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For Immediate Release

**GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY IS ONE OF 75 ORGANIZATIONS NATIONWIDE
TO RECEIVE A BIG READ GRANT**

***The Southland to Read and Celebrate Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451
During The Big Read***

July 23, 2015—Governors State University is a recipient of a grant of \$12,100 to host The Big Read in Chicago's southland communities. A program of the National Endowment for the Arts, The Big Read broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Managed by Arts Midwest, this initiative offers grants to support innovative community reading programs designed around a single book.

Governors State University is one of 75 nonprofit organizations to receive a grant to host a Big Read project between September 2015 and June 2016. The Big Read will focus on Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. Activities will take place starting September 28 and run through November 8, 2015, culminating with stage performances of *Fahrenheit 451* at GSU's Center for Performing Arts. The theatre performances will be presented by GSU's Theatre and Performance Studies program participants and students. Details are available online at **CenterTickets.net** and **http://opus.govst.edu/big_read**.

NEA Chairman Jane Chu said, "The Big Read is a powerful example of how the arts can bring communities together and help us to connect with one another. These 75 organizations, including Governors State University and participating partner libraries and schools, are creating valuable opportunities for their communities to share wonderful stories and characters and to have meaningful conversations."

GSU President Elaine P. Maimon added "GSU is home to art in all its forms, and we intentionally intertwine art with curriculum in a wide variety of ways. The Big Read is a wonderful example of this synergy. We are thrilled with NEA recognition, allowing our students and community members to experience a classic work of literature in new and exciting ways."

The Big Read provides communities nationwide with the opportunity to read, discuss, and celebrate one of 37 selections from U.S. and world literature. The 75 selected organizations will receive Big Read grants to promote and carry out community-based reading programs. The NEA has also developed high-quality, free-of-charge educational materials to supplement each title, including reader's guides, teacher's guides, and audio programming, all of which are available to the public on **neabigread.org**.

Project partners and participants will include the GSU Library, GSU Visual Arts Gallery, GSU Center for Performing Arts, The Knowledge Exchange at GSU, Crete Public Library, Manteno Public Library, Peotone Public Library, Richton Park Public Library, Steger/S. Chicago Heights Library District, University Park Public Library, and the Michelle Obama School for the Arts.

For more information about The Big Read please visit neabigread.org.

Governors State University serves more than 5,500 undergraduate and graduate students with 64 degree and 24 certificate programs that prepare them for success in business, industry, healthcare, the arts and education. As a state university, GSU is committed to providing high-quality, accessible, and responsible higher education opportunities. GSU is located 40 miles south of Chicago in University Park, IL and offers the most affordable undergraduate tuition and fees in the state. GSU is committed to embracing diversity and academic excellence.

*Established by Congress in 1965, the **National Endowment for the Arts** is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. For more information, visit arts.gov.*

***Arts Midwest** promotes creativity, nurtures cultural leadership, and engages people in meaningful arts experiences, bringing vitality to Midwest communities and enriching people's lives. Based in Minneapolis, Arts Midwest connects the arts to audiences throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One of six non-profit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest's history spans more than 25 years. For more information, please visit artsmidwest.org.*

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