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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Mitchell Museum Announces Spring Break Family Activities for Chicago and Evanston School Districts

Thursday, March 26—Families can stop by The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian weekdays during Spring Break (Fri April 3, Tues- Fri April 7-10) and enjoy daily story time book readings, and Native American inspired crafts that students can make and take home.

Each weekday afternoon from 2:00-3:00 pm, pre-selected Native American stories from tribes throughout the United States will be read by volunteers. The story time program and the all-day D.I.Y. crafts are free with regular admission. They are recommended for children ages 5 and up, but there is no minimum age requirement. Participants must be accompanied by an adult. No pre-registration is necessary.

The Mitchell Museum provides everything students will need to make simple versions of traditional Native American artifacts including porcupine quill boxes, talking sticks, beaded keychains, and more. Each craft includes background information about the importance of the artifact to Native American ways of life.

Visitors can view similar artifacts in the exhibits which cover a variety of themes including miniatures, use of natural resources, the importance of tradition and ceremony, and the impact of the tourist trade.

Porcupine quilling is an ancient Native American art used particularly among East Coast and Great Lakes tribes. Indian quillwork involves softening and dyeing stiff porcupine quills and sewing or weaving them onto leather or birch bark. Today, Native American quillwork embroidery is a rare but highly valuable art form.

Many tribes including the Lakota and Cherokee used talking sticks or feathers at family gatherings and around camp fire circles. The only person allowed to talk would be holding the decorated stick. When their turn to talk was over, the feather was passed to the next person. This tradition brings closeness and harmony to a family.

Keychains are a fun way to display beadwork that is very popular among many Native American tribes throughout North America. Beaded keychains increased in popularity as a result of the tourist trade.

The Mitchell Museum is one of only a handful of museums in the country that focuses exclusively on the art, history and culture of American Indian and First Nation peoples throughout the United States and Canada. In 2012, The Mitchell Museum was named “Best Museum of The North Shore: Up and Comer” by *Make it Better* magazine, won the Superior award by the Illinois Association of Museums and was named a national finalist by the American Association of State and Local History award program.

For more information about The Mitchell Museum of The American Indian, visit www.mitchellmuseum.org or call 847-475-1030. The museum is open Tuesday-Wednesday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday- Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors, students and children and Free for Mitchell Museum members and Tribal members.

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