



**Adirondack Experience Announces \$4M Campaign to Renovate Building
And Create First Permanent Exhibition Spaces for Its Fine and Decorative Art Collection**

Museum Reaches \$1M Fundraising Benchmark with \$250,000 IMLS Grant

Blue Mountain Lake, NY – September 1, 2020 – The [Adirondack Experience, The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake \(ADKX\)](#), today announced a \$4M campaign for its *Adirondack Creativity* initiative, which includes the renovation of its original building—now one of 24 historic and contemporary buildings on the museum’s campus. The renovation will establish a 5,800-square-foot exhibition space dedicated to the museum’s fine and decorative art collection. Once completed in 2023, the building will provide the first permanent galleries dedicated to this approximately 5,000-object collection and allow for the most comprehensive showing of the material in the museum’s 60-year history. ADKX also announced that it has received \$250,000 grant from the *Museums for America* program of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal agency. The IMLS funds, along with \$600,000 in state funding and an additional \$250,000 from private donors, push ADKX’s fundraising for the initiative over the \$1M benchmark, adding new momentum to the campaign.

The Adirondack Experience (formerly the Adirondack Museum) was established in 1957 by industrialist, philanthropist, and historian Harold Hochschild in what is now referred to as the “Main Building.” As part of the *Adirondack Creativity* initiative, the Main Building will be redesigned to feature four distinct gallery spaces, each thematically tied to inspirations within the fine and decorative art collection; a refreshed entry and introductory space; and a maker’s studio, which will allow for onsite creation of works by local and visiting artists and artisans as well as visitors to the museum. The building will for the first time be fitted with a climate control system, allowing for the long-term display of art and artifacts that previously were only shown in brief rotations.

The *Adirondack Creativity* initiative continues the museum’s institutional transformation to reinvigorate the campus and emphasize visitor engagement and experience. The effort publicly launched in 2017 with the opening of 19,000-square-foot permanent installation, titled *Life in the Adirondacks*, which focuses on the rich cultural history, natural environment, and growth of the Adirondack region. The installation features approximately 300 artifacts from ADKX’s 165,000-object permanent collection, including wooden guide boats, vintage railway cars, historic photographs, and rare books and volumes, as well as a range of newly created interactive elements that center individual narratives, music, and oral histories.

With *Adirondack Creativity*, ADKX is turning its focus on reinterpreting and creating new opportunities to engage audiences with its fine and decorative arts collection, which includes works from the 1820s

through the present day and is recognized for magnificent examples of works in the “Adirondack Style”—a unique approach that emphasizes the use of natural materials and takes inspiration from surrounding landscapes. The building’s four primary galleries will highlight how the natural features of the Adirondacks, such as light, water, and forest and mountain terrains, have captured the devotion and inspired painters, sculptors, architects, writers, and expert artisans for generations. The presentations will emphasize the stories and creative innovations of a wide range of artists, from renowned figures such as Thomas Cole, Seneca Ray Stoddard, and Rockwell Kent, as well as pioneering but perhaps lesser-known individuals like Edna West Teall, Margaret Bourke White, Bumpei Usui, and Niiio Perkins. The installations will emphasize video and sound installations as well as interactive and immersive content.

“The *Adirondack Creativity* initiative is an important next step in enacting our vision to center the visitor experience. In a moment in which institutions are being called to reexamine and reinterpret their collections, we see this previously conceived project as an essential opportunity to share the artistic trajectory of the region in a way that is fulsome and engaging to a wide range of audiences,” said Executive Director David Kahn. “We are grateful to IMLS for helping us achieve an important benchmark in our fundraising campaign toward this project, which has been a long-held dream for the museum’s leadership.”

This year, IMLS received 345 funding requests from across the U.S. and made grants to only 109 projects, totaling \$19,673,947 in funds. “As pillars of our communities, libraries and museums bring people together by providing important programs, services, and collections. These institutions are trusted spaces where people can learn, explore and grow,” said IMLS Director Crosby Kemper. “IMLS is proud to support their initiatives through our grants as they educate and enhance their communities.”

About Adirondack Experience, The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake

Adirondack Experience, The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake (ADKX), accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, shares the history and culture of the Adirondack region through interactive exhibits, hands-on activities, and culturally rich collections in more than 24 historic and contemporary buildings on a 121- acre campus in the heart of the Adirondacks. The museum is supported in part with donations from the general public, with some general operating support made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. For additional information, call 518-352-7311 or visit www.theADKX.org.

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