

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Johnson C. Smith University receives IMLS African-American Museum grant**

Charlotte, N.C., - July 23, 2014 – The James B. Duke Memorial Libraryat Johnson C. Smith University has received a $96,665 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) African History and Culture to fund a traveling exhibition and public programs that illuminate cultural traditions of giving in African-American communities. The two-year project is titled *Giving Back: The Soul of Philanthropy Reframed and Exhibited*.

 The grant will enable community advisors, partners and the library staff to develop an exhibition with accompanying programming materials that will be shared with HBCUs and cultural institutions across the South. It is also designed to have a long-term benefit for JCSU’s students, faculty and the community.

 “This grant demonstrates the university’s vision to enjoy strong community relations and strategic partnerships with businesses, corporations and professional organizations,” said Monika Rhue, director of the James B. Duke Memorial Library and director of the project. Partners on the IMLS-funded project include Bennett College, The Black Benefactors, BlackGivesBack.com, Blair Caldwell African American Research Library, Buffalo Soldiers National Museum, Foundation for the Mid-South, Levine Museum of the New South, Prairie View A&M University and The Denver Foundation.

 The exhibition will illustrate the history of Black philanthropy through artful photography and insightful first-person narratives. The JCSU library staff will work with author Valaida Fullwood, photographer Charles Thomas and members of the giving circle New Generation of African American Philanthropists (NGAAP-Charlotte) to design, curate and fabricate the exhibition as well as create collateral educational and marketing materials in print and online. It will contain original photographs and stories from the book “Giving Back: a Tribute to Generations of African-American Philanthropy.”

 African Americans are often left out of the conversation and recognition of giving unless fame and wealth are associated, according to Fullwood. The book points out that stories of ordinary African Americans giving to charitable causes are rarely heard. The stories more often feature Black people as only beneficiaries or people in need.

 Rhue said the exhibition will benefit the larger community by providing a more comprehensive story, making the point that African Americans give a higher percentage of their discretionary income to charitable causes than any other racial group in America.

 "This partnership with JCSU is the fulfillment of a longtime aspiration because influencing the next generation of givers is a priority of our giving circle, New Generation of African American Philanthropists,*”* said Fullwood*. “*Our aim has been to use artful photography and storytelling to ignite a movement of conscientious philanthropy by empowering a generation of Americans to recognize their power and responsibility to give back."

 For more information about the exhibition, contact Monika Rhue at mrhue@jcsu.edu