



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

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For Immediate Release

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### Student Designed Quilts Begin Tour Across Nation



*Left to right: Kansas Governor Sam Brownback, Park Ranger Joan Wilson, Supt. Wendy Lauritzen, Acting Supt. Clara Wooden, Chief of Interpretation Dave Schafer*

In 2010 the five Kansas National Park units worked with their local schools and local quilters to create six student- designed and one master educational quilt. These quilts became the project “Building Common Ground through the Quilts of Many Hands,” which is now beginning its tour across the nation.

To kick off the tour, the student quilts are on display at the state capitol building in Topeka, KS in Governor Sam Brownback’s and Lt. Governor Jeff Colyer’s offices from March 16 – April 15,

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2011. As the quilts travel across the nation, it is hoped that other parks will create their own quilts and join the display. From July 3 – August 14, 2011 two of the student quilts will be on display at the Stauth Memorial Museum in Montezuma, KS representing Chase and Graham counties as part of the many 150<sup>th</sup> statehood celebrations being held this year across Kansas. Its next scheduled venue is at Homestead National Monument of America in Beatrice, NE for the entire month of October as part of their Pioneer Heritage special event.

Subsequent exhibit dates and locations are pending, including the National Park Service Midwest Regional Office in Omaha, NE and the National Park Service Office in Washington, D.C. A formal request will soon be made for displaying the quilts in the White House during the holiday season of 2012. This time frame will allow ample time for more quilts to be created by people across the nation, thus bringing together many different ages, backgrounds, and cultures.

To encourage even more participation, the five Kansas National Park units are working with the Student Conservation Association to take this program nationally. Since the quilts' recent display at the National Association of Interpretation conference in Las Vegas, NV, another half dozen parks throughout the United States have voiced their interest in becoming involved in developing quilts as part of this growing educational experience. However, this project is open to all organizations, not just the National Parks.

We hope to encourage all people to join in this project and become involved with their communities. As the quilt project title implies, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished when people “build common ground” and learn from each other as they work together. As the quilts make their way across the nation, this is the hopeful outcome of the journey. To learn more about how your organization can be involved in the project, please go to <http://www.nps.gov/tapr> and click on the student quilt photo. As the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu stated, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” The first step of the journey has begun at the Kansas State Capitol.

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