

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **TOUCHING THE LIVES OF TEXANS: THE AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT COMES TO SAN ANTONIO** *Institute of Texan Cultures, area partners plan education and awareness days*

SAN ANTONIO – From Aug. 15 through Sept. 20, the Institute of Texan Cultures will display 12 blocks of the AIDS Memorial Quilt at its East Texas Gallery. Each block contains panels with Texas or San Antonio connections. Admission to this exhibit is complimentary.

Established in 1987, The NAMES Project Foundation is the international organization that is the custodian of The AIDS Memorial Quilt. The Quilt is a 54-ton, handmade tapestry that stands as a memorial to more than 91,000 individuals lost to AIDS. The AIDS Memorial Quilt began with a single panel created in San Francisco in 1987. Today, The Quilt is composed of more than 47,000 individual three-by-six-foot panels, organized into 12-by-12-foot blocks. Each panel commemorates the life of someone who has died of AIDS.

The quilt panels come from every state in the nation and every corner of the globe. The hand-sewn crafts of hundreds of thousands of friends, lovers and family members are combined into this epic memorial, the largest piece of ongoing community art in the world.

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**AIDS Quilt**  
**Add one of two**

The Institute of Texan Cultures has partnered with local organizations to enhance visitor experiences on selected Saturdays during this exhibit. Guests will have an opportunity to visit with representatives from the San Antonio AIDS Foundation, Beat AIDS, and The University of Texas at San Antonio's SHADES program - Sexual Health, Alcohol and Drug Education for Students - to learn about AIDS awareness and prevention and the disease's impact on Texas and San Antonio. Check [TexanCultures.com](http://TexanCultures.com) for a schedule.

"We believe it is very fitting to bring the AIDS Memorial Quilt to San Antonio and the Institute of Texan Cultures because, like every community, we are impacted by AIDS every day," said Executive Director Tim Gette. "AIDS takes lives indiscriminately. It can affect any person in any culture."

The display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt is part of the institute's mission as a component of the University of Texas at San Antonio: to develop a rich and vibrant culture in the arts and humanities that will expand the community's awareness and appreciation of the human condition, our history and our cultures.

In a war against a disease that has no cure, The AIDS Memorial Quilt has become a potent tool in the effort to educate against the lethal threat of AIDS. By revealing the humanity behind the statistics, The AIDS Memorial Quilt helps teach compassion; triumphs over taboo, stigma and phobia; and inspires individuals to take direct responsibility for their own well-being and that of their family, friends and community.

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**AIDS QUILT**  
**Add two of two**

The Institute of Texan Cultures is located on the UTSA HemisFair Park Campus, 851 E. Durango Blvd. (physical address), a short distance from the Alamo and the River Walk. Regular hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday; noon to 5 p.m. Sunday; closed Monday. Admission is \$8 for adults (12-64); \$7 for seniors (65+); \$6 for children (3-11); free with membership, UTSA or Alamo Colleges identification. For additional information, call (210) 458-2300 or visit [TexanCultures.com](http://TexanCultures.com).

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The Institute of Texan Cultures is an agency of the Vice President for Community Services at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). The mission of the institute is to engage lifelong learners in the understanding and celebration of Texas cultural heritage. Located on the UTSA HemisFair Park Campus in downtown San Antonio, the 182,000-square-foot complex features 65,000 square feet of interactive exhibits and displays that tell the stories of Texans. The institute develops quality, accessible resources for educators and lifelong learners on topics of cultural heritage and strives to develop a rich and vibrant culture in the arts and humanities that will expand the community's awareness and appreciation of Texas through an engaging series of exhibits, programs, and special events. Resources for multiple audiences are available at the institute's Web site, [TexanCultures.com](http://TexanCultures.com).