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Governor Wolf's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs Congratulates Mira Nakashima on Lifetime Achievement Award

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs would like to congratulate Mira Nakashima who received the 2018 Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award yesterday evening in Scranton at a ceremony held at the Scranton Cultural Center at the Masonic Temple. Gov. Wolf and First Lady Frances Wolf attended the event and recognized Mira for her distinguished career.

Mira Nakashima is a renowned furniture designer known for her unparalleled knowledge and mastery of wood. She serves as the director and custodian of the George Nakashima Woodworker studio and property.

The Governor's Awards are the commonwealth's most prestigious recognition for the arts, honoring outstanding Pennsylvania artists, arts organizations, cultural leaders and patrons who have made significant contributions to the advancement of the arts. Recipients are selected from public nominations, then reviewed and recommended by an advisory panel.

In 1945, George Nakashima opened his woodworking business in New Hope as a means to earn a living after having relocated from the Minidoka Incarceration Camp located in a remote region of South Central Idaho's Snake River Plain where approximately 13,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated during World War II. Mira was just three years old at the time. She would go on to follow her father's path by becoming a woodworker, attend Harvard University, and receive a Masters degree in Architecture from Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. Mira worked with her father for two decades until his death in 1990. She then became the creative director of the Nakashima studio in New Hope.

"Mira Nakashima's story and her work are truly representative of the Asian American experience in the United States," said Bibhuti Aryal, Chair of the Commission. "Through her artistry in design and woodworking the furniture that Nakashima Woodworkers creates pays homage to its Japanese ancestry while creating innovative and functional works of art that are both reminiscent of the old and representative of the new."

The Governor's Awards for the Arts are administered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency under the Office of the Governor. The Council's mission is to foster the excellence, diversity and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania, and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the state. For more information about the PCA, visit arts.pa.gov or call 717-787-6883.

MEDIA CONTACT: Tiffany Chang Lawson, Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, 717.787.5825

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