



June 8, 2010
For Immediate Release

GRANT TO HELP HILL-STEAD MUSEUM BROADEN BASE OF FINANCIAL AND AUDIENCE SUPPORT

Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington has been awarded a \$350,000 grant by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to establish an entrepreneurial department to explore new sources of income.

The goal of the three-year grant is to allow Hill-Stead, which has a small endowment and must raise 85 percent of its operating budget each year, to annually balance its budget by increasing its earned income, said Sue Sturtevant, museum executive director and CEO.

“In doing so,” explained Sturtevant, “we will then be able to take greater risks with new programming to reach a more diversified audience. When we have greater age, gender and ethnic diversity in our visitors, and greater financial security, we will be successful in our new initiative. We are so grateful to the Hartford Foundation. It is a true community foundation, keeping cultural institutions in the Hartford region alive and well.”

Along with marketing materials and supporting staff, the grant will fund the new position of director of enterprise initiatives who will work with Dr. Sturtevant to develop projects.

Nonprofits having sources of earned income to sustain programs is not a new concept, said Sturtevant. “Think Girl Scout cookies or Goodwill Industries, or nonprofits operating a thrift store or a bakery, or a science museum selling telescopes in its gift shop. The economic downturn has made this a good time to act to supplement and complement the current streams of contributed and fee income at Hill-Stead.”

At present, Hill-Stead generates most of its annual income primarily through donations and ticket sales to approximately 32,000 visitors each year. Potential new sources of income to be considered include development of products for sale that are aligned with the museum’s extensive collections of paintings, prints, photographs, ceramics, furniture and books and documents.

Other sources of new revenue might come from such things as increased marketing of the site for corporate and private events, expansion of the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival, and development of the Farmers’ Market.

“Part of the beauty of this grant,” added Marie Dalton-Meyer, Hill-Stead’s director of institutional advancement, “is that it ties directly into the museum’s long-term objective of building its endowment, and goes hand in hand with the goals of our five-year strategic plan.”

A National Historic Landmark, Hill-Stead Museum, built in 1901, is most noted for its 33,000-square-foot house filled with art and antiques. Pioneering female architect Theodate Pope Riddle designed the Colonial Revival-style house, set on 152 hilltop acres, to showcase the Impressionist masterpieces amassed by her father, Cleveland iron industrialist Alfred A. Pope.

Collections include paintings by Monet, Degas, Manet, Whistler and Cassatt, as well as numerous works on paper and Japanese woodblock prints, all displayed among original furnishings.

The collection also includes 250 prints and photographs, 290 ceramics, 400 pieces of furniture, a 3,300-volume library and 16,000-plus archival documents. The property also features an Arts and Crafts carriage barn and theater, stone garages, woodland trails, a pond and dairy complex, and the 1920-era Sunken Garden.

***Hill-Stead Museum** is a member of Connecticut’s Historic Gardens and a stop on the Connecticut Art Trail ([.arttrail.org](http://arttrail.org)), a partnership of fifteen world-class museums and historic sites across the state. The museum’s period rooms are open for tours Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm. The last tour of the day begins one hour before closing. Grounds are open to the public daily 7:30 am-5:30 pm.*

***Hartford Foundation for Public Giving** is the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region, dedicated to improving the quality of life for area residents for the past 85 years. The Foundation receives gifts from thousands of generous individuals and families, and last year, awarded grants of more than \$25 million to a broad range of area nonprofit organizations. For more information about the Hartford Foundation, visit [.hfpg.org](http://hfpg.org) or call 860-548-1888.*