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Racine Art Museum announces retirement of long-time employee

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The Racine Art Museum Association (RAMA) announced today that its Deputy Director and Chief Development Officer, Laura D’Amato, will retire on June 30, 2026, after 21 years of dedication.

Throughout her time at the organization, D’Amato demonstrated exceptional grant writing, donor engagement, and support of the Executive Director in operational oversight, along with an unwavering commitment to RAMA’s mission. Working in close partnership with colleagues, volunteers, and board members, she helped lead efforts that generated \$29.2 million to support programming at both RAMA campuses—the Racine Art Museum (RAM) and RAM’s Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts (Wustum). This extraordinary achievement reflects not only Laura’s vision and dedication, but also the collective strength of a community united in advancing the organization’s impact for years to come.

“Laura’s leadership and deep commitment to the museum and our community have shaped RAM in lasting ways,” said Robb Woulfe, RAM Executive Director. “We’re deeply grateful for the impact she has had on the organization and the many relationships she has helped build over the years.”

D’Amato was hired in December 2004 as Director of Development. Shortly thereafter, RAM’s 2006–07 Empowerment Reserve Fund Campaign was launched, and she worked closely with board, staff, and volunteers to raise \$5 million to build the organization’s endowment.



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After a successful endowment campaign, fundraising efforts increased and were focused on building RAM's outreach education programs—specifically *RAM on the Road*, which brings free cultural programs directly to children in their classrooms, and *SPARK!*, which provides creative engagement for people with memory loss and their care partners. These particular programs, among others, garnered nationwide attention and continue to attract funding from several local and national sources.

“One of the most rewarding aspects of raising funds for RAM was seeing the growth in financial support that enabled our dedicated staff to present such high-quality exhibitions and art-focused outreach programming—work that continues to serve people of all ages and abilities today,” said D’Amato.

In 2012, during a period of increased activities surrounding exhibitions, education programming, and permanent collection growth, D’Amato was asked to extend her role by supervising aspects of museum operations while maintaining a healthy development program and steady financial support. “Many of our staff wear a variety of hats, and I was pleased to help out where I could. I remain grateful to my co-workers and board leadership who assisted me every step of the way.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve RAM and Wustum all these years. I am deeply grateful to my co-workers, board members, volunteers, and donors who have traveled along with me on this journey. It has been a joy to celebrate RAM’s legacy, and I look forward to seeing the organization flourish into a bright and exciting future. While I’m eager to spend more time with my husband, family, and friends, I will truly miss the many wonderful people I’ve had the joy of getting to know and love throughout the past 21 years.”

RAMA is currently seeking applications for its new Director of Institutional Advancement, a reimagining of D’Amato’s existing role with a renewed focus on growing contributed revenue in support of the institution’s mission, strategic priorities, and long-term sustainability. More information about the open position can be found on RAM’s website, ramart.org.

Programming at the Racine Art Museum is made possible by: **Platinum Partners**—Anonymous, The Estate of Karen Johnson Boyd, Ron and Judith Isaacs, Racine Community Foundation, The Estate of Marilyn Rothschild, Windgate Foundation; **Diamond Partners**—David Charak, Ruffo Family Foundation, Ruth Arts Foundation, Diane Zebell; **Gold Partners**—Judith and David Flegel Fund, Osborne and Scekcic Family Foundation, Reliance Controls Community Fund, W.T. Walker Group, Inc.; **Silver Partners**—Anonymous, Anonymous, Bader Philanthropies, Baird, A.C. Buhler Family, Dave’s Wine Garage, Paula and E.L. Donovitz Memorial Endowment



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Fund, Ben and Dawn Flegel, Tom Harty, Horizon Retail Construction, Inc., Johnson Financial Group, Robert E. Kohler Jr. Fund, Luanne Frey and Mark Lukow, Sheri and Frank Sullivan, Visit Racine County, We Energies Foundation, Wisconsin Arts Board; **Bronze Partners**—Sandy and Gus Antonneau, Carol Baylon, Susan Boland, Rose and Peter Christensen, Educators Credit Union, Carol Griseto, Julia Ann Oas and Don Gloo, Hitter's Baseball, Debbie and Chuck Hoffman, Susan and Dan Horton, Gary Van Wert and Ronald Jacquart, Paula Kalke, Bill and Debbie Keland, Nancy Kurten, Susan Manalli, Norbell Foundation, O&H Danish Bakery, Rita Petretti, Rasmussen Diamonds, SC Johnson, Harold and Lois Solberg, Twin Disc, Marc J. Wollman, Amy and Robb Woulfe; **Media Partner**—Radio Milwaukee

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The two campuses of the Racine Art Museum—RAM in downtown Racine at 441 Main Street and the Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts (Wustum) at 2519 Northwestern Avenue—are located in Racine, Wisconsin, a historic community on the shores of Lake Michigan. RAM is home to the largest contemporary craft collection in North America and has a reputation for its award-winning architecture and nationally recognized exhibition program. Wustum is home to the organization's diverse, award-winning art education programs and has presented significant art exhibitions since 1941.

Both campuses of the Racine Art Museum are currently open Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission rates are \$10 for adults; \$8 for students, seniors (62+), and veterans; and free for RAM members, children under 12, active military personnel, and NARM, ROAM, and AAM members.