



DUBUQUE  
**museum**  
OF **art**



Smithsonian Affiliate

## Dubuque Museum of Art Announces Leadership Transition

*Executive Director David Schmitz to Depart March 30;  
Board President Julie Steffen Named Interim Director*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**February 6, 2020 (DUBUQUE, IA)** – The Dubuque Museum of Art (DuMA) Board of Trustees has announced the departure of its executive director, effective March 30, 2020.

David Schmitz, who has served as DuMA's executive director since 2015, was named Administrator of the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), by DCA Director Chris Kramer on Thursday.

The DuMA Board of Trustees, under President Julie Steffen, has implemented a succession plan that includes Steffen serving as Interim Director, following Schmitz' departure in March, to ensure continuity of leadership. A search to identify a permanent replacement, chaired by DuMA Board Vice-President Andrew Butler, will begin shortly.

During Schmitz's tenure, the DuMA has launched a number of new programs and special events, focused on engaging new audiences and broadening the museum's reach into the community; raised its profile by forming partnerships with the Smithsonian Institution, Art Bridges, and Humanities Iowa, among others; brought major traveling exhibits, including 2019's *African American Art in the 20th Century*, to Dubuque; and earned reaccreditation with the American Alliance of Museums.

“We want to thank David for his service to the Museum and are excited that he will continue to impact the arts in Dubuque and Iowa in his new role,” Steffen said. “We also look forward to continuing the growth and momentum, particularly in our outreach to the community, started under David’s and our Board’s leadership over the past five years.”

Steffen, who was elected president in 2018, joined the DuMA Board of Trustees in 2004. Steffen was instrumental in bringing the traveling exhibit *Ships and the Sea*, from the collections of Cigna, to the DuMA and has chaired the museum’s governance and Art After Hour committees. She has a long history of community service, exemplified by roles as past president of the Dubuque County Fine Arts Society and the Dubuque and Jackson County Chapters of Habitat for Humanity. Steffen is also a past member of the City of Dubuque’s Arts and Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission.

“It has been a privilege to work alongside so many wonderful people, starting with our talented staff, committed Board members, and generous supporters, to advance our mission over these last five years,” Schmitz said. “Dubuque is deservedly proud of its rich history and cultural heritage. The opportunity to continue building upon that legacy by making the arts even more inclusive and accessible and by advancing the city’s creative and cultural infrastructure is very significant.”

Schmitz added, “I believe that we have made demonstrable progress towards our long-term goals. The Museum’s future, much like Dubuque’s, is very bright.”

### **About the Dubuque Museum of Art**

The Dubuque Museum of Art (DuMA), founded in 1874 and reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums in 2019, is Iowa’s oldest cultural institution. Named a national affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution in 2016, DuMA’s mission is to excite, engage and serve diverse communities within the Tri-State area through our collections, exhibitions and educational programs. We connect generations of people to their cultural heritage and exceptional art.

DuMA is located across from Washington Park in historic downtown Dubuque at 7th and Locust Streets. Museum hours are Tuesday–Friday 10:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M., Saturday 10 A.M. - 4:00 P.M., and Sunday 1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M. The museum is closed on Mondays and on the following holidays: Independence Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Daily admission rates are: \$7 Adults, \$6 seniors, and \$3 College/University Students. The museum is free on Thursdays, and those 18 and younger receive free admission every day, thanks to Prudential Financial. Website: [www.dbqart.org](http://www.dbqart.org).