



# City of Houston

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Mayor's Office  
Media Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Mayor announces national honor society's award to Houston for arts and sciences engagement**

**HOUSTON** - Mayor Sylvester Turner announced today that the City of Houston will receive the Arts & Sciences Cities of Distinction Award from the Phi Beta Kappa Society in recognition of the quality, depth, range and vibrancy of its community engagement with the arts and sciences.

Debbie McNulty, director of the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, will accept the award on the city's behalf during a ceremony at the Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston on April 17, 2018.

"Creative, vibrant and strong cities serve residents best—and they are attractive to tourists, investors in industry and innovators. In turn, they generate employment opportunities, expand the tax-base and generally add to the real wealth of the community," said Mayor Turner. "My Office of Cultural Affairs is focused on ensuring the City's investments celebrate all of Houston's artists, cultures and communities as we move forward as a more inclusive city."

The national award acknowledges the outstanding contributions of the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs and local organizations to this cultural vitality.

"The City of Houston has a thriving, diverse and innovative cultural sector thanks to careful planning, financial support and public commitment to its importance," said Phi Beta Kappa Secretary/CEO Frederick M. Lawrence. "We applaud Houston's Office of Cultural Affairs not only for its programs that appeal to residents and visitors alike, but

also for its deep commitment to providing cultural opportunities for all, made especially clear in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.”

“Houston is rich in the arts and humanities that infuse our city with creativity, ideas and excitement,” McNulty said. “Everyone should have the opportunity to experience and share the joy of great art, poetry, dance, music and lifelong enrichment. We are deeply honored to be selected by the Phi Beta Kappa Society as the recipient of this year’s Cities of Distinction Award and for the very valuable investment the Society is making in our community to these wonderful grant recipients.”

The award ceremony will include the presentation of \$5,000 grants to four exemplary local organizations that serve as national models for building creative exchanges with diverse audiences in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences or mathematics.

Mayor Turner congratulates the recipients: The Harvey Arts Recovery Fund, Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts, [the Cougars and Houston Area Math Program at the University of Houston](#) and Rice University’s Houston Asian American Archive.

As the nation’s most prestigious academic honor society, Phi Beta Kappa is best known for inducting outstanding undergraduate students across the nation. It launched the Arts & Sciences Cities of Distinction Award in 2016 to spotlight cities or metropolitan regions for their exceptional artistic vitality, cultural vibrancy, and scientific engagement. Previous recipients of this award include the cities of Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

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