

Rep. Louise Slaughter Emphasizes Importance of the Arts to Patrons of Niagara University's Castellani Art Museum

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NIAGARA UNIVERSITY, NY – U.S. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (D-NY) addressed an enthusiastic audience of museum patrons at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University's Seventh Annual Gala, "15 Minutes of Fame! The Andy Warhol Experience" on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009. The near-capacity crowd enjoyed a gala dinner and auction to raise funds for the museum's many educational and exhibition-related programs for Niagara University students and the surrounding community.

Rep. Slaughter said that the Castellani Art Museum was one of the first places she visited when she became the representative for the 28th District, which includes Niagara University and its surrounding community. "I am so happy to be here to recognize the important work of both Castellani Museum and Niagara University as stewards of the arts," she said. "The recent acquisition of such a collection of original Andy Warhol photographs illustrates yet again the museum's continued efforts to shape the unique cultural landscape of Niagara Falls."

Rep. Slaughter is one of Congress's most outspoken and effective advocates for the arts. "The arts define our culture and instill unique character in the communities across our nation," she said. "Art transcends barriers of language, time, and generation, translating cultural differences, breathing life into history, and bridging experiences across cultures."

As co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, she was instrumental in obtaining \$50 million in stimulus funding for the National Endowment of the Arts last year.

She emphasized the importance of the arts to the economy, noting that "arts and culture are important economic assets. They create a hub of economic activity, attracting investments, generating tax revenues, and stimulating local economies through tourism and urban renewal." She added that the arts have an impact both nationally, and on our local economy, supporting "5.7 million jobs nationwide, and in our district, there are over 1,200 arts-related businesses employing nearly 16,000 people."

In conclusion, the Congresswoman noted that "employers today in America and abroad are looking for imaginative and vibrant young men and women to fill their rosters. Educating children early and continuously in the arts will prepare them for the work in today's innovative and creative postindustrial society. Ninety-six percent of corporate leaders surveyed recognized that creativity is essential to succeeding in the today's workforce."

The Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University is a cultural resource that benefits the Niagara Region as a whole. The museum's collection of 5,500 pieces of mainly modern and contemporary art includes works by Warhol, Picasso, Miro, Nevelson and many others. Admission is free and the public is always welcome. The museum stages innovative exhibitions which change frequently throughout the year. Museum hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 11 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. For more information, please call 716-286-8201.

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