

PRESENTATION OF THE VERSAILLES AWARD FOR AMERICAN PHILANTHROPY TO MRS. CATHARINE HAMILTON

Versailles, October 19th, 2023
Press Release

In 1998, Mrs. Catharine Hamilton founded the *American Friends of Versailles*. Over the past 25 years, the support of the American Friends has played an indispensable role in the preservation of the Palace of Versailles and its Estate, facilitating the realisation of ambitious restoration projects. In conferring the Versailles Award for American Philanthropy upon Mrs. Hamilton, we aim to honor the dedication of a passionate woman and the generosity of her compatriots.

THE SPECIAL BOND BETWEEN VERSAILLES AND THE UNITED STATES

A span of three centuries of history attests to the special bond that exists today between Versailles and the American people. In 1778, it was from Versailles that Louis XVI decided to align his ancient kingdom with the young American republic, then in the pursuit of its independence. By associating its name with this seminal event in the history of the United States, the Palace of Versailles garnered a unique affection from its visitors hailing from across the Atlantic, who to this day are the nationality with the greatest number of visitors each year.

MRS. CATHARINE HAMILTON - 25 YEARS OF DEDICATION THROUGH THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF VERSAILLES

The steadfast and loyal support of the American people for the Palace of Versailles is best illustrated by the *American Friends of Versailles*. Established in 1998 by Mrs. Catharine Hamilton, the *American Friends of Versailles* has ensured the funding of major restoration and development projects, including restorations of the Grove of the Three Fountains, the Pavillon Frais in the Trianon Estate, the Queen's Guard Room, and finally, the Queen's Grove.

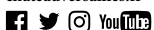
For a quarter-century since its founding, Mrs. Catharine Hamilton has led the *American Friends of Versailles* with passion. As Ms. Alicia Bryan assumes the presidency of the American Friends at today's annual meeting in Chicago, the Palace of Versailles pays tribute to Mrs. Catharine Hamilton and her steadfast support by presenting her with the Versailles Award for American Philanthropy.

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THE VERSAILLES AWARD FOR AMERICAN PHILANTHROPY

One of the channels through which the United States shows its attachment to Versailles is its support. In fact, American philanthropists are among the most numerous and benevolent donors to the Palace of Versailles. To commemorate this special relationship, the Versailles Award



The Grove of the Three Fountains, restored thanks to the patronage of the American Friends of Versailles in 2000
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for American Philanthropy is regularly bestowed upon an American citizen who has made an outstanding contribution to the preservation of the Palace and its gardens. The inaugural award was conferred in 2019 to Mr. David Rockefeller Jr., as a tribute to his grandfather, John D. Rockefeller Jr., who to this day remains the most significant patron of the Palace of Versailles since 1920. The second award, presented in 2021, went to Evan Spiegel, founder of the social network Snapchat and a generous donor to the Palace.



As a symbol of its gratitude, the Palace of Versailles bestows upon Mrs. Catharine Hamilton this unique medal, made especially by the Monnaie de Paris.

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