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## **National WWI Museum and Memorial Announces Major Gift From Sunderland Foundation for Gallery and Courtyard Upgrades**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – The National WWI Museum and Memorial announced a major gift from the Sunderland Foundation to update the Museum’s main gallery, public spaces and courtyard. These updates are part of the Museum and Memorial’s multi-year strategic plan and will provide greater opportunities for immersive experiences as well as increased viewing space for the collection. The generous gift totals nearly \$10 million.

The enhancements include touch-free video screens and interactive exhibits, more accessible viewing of the trench experience, better navigation to improve crowd flow and increased functionality of the Museum and Memorial’s open storage and educational areas. The upgrades include critical enhancements to navigate a post-COVID-19 environment. The restoration of the historic Memorial Courtyard began earlier this year.

“The Sunderland Foundation’s support will drive the needed changes to make our strategic plan a reality, making our on-site visitor experiences better than ever and maintaining our position as the world’s premier WWI collecting institution,” said Matthew Naylor, President and CEO of the National WWI Museum and Memorial.

“These upgrades will play a transformative role in our future growth and success.”

The Sunderland family has deep ties to the Museum and Memorial. Until his passing in Jan. 2004 at the age of 107, Paul Sunderland was the oldest living WWI veteran in Kansas City. He served from Sept. 1917 to Dec. 1918 in the Navy aboard the USS Charleston as a mechanic and Musician First Class with the saxophone that accompanied him through seven trans-Atlantic trips. Sunderland was a longtime supporter of the Museum and Memorial, from its dedication in 1926 to the rededication in 2002. His family has continued his legacy since his passing.

“My grandfather, Paul Sunderland, recognized the importance of remembering the sacrifices and lessons of the first World War,” said Kent Sunderland, Chairman of the Sunderland Foundation and former board trustee of the Museum and Memorial. “The updates being made to the Museum and Memorial will ensure that the stories of the Great War are told for generations to come. It is a meaningful way for our family to honor my grandfather.”

Through the years, the Sunderland Foundation’s generosity has supported the restoration of the Museum and Memorial’s Reflecting Pool and the construction of its newest exhibition space, Wiley Gallery. Their support also ensured a successful renovation of the Memorial Tower elevator in 2018. In 2020, the Sunderland family served as honorary chairs and was the presenting sponsor for the Museum and Memorial’s *Night at the Tower* annual event.

### **About the National WWI Museum and Memorial**

The National World WWI Museum and Memorial is America’s leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum and



Memorial holds the most comprehensive collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum and Memorial takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America's official World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National WWI Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit [theworldwar.org](http://theworldwar.org).

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