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### **Myles & C. Jean McDonough Foundation Announces More than \$15 Million in Commitments to Seven Leading Cultural Institutions in Worcester and Central Massachusetts**

WORCESTER, MASS. — The McDonough family, on behalf of the Myles & C. Jean McDonough Foundation, is pleased to announce \$15.25 million in commitments to seven leading cultural institutions in Worcester and central Massachusetts. In a sweeping philanthropic act that will have profound and lasting benefits to Worcester and surrounding communities, the commitment will be used to support initiatives at the American Antiquarian Society, EcoTarium, The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts, Music Worcester, Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Worcester Art Museum, and Worcester Historical Museum.

C. Jean McDonough and her late husband Myles, founder of Spencer, Mass. manufacturer FLEXcon, have shown their passion for these seven institutions for decades, through philanthropic generosity and direct involvement. "These extraordinary institutions have long been a part of the cultural heart of central Massachusetts. We felt the time was right to present each with a gift to show our continued adoration of the role each plays in our community, with the desire to support their initiatives for years to come," said C. Jean McDonough.

"Worcester takes great pride in our cultural institutions and in the city's support of all things creative and historic. These organizations are the lifeblood of the heart of the Commonwealth," said City Manager Edward M. Augustus, Jr. "This gift is perhaps the biggest to the Worcester cultural community this century, if not of all time. I'm so grateful to the McDonough family for its overwhelming support of these vital pillars of our community."

Representing some of the oldest and largest cultural organizations in central Massachusetts, the seven institutions combined represent more than 850 years of serving the Worcester community and attract nearly 580,000 visitors each year. The impact of this gift to central Massachusetts in providing communities the opportunity to engage with culture in science, nature, art, music, performing arts and history, will be far reaching for decades to come.

The Myles & C. Jean McDonough Foundation gifts were committed as follows:

- \$4 million to the **American Antiquarian Society (AAS)**. Founded in 1812 by Revolutionary War patriot and printer Isaiah Thomas, the American Antiquarian Society is both a learned society and a major independent research library. The AAS library today houses the largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, music, and graphic arts material printed through 1876 in what is now the United States, as well as manuscripts and a substantial collection of secondary texts, bibliographies, and digital resources and reference works related to all aspects of American history and culture before the twentieth century. AAS was presented with the 2013 National Humanities Medal by President Obama in a ceremony at the White House.
- \$4 million to the **Worcester Art Museum (WAM)**. Founded in 1896, the Worcester Art Museum's encyclopedic 38,000 piece collection covers fifty one centuries of art, including

European, American, Asian, Pre-Columbian, and Contemporary. Highlights include the Medieval Chapter House, Renaissance Court, and Worcester Hunt Mosaic. The Museum was the first in America to acquire paintings by Monet and Gauguin and one of the first to collect photography and to focus on collaborating with local schools. In 2013, WAM acquired the John Woodman Higgins Armory Collection, one of the finest arms and armor collections in the country.

- \$2.5 million to **Tower Hill Botanic Garden**. The Worcester County Horticultural Society, incorporated in 1842, is the third oldest active horticultural society in the United States. The society is a nonprofit educational organization for the purpose of advancing the science, and encouraging and improving the practice of, horticulture. Its public garden, Tower Hill Botanic Garden, showcases carefully planned gardens and trails that enhance the natural features of this beautiful 132-acre property and is the first and only comprehensive botanic garden in New England.
- \$2 million to **EcoTarium**. Founded as the Worcester Lyceum of Natural History in 1825 and incorporated as the Worcester Natural History Society in 1884, the EcoTarium is well rooted in the Worcester community as an organization dedicated to the study of science and nature, and is the second oldest natural history society in the United States. With a three floor museum, historic collections, wildlife, educational programs and 55 acres of grounds, EcoTarium offer hands-on exploration of natural and physical sciences and the New England environment.
- \$1.5 million to the **Worcester Historical Museum (WHM)**. The Worcester Society of Antiquity was founded in 1875 with the purpose to increase an interest in archaeological science, and to rescue from oblivion such historical matter as would otherwise be lost. WHM is the only institution devoted to local history. It includes a research library of over 7,000 titles, an archive that houses thousands of documents, and a collection of artifacts, all vital to the study of Worcester history.
- \$750K to **Music Worcester**. Music Worcester, Inc., formerly called the Worcester Music Festival, was founded in 1858 to bring live music and cultural events to the greater Central Massachusetts region. Music Worcester presents world-renowned musicians and artists from across all performing arts disciplines in addition to serving its community through far-reaching educational and outreach activities. Music Worcester programs include international orchestras, Grammy-award winning headliners, and celebrated soloists and chamber ensembles to inspire tens of thousands of audience members each season. The Worcester Music Festival was recognized by the Library of Congress as one of the oldest performing arts organizations in the country and the oldest music festival in continuous operation.
- \$500K to **The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts**. The Hanover Theatre opened in March of 2008 following a \$32 million historic renovation. Over the last seven seasons, the theatre has established its place as a world-class performing arts venue, acting as a catalyst for the economic development of downtown Worcester and gaining recognition by Pollstar as one of the top theatres in the world. Serving the youth, education and accessibility are some of the values behind the theatre's mission to foster a love and appreciation of the performing arts in audiences of today and tomorrow. The newly acquired 551 Main Street demonstrates a commitment to provide expanded education programming while putting the organization's core values center stage while building a culturally vibrant institution and city.

These commitments provide renewed vigor for the cultural institutions, which will use these gifts for current capital campaigns or endowments.

On behalf of all seven institutions, Joseph P. Cox, president of the EcoTarium and chair of the Worcester Cultural Coalition, said, "Words cannot express nor encompass the generosity and passion for culture that remains the legacy of Myles McDonough, and that has been the continuing mission of one of Worcester's most gracious ladies, Jean McDonough." He added, "Jean's energetic enthusiasm and nurturing support for central Massachusetts remains unparalleled, enabling all of us to successfully fulfill our missions and inspire future generations of children and families to develop a passion for science, nature, art, music, performing arts and history. As we have inspired others, so she continues to inspire us."

For more information about each of the cultural institutions, visit their websites: American Antiquarian Society at [americanantiquarian.org](http://americanantiquarian.org), EcoTarium at [ecotarium.org](http://ecotarium.org), The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts at [thehanovertheatre.org](http://thehanovertheatre.org), Music Worcester, Inc. at [musicworchester.org](http://musicworchester.org), Tower Hill Botanic Garden at [towerhillbg.org](http://towerhillbg.org), Worcester Art Museum at [worchesterart.org](http://worchesterart.org), and Worcester Historical Museum at [worchesterhistory.org](http://worchesterhistory.org).