

Unique Public-Private Partnership Will Build New Museum at Alfred University

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A unique blend of public and private resources will allow for the construction of a new building to house the International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred University. The AU Board of Trustees, meeting on campus over the weekend, learned that the State Legislature has earmarked another \$1.75 million through the State University of New York Construction Fund to erect the new building, bringing the total allocated by the state for construction of the facility to \$7.95 million. "The State Legislature agreed to allocate the additional funds for the Museum for two very good reasons," said President Edward G. Coll, Jr. "First, thanks to the diligent efforts of State Senator John R. Kuhl, the legislators were convinced that the International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred will enhance the Southern Tier's ability to attract tourism," said Coll. "We see this project as a critical piece for economic development in this region." The International Museum of Ceramic Art, founded in 1991, has established itself as a destination attraction in Western New York in the past few years, gaining regional, national and international acclaim through its exhibits, catalogues, website and special educational programs, noted Dr. Margaret Carney, director of the International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred 2-2-2. "The \$1.75 million state funding will grow the Museum by enhancing our ability to construct a state of the art facility in Alfred, New York. Regional tourism will become even more attractive with the addition of a premiere destination in Alfred, coupled with the already acclaimed glass museum in Corning and photography museum in Rochester," added Carney. A second important factor in the Legislature's decision, said Coll, was the commitment of private funds to help build and support the Museum. It began with a \$2 million gift from AU Trustee Pamela Joseph to start an endowment fund that will, as it grows, provide operational support for the Museum. "We recognize the importance of Ms. Joseph's gift – and the faith behind it," said Dr. Gene Bernstein, chairman of the Board of Trustees. "She made her gift before the new building was a certainty, clearly demonstrating her commitment and support for the Museum, which, in turn, spurred other private and state supporters." For that reason, Dr. Bernstein said, the Board of Trustees voted to name the Museum The Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred, in honor of Ms. Joseph and her late husband, Jay Schein, who was a member of Alfred University's Class of 1962 and a former member of the AU Board of Trustees. Prior to his death, he was chairman and chief executive officer of Henry Schein, Inc., a pharmaceutical manufacturing firm in Port Washington, NY. Joseph was not the only private donor. Dr. Marlin Miller, a 1954 graduate who is a member and former chairman of the Board of Trustees, made a \$1 million gift to defray costs for the new facility. Other major gifts to support the Museum have come from: Otto Heino, in memory of his late wife, Vivika, the second Master of Fine Arts graduate from the School of Art and Design, pledged \$400,000. Robert and Sue Turner, who contributed \$200,000. Turner, a 1949 alumnus of Alfred University with an MFA degree, is a professor emeritus of ceramic art in the School of Art and Design. International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred 3-3-3 AU Trustee Joel Moskowitz, a 1961 graduate, and his wife Ann have pledged \$50,000. "These private gifts, totalling \$3,650,000, really persuaded the State Legislature that we were serious about building a world-class facility here in Alfred, for the economic benefit of the entire Southern Tier," said Coll. Such a blending of public and private resources may seem unusual, but it has been a practice at Alfred University for 100 years, noted President Coll. Through a contract with the State University of New York, Alfred University administers a state-supported unit, the College of Ceramics. The partnership – a private university, the State Legislature and the State University of New York – that is leading to the construction of a new museum may well be a model for others to emulate in years to come, noted Coll. "We are extremely grateful for the confidence placed in Alfred University by New York State to promote the cultural, educational, and economical development of Western New York," said Dr. L. David Pye, dean of the College of Ceramics. "Coupling this grant with additional private donations to the Alfred University, the College of Ceramics is well on its way to creating a tourist attraction that will be of great interest to artists, educators, and students through out the world." "The museum looks forward to broadening the audiences we already serve with the construction of our new facility," said Carney. "While we currently have more 'virtual visitors' via the Museum's website at www.ceramicsmuseum.alfred..., we look forward to more real visitors in the near future and are grateful to the State for its recognition of Alfred as one of the ceramic education centers of the world." The State University of New York Construction Fund is in the process of hiring an architectural firm to design the new museum.