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AN ARTISTIC INAUGURATION

Judy L. Larson will be installed as the first holder of the R. Anthony Askew Chair in Art on Friday, Jan. 23, with a ceremony at 10:30 a.m. in Murchison Gym. A panel of art professionals will discuss "The Meaning and Value of Museums in the 21st Century" at 3:30 p.m. in Porter Theatre, and Larson will give a lecture, "The Adams Center for the Visual Arts: Transforming Communities Through Art," at 5 p.m. in Porter Theatre. All events are free and open to the public.

The R. Anthony Askew Chair honors the founding director of Westmont's Reynolds Gallery, Tony Askew, who retired in 2008 after 26 years of service. Stephen and Denise Adams, Walter and Darlene Hansen, Harold and Annette Simmons, and Parker and Carolina Montgomery provided the principal gifts toward endowing the chair, which was also supported by many alumni and friends.

As holder of the R. Anthony Askew Chair, Larson will direct the gallery and guide its move into the Adams Center for the Visual Arts, scheduled for completion by 2011, and teach classes in art history and museum studies. She was most recently the director of the National Museum of Women in the Arts [NMWA] in Washington, D.C.

Panelists in the afternoon discussion include professionals from all levels of the art industry. Mary Case, who will moderate, is the founding director of Qm², a consulting firm specializing in museum leadership. Dane Goodman, director of the Atkinson Gallery at Santa Barbara City College, will discuss the particular challenges and strengths of the local art community. Randall Stout of Randall Stout Architects Inc. has designed galleries and museums around the world, including the Taubman Museum of Art in Roanoke, Va. and the Hunter Museum of American Art in Chattanooga, Tenn. Artist and historian Amalia Amaki is widely exhibited and published. Formerly professor and curator of the Paul R. Jones Collection at the University of Delaware, she is currently a professor of art and art history at the University of Alabama.

As the director of the NMWA from 2002 to 2007, Larson is credited with completing a \$25 million endowment campaign and enriching the museum's exhibition schedule to include thematic exhibitions and new artistic fields. She was active in the formation of new national and international committees, which advocate for women in the arts, and in 2007 she successfully nominated the museum for a National Award from the Institute of Museums and Library Services. Larson previously directed the Taubman Museum of Art, where she coordinated the acquisition of a multi-million dollar American art collection. She has also served as curator of American art at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Ga., where she organized national touring exhibitions on American artists such as John Twachtman and Norman Rockwell.

Larson worked at the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art while earning undergraduate and master's degrees in art history at UCLA. She worked six years in the print department of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass. In 1980 she served as guest curator at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. She completed a doctorate at the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts at Emory University, Atlanta, in 1998.

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