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Ramsey County Historical Society Selected by the American Alliance of Museums for Participation in Groundbreaking National Initiative to Increase Diversity and Inclusion on Museum Boards

ARLINGTON, VA – July 23, 2019 – The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) has been selected by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) to participate in “Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity & Inclusion.” This unprecedented national initiative to diversify museum boards and leadership is taking place across 5 U.S. cities and includes a cross-section of museums of all types and sizes.

Backed by \$4 million in grants from three foundations (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Alice L. Walton Foundation, and Ford Foundation), *Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity & Inclusion*, will provide the framework, training, and resources for museum leaders to build inclusive cultures within their institutions that more accurately reflect the communities they serve.

“Building a more inclusive museum field is achievable only with museums trustees and leaders committed to long-term change and improvement,” said Laura Lott, president and CEO of the American Alliance of Museums. “Museum boards, in particular, set the tone for their institutions and are well positioned to be agents of change. We commend the museum directors and trustees who have committed to this program for investing in their own operations and serving as models for all museums.”

“Ramsey County Historical Society has been a trusted partner in preserving the history of the people and institutions in Ramsey County for seventy years. Enhancing its leadership to ensure inclusive representation of everybody that calls this community home is a strategic priority that RCHS has been actively pursuing. The *Facing Change* program brings more resources from across the country to help elevate and accelerate this important work. We are looking forward to working with our peers and colleagues help address this nation-wide challenge through our efforts here in Minnesota’s capital county.” – Chad Roberts, President

“We are honored to be included in this nation-wide effort that is so important to the future of museums and communities across the country. When museum leadership is inclusive of the community that the institution serves, it helps ensure the community’s ownership and participation in the museum’s mission, goals and programs.” - Jo Driscoll, RCHS Board Chair

Earlier this year, as part of the *Facing Change* initiative, AAM announced an [Excellence in DEAI Task Force](#) charged with developing recommendations to embed diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion more deeply into AAM's excellence programs. AAM also named ten [DEAI fellows](#) who will work with AAM to implement trainings and support the museum boards in developing sustainable and measurable inclusion plans.

The Need for Action

AAM's field-wide diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) initiative responds to extensive and multi-year research that underscores the need and desire for change.

In 2017, AAM and BoardSource examined museum board leadership and found a disconnect in the area of diversity and inclusion. The [survey](#) revealed that nearly half (46 percent) of museum boards are entirely white, 77 percent of museum directors believe expanding the racial and ethnic diversity of their boards is important to advancing their missions, but only 10 percent of museum boards have developed a plan of action to become more inclusive.

A [recent survey](#) by the Mellon Foundation demonstrated that employment in the US museum sector does not reflect the makeup of the communities these institutions serve, despite decades of local and national efforts.

About the American Alliance of Museums

The American Alliance of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. Representing more than 35,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, institutions, and corporate partners serving the museum field, the Alliance stands for the broad scope of the museum community. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

About the Ramsey County Historical Society

The Ramsey County Historical Society offers educational, informative and hands-on programs for children and adults through the [Gibbs Farm: Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life](#) on Larpenteur and Cleveland Aves., and through our *History Revealed* series of adult programs held throughout Ramsey County; creates and curates exhibitions of historical significance at the Landmark Center and other venues; provides documents and research opportunities at our Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center, also in the Landmark Center; manages a large collection of historical artifacts, photos, and documents; and publishes an award-winning quarterly magazine, books, movies, and other publications on the history, people and stories of Ramsey County. Learn more about RCHS at www.rchs.com.