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Federal Grant Monies Awarded

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Weatherspoon Art Museum to Receive Federal Grant for Vault Renovation

Greensboro, NC—The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) recently announced nearly $30,000,000 in grants to museums across the nation. The Weatherspoon Art Museum (WAM) at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, is receiving one of 244 awards dispersed through the agency's highly competitive grant programs. Selected from among 707 applicants, the Weatherspoon was awarded $150,000 through IMLS’s Museums for America program to renovate its principal 5,382 square foot storage vault, which houses 40% of its collection. The second phase of a three-part scheme, the renovation will allow the museum to increase storage for 1,250 framed two-dimensional artwork by 20% and for more than 200 small to mid-size sculptures by 150%. The renovation also will improve and enhance safe access to the collections, provide for state-of-the-art optimal storage conditions, allow for collection growth, and increase the museum staff’s overall efficiency. Preserving the museum’s collection—part of the documentary heritage of our society and culture—is one of the core missions of the Weatherspoon in its service to the university, state, and nation.

“IMLS recognizes three valuable roles museums have in their communities: putting the learner at the center, serving as community anchors, and serving as stewards of cultural and scientific collections,” said IMLS Director Susan Hildreth. “It is exciting to see the many ways our newly announced grants further these important museum roles. I congratulate the slate of 2013 museum grant recipients for planning projects that advance innovation in museum practice, lifelong learning, and community engagement.”
The Weatherspoon’s renovation project reflects the staff’s understanding that effective care of the collection requires not only a deep understanding of best practices and earnest attention and care, but also periodic system upgrades, particularly in collection storage areas. Since 2001, the collection has grown by more than 1,149 objects, and it is crucial that the museum optimizes its existing space to accommodate future growth. Ensuring that the artworks are protected from natural and man-made disasters is also essential to their ongoing availability for educational, programmatic, and aesthetic purposes. The renovation project will be accomplished over a 10-month period from December 1, 2013 through September 2014. During that time, all of the museum’s normal activities, including exhibitions, conservation, and education, will continue.

This is the second time the Weatherspoon has received funding from IMLS for vault renovation. In 2006, a grant of $150,000 enabled the museum to undertake the first phase of the overall vault renovation, which entailed installing new state-of-the-art painting storage screens and consolidating large-scale sculpture storage. As with the upcoming vault project, that effort increased overall storage to provide for future growth and provide for greatly increased access and safer handling of the works.

“This significant award from the Institute of Museum and Library Services is a testament to the importance of our collection, the many ways in which we make it available to the public, and the professional standards maintained by the museum staff,” said Weatherspoon Art Museum Director Nancy Doll. “In addition to the improvements in collection management that will be made possible with these funds, such external recognition also helps us in other fundraising efforts. We are thrilled to be one of this year’s IMLS grantees.”

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit http://www.imls.gov follow IMLS on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/USIMLS) and Twitter (https://twitter.com/us_imls).

About the Weatherspoon Art Museum

Mission
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro acquires, preserves, exhibits, and interprets modern and contemporary art for the benefit of its multiple audiences, including university, community, regional, and beyond. Through these activities, the museum recognizes its paramount role of public service, and enriches the lives of diverse individuals by fostering an informed appreciation and understanding of the visual arts and their relationship to the world in which we live.

History
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro was founded by Gregory Ivy in 1941 and is the earliest of any art facilities within the UNC system. The museum was founded as a resource for the campus, community, and region and its early
leadership developed an emphasis—maintained to this day—on presenting and acquiring modern and contemporary works of art. A 1950 bequest from the renowned collection of Claribel and Etta Cone, which included prints and bronzes by Henri Matisse and other works on paper by American and European modernists, helped to establish the Weatherspoon’s permanent collection. Other prescient acquisitions during Ivy’s tenure included a 1951 suspended mobile by Alexander Calder, Woman by Willem de Kooning, a pivotal work in the artist’s career that was purchased in 1954, and the first drawings by Eva Hesse and Robert Smithson to enter a museum collection. In 1989, the museum moved into its present location in The Anne and Benjamin Cone building designed by the architectural firm Mitchell Giurgola. The museum has six galleries and a sculpture courtyard with over 17,000 square feet of exhibition space. The American Association of Museums accredited the Weatherspoon in 1995 and renewed its accreditation in 2005.

**Collections + Exhibitions**
The permanent collection of the Weatherspoon Art Museum is considered to be one of the foremost of its kind in the Southeast. It represents all major art movements from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Of the nearly 6,000 works in the collection are pieces by such prominent figures as Sol LeWitt, Robert Mangold, Cindy Sherman, Al Held, Alex Katz, Henry Tanner, Louise Nevelson, Mark di Suvero, Deborah Butterfield, and Robert Rauschenberg. The museum regularly lends to major exhibitions nationally and internationally.

The Weatherspoon also is known for its adventurous and innovative exhibition program. Through a dynamic annual calendar of fifteen to eighteen exhibitions and a multi-disciplinary educational program for audiences of all ages, the museum provides an opportunity for audiences to consider artistic, cultural, and social issues of our time and enriches the life of our university, community, and region.

**Weatherspoon Art Museum**
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