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For Immediate Release

## **Mulvane celebrates 95 years, announces acquisition important to Topeka**

Topeka, Kansas – The oldest art museum in Kansas celebrated its 95<sup>th</sup> birthday Friday evening with a special announcement of its acquisition of Brian Lanker’s photographs from his book “I Dream A World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America.”

Brian Lanker, a 1973 Pulitzer Prize winner when he was a photographer with the Topeka Capital-Journal, published the book in 1989. It presents an African-American female view of the world in their words, accompanied by the critically-acclaimed portraits and a forward written by Maya Angelou. “I Dream A World” is out of print, but Lanker’s family kept the original portraits.

“Acquiring this renowned exhibit of Lanker’s photographs will continue to drive the conversation on the historical importance of African-American women in a city that was an epicenter of civil rights and the start of Lanker’s career,” said Connie Gibbons, director, Mulvane Art Museum at Washburn University. “We are thrilled to have these photographs available for the patrons of the Mulvane Art Museum.”

The acquisition would not have been possible without the help of donors.

“We are grateful to all the donors who immediately stepped up so we could quickly take advantage of this special opportunity when it was available,” said Marshall Meek, president, Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation. “Their leadership will bring these important photographs to the area to be enjoyed and appreciated by all who visit the Mulvane.”

Lanker, who passed away in 2011, started his career in photojournalism at the Topeka Capital-Journal, where in addition to winning the Pulitzer Prize for feature photography, he was twice named Newspaper Photographer of the Year. His work for LIFE Magazine and Sports Illustrated received numerous international awards.

The first planned exhibition of the photographs at the Mulvane will be in February 2020.