

'Facing Statehood' exhibit honored

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The Willamette Heritage Center won the 2010 Charles M. Redd Center for Western Studies Award for Exhibition Excellence for its "Facing Statehood" exhibition.

This is the second honor for the exhibit; it also won the Heritage Tourism Award from Travel Oregon and the Oregon Tourism Commission, awarded in April 2009.

"Facing Statehood," which opened at Mission Mill Museum in February 2009 and ran through May of this year, examined Oregon's prestatehood years.

Set to coincide with Oregon's sesquicentennial, the exhibit focused on the people and communities of the area from its earliest tribal inhabitants to 1859, when Oregon became the 33rd state.

The award, given by the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University, honors an exhibit that furthers the understanding of the West.

Peter Booth, executive director of the Willamette Heritage Center, said that the exhibit was a collaboration between many community partners, including the Oregon Historical Society, Champoeg State Heritage Area and the Grand Ronde Cultural Resources Department.

"It's not just an award for us; it's an award for the many partners," he said. "It was an exhibit about the creation of the Oregon community that was put together by the community, and we were just one of the many partners involved."

The \$250,000 exhibit occupied 900 square feet in the museum; nearly half of that space was dedicated to Native American tribes.

The award was given Oct. 18 at the Western Museums Association's annual conference. Booth and curator Keni Sturgeon accepted on behalf of the museum.

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