we continue to build on her legacy which clearly reflects her heart for philanthropy."

The grant to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum represents one of 23 awarded to nonprofit organizations in Arizona by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust during the first of two grant cycles this year. Since the Trust began its grant making in 1998, it has awarded more than \$121 million to 443 nonprofit organizations in Arizona.

The Trust also makes grants in Indiana, and as of April 30, 2015, had assets of approximately \$390 million. Visit [www.ninapulliamtrust.org](http://www.ninapulliamtrust.org).

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#### About The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum founded in 1952, is one of the nation's leading outdoor, living museums, featuring more than 230 animals and 1,200 varieties of desert plants. Its purpose is to inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world by fostering love, appreciation, and understanding of the bi-national, Sonoran Desert region. The Museum is located at 20121 North Kinney Road, in Tucson Mountain Park adjacent to Saguaro National Park (West). It is open daily year round with operating hours varying by season. Call (520) 883-2702 or visit [www.desertmuseum.org](http://www.desertmuseum.org) for more information.