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CONTACT: Jeff Mammenga, Media Coordinator, 605-773-6000,
Jeff.Mammenga@state.sd.us

AASLH Contact: Bethany Hawkins, hawkins@aaslh.org, 615-320-3203

State Historical Society exhibit “Silent Silos” wins AASLH Award of Excellence

PIERRE, S.D. -- The American Association for State and Local History recently announced that the Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre is the recipient of an Award of Excellence for the exhibit “Silent Silos: South Dakota’s Missile Range.”

The AASLH Leadership in History Awards, now in its 75th year, is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

The award-winning exhibit is the culmination of nearly two years of work by the museum staff, and it represents the first-ever collaboration between the state museum and the National Park Service’s Minuteman Missile National Historic Site near Philip. The exhibit focuses on the story of South Dakota’s missile field, the missileers who operated the silos, and it provides the first look that many South Dakotans have at the equipment and materials underground, from the launch keys to uniforms.

“We are honored to win this award,” said Jay Smith, museum director. “I would be remiss if I did not also thank Superintendent Eric Leonard and his staff at the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site for their partnership. It was a true collaboration between our institutions, and we are delighted to share the results with the public.”

“Silent Silos” will be on display at the Cultural Heritage Center through February 2021.

The museum, as of June 15, is open from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CDT Monday through Saturday, and 1-4:30 p.m. CDT on Sundays and most holidays. Call 605-773-3458 for more information about exhibits, special events, and upcoming activities.

This year, AASLH conferred 57 national awards honoring people, projects, exhibits, and publications. The winners represent the best in the field and provide leadership for the future of state and local history.

The AASLH awards program was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards not only honor significant achievement in the field of state and local history, but also bring public recognition of the opportunities for small and large organizations, institutions, and programs to make contributions in this arena. For more information about the Leadership in History Awards, contact AASLH at 615-320-3203, or go to www.aaslh.org.

About the South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution since 2013, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing, and administrative/development offices. Call 605-773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call 605-394-1936 for more information.

About AASLH

The American Association for State and Local History is a not-for-profit professional organization of individuals and institutions working to preserve and promote history. From its headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, AASLH provides leadership, service, and support for its members who preserve and interpret state and local history in order to make the past more meaningful to all people. AASLH publishes books, technical publications, a quarterly magazine, and maintains numerous affinity communities and committees serving a broad range of constituents across the historical community. The association also sponsors an annual meeting, regional and national training, in-person workshops, and online training.