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## **Experience Hispanic Heritage During Cinco de Mayo at the State Museum**

*Fourth annual event presents a day of cultural fun for all ages on May 1*

**COLUMBIA, S.C., April 19, 2016** –The South Carolina State Museum is proud to host the fourth annual Cinco de Mayo celebration to showcase Hispanic heritage and pride from 12 – 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 1. This event provides an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate and recognize the Hispanic culture in South Carolina.

Guests will enjoy family fun featuring a variety of Latin American activities, including The Unbreakable Piñata, crafts, prizes and games like Juega de Lotena (Mexican Bingo). The event will also feature traditional Mexican dance performances by *Compania de Danza Herencia Latina* from Charlotte, N.C., and live music provided by *Pachanga*, a Latin American dance band from Hilton Head Island, S.C.

“The Hispanic community is an important part of South Carolina and we look forward to recognizing and celebrating their traditions and contributions to our diverse society,” said public programs manager Celeste Wszola. “We are excited to bring South Carolinians a full day of family fun and cultural activities that celebrate Hispanic culture.”

Authentic Mexican cuisine prepared by Cecilia’s Mexican Restaurant in Irmo, S.C., as well as beverages, will be available for purchase.

A fact that many people may find surprising is that Americans celebrate this Mexican holiday more widely than people do in Mexico. Cinco de Mayo means “fifth of May” in Spanish, and the holiday commemorates the events of May 5, 1862. It is not Mexican Independence Day, as many believe. Rather, on that day, the Mexican army, under the command of Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín, won a victory over the French at Puebla, despite overwhelming odds. This victory led to the expulsion of the French from Mexico five years later. Cinco de Mayo took off as an American holiday in the 1960s, when the holiday was promoted as a day to celebrate America’s own Latino community.

The Cinco de Mayo celebration at the museum falls on First Citizens First Sunday, which means general admission is only \$1 thanks to First Citizens Bank. Cinco de Mayo activities are included with general admission or museum membership. There is an additional fee for food and beverages. Visit [scmuseum.org](http://scmuseum.org) or call (803) 898-4999 to learn more.

**About the South Carolina State Museum:** *As the state’s largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000 square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia’s Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its largest artifacts, an 1894 old textile mill full of character and charm. Guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch an interactive 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science/technology. Visit [scmuseum.org](http://scmuseum.org) to learn more.*