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CONTACT

Kerri VanderHoff
Grand Rapids Art Museum
616.831.2914
kvanderhoff@artmuseumgr.org

Grand Rapids Art Museum Announces Project Director for GRAM GoSite Collaborative Space

Project director will oversee strategic planning process for this innovative information and activity center

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 4, 2013 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum announced today that Kerri VanderHoff has been named GRAM GoSite Project Director, assuming responsibility for the position on January 20, 2013. Since 2007, VanderHoff has served as the Marketing and Public Relations Director at the Grand Rapids Art Museum, helping to define the new facility identity in the heart of the city and implement a more prominent and collaborative role in the community for the Art Museum. Her public relations efforts have elevated awareness of GRAM through local, regional, national, and international publications, broadcasts, and social media. During her tenure as Marketing and PR Director, she has also spearheaded successful collaborative programs and events including *GRAM on the Green*, *Friday Night Conversations*, Culture Pass GR (which recently won a national award from Americans for the Arts), the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony and Season Opening of Rosa Parks Circle Ice Rink, Welcome Wreaths at GRAM, and the Michigan Film, Art & Literature Symposium; she has also developed the partnership with WOODTV8's studio at GRAM active during ArtPrize.

The GRAM GoSite is a proposed information and activity center sited in the architecturally prominent glass enclosed space at the northwest corner of the Museum along Monroe Center, formerly a café. With a goal to develop and implement a vision for a 21st century information space for Grand Rapids, GRAM GoSite will be created collaboratively with local organizations, institutions, government agencies, and others. Broad information gathering will ensure a chance for wide participation in the strategic planning process. The concept for the GRAM GoSite was created in the Art Museum Marketing Department by VanderHoff, developed further within the management staff at GRAM, and was then presented to and approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees in Spring 2011. In 2012, Director and CEO Dana Friis-Hansen advanced the project to the next stage in the process by organizing stakeholder meetings to evaluate interest and support from the community. The concept was met with enthusiasm, and Friis-Hansen determined that a dedicated project director would be integral in the planning progress and feasibility study for the GRAM GoSite.

"The GRAM GoSite has the ability to serve both a community need and the GRAM mission of providing a welcome and inclusive gathering space," said Friis-Hansen. "It's a great idea and I am thrilled that Kerri is shifting her role at the Museum to move the GoSite forward in a collaborative and thoughtful fashion."

"I am really looking forward to continue building upon this concept through community involvement," said VanderHoff. "There really isn't a clear model of this type of activity center out there to work from. It truly is a reflection of the way we like to do things around this area – make great things happen with creative thinking, by sharing ideas, and working together."

The newly created position is flexible and focused on the GRAM GoSite planning process. A transition plan for general marketing and public relations responsibilities is in progress and interim contacts will be assigned by January 18, 2013.

About the Grand Rapids Art Museum

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is: to inspire discovery, enjoyment, and learning about art; to serve as a welcoming and inclusive cultural resource; to collect, conserve, and interpret works of art of the finest quality. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new Art Museum is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED Gold certified status. Established in 1910 as the Grand Rapids Art Association, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and more than 3,000 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft.

Public comments regarding the project can be e-mailed to GRAMGoSite@artmuseumgr.org

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