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## **HEIDI MARQUEZ SMITH NAMED NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST**

AUSTIN, TX –Heidi Marquez Smith, an accomplished non-profit leader and experienced public servant, was named as the new Executive Director of the Texas Cultural Trust, a statewide arts advocacy organization that promotes the importance of the arts in education and economic impact. Smith’s years leading the state’s most respected literary arts organization, the Texas Book Festival, as well as her experience working at the highest levels of government at the White House, make her the ideal person to lead the Trust and promote the arts on both a state and national level.

“What makes Heidi the perfect fit for the Trust is her many years of experience in our nation’s capital combined with her leadership of a statewide arts non-profit, The Texas Book Festival,” says Judy Robison of El Paso, Board Chair of the Texas Cultural Trust. “Heidi understands just how critical the arts are to our state’s economy and our children’s education. We are very pleased to have her join our team.”

“As a long-time, passionate advocate for literacy and the arts, I am thrilled to be part of an organization that promotes the vital role of the arts in education and actively supports our State’s many talented artists and educators,” said Smith. “I look forward to advancing the work of the Trust to build awareness of the quantifiable impact of art in the classroom and the Texas economy, and the important role of the arts in building a competitive workforce for the future of our State.”

Most recently a Principal at Marquez Smith Consulting, she worked with non-profits to advance their mission through development and strategy. She previously served as the Executive Director of the Texas Book Festival for more than five years. Prior to that, she lived and worked in Washington DC, where she served as Special Assistant to the President for Cabinet Liaison in the White House.

Marquez Smith is active in the Austin community and currently serves on the Texas Lyceum (director), Texas Book Festival Board of Directors, St. David’s Foundation - Toast of the Town Committee, Dell Children’s Trust, and volunteers with various local organizations, including Eanes Elementary School, Hill Country Middle School, Eanes Education Foundation, Pop-Up Birthday, City of Rollingwood, and LBJ Library.

Incoming Board Chair, Linda LaMantia of Laredo said, “Heidi possesses that unique set of skills needed to successfully lead the Texas Cultural Trust. Her extensive experience with a statewide non-profit like the Texas Book Festival, her in-depth knowledge of public policy and advocacy, plus her energy and passion for education and the arts left no doubt that she is the right choice for our organization.”

### **ABOUT THE TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST**

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to be the leading voice for the arts in education, advocacy, and economic impact in Texas, spotlighting the artistic excellence of our state. Programs of the Texas Cultural Trust include the biennial Texas Medal of Arts Awards, Texas Women for the Arts, the Texas Young Masters Program, the Arts & Digital Literacy Initiative, the *Invest in the Arts. The Arts Perform* Legislative Campaign, and the Art Can Initiative. The Trust also supports the programs of the Texas Commission on the Arts and other qualifying state agencies. **Since 2008, the Texas Cultural Trust has invested more than \$3.8 million into arts awareness and education, bringing the total investment to more than \$5.5 million.** For more information, visit [www.txculturaltrust.org](http://www.txculturaltrust.org)

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