



New MIAD president is nationally recognized arts and administrative leader

For release: March 28, 2007

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PRESS RELEASE

MILWAUKEE... Neil Hoffman, a three-time college president and lifelong advocate for the arts and community arts education, has been appointed the next president of the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design. He will begin working at Wisconsin's only independent, four-year college of art and design on June 1.

"Neil Hoffman is a nationally recognized expert in the advancement of educational institutions through strategic planning, enrollment management, fundraising, and board and leadership development," said Claire Hackmann, chair of MIAD's board of trustees and leader of its presidential recruitment efforts.

"These are exactly the skills that allow MIAD to reach a new level of excellence," said Hackmann. "Neil's proven track record, coupled with his infectious energy and passion for arts education at all levels, distinguished him from among the 10 highly qualified candidates the search committee interviewed for this position."

"I cannot wait to begin," said Hoffman. "As the only independent college of its kind in the state, MIAD plays a prominent role in the community and has a unique responsibility to support the arts and arts education in high schools. MIAD is an outstanding college and community resource, and I want to help increase its deserved recognition in these areas.

"What I have found during my career is that what people believe in, as a shared vision for the future, becomes the future. One of the many things I am looking forward to is helping to shape MIAD's promising future through strategic planning and thinking in partnership with its renowned faculty and staff."

Hoffman has twice served at the Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, as president from 1993-2000 and as dean and chief executive officer from 1979-1983, during which time he converted the then two-year publicly operated college to a comprehensive, independent four-year college.

As president, he established the college's first strategic long-range plan and substantially improved all measures of enrollment management, including number and quality of students. He raised capital funds of \$15 million and increased the endowment 600%. Hoffman also increased scholarship funding and created a comprehensive diversity program, new degree programs and a new downtown campus for the School of Fashion Design.

"I congratulate the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design on the appointment of Neil Hoffman as its new president," said Samuel Hoi, Otis' current president and chair of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD). "In the 1990s, Neil led the Otis College of Art and Design through a transformative period. His presidency was one of confidence, optimism and long-range vision, and the Otis community appreciates his legacy to date. I am certain that Neil will bring his trademark skills and strengths to MIAD."

In between his positions at Otis, Hoffman served from 1985-1993 as president of the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he achieved similar exemplary results.

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From 1983-1985, Hoffman served as the first president of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he implemented a comprehensive marketing and enrollment management program and acquired the donation of the school's first residence hall. He established support for secondary arts education through the creation of a national outreach program (BASIC – Basic Art Support in the Curriculum), which was adopted by the 36 AICAD colleges.

During his career, Hoffman also served as founding director of the Program in Artisanry at Boston University and as associate dean at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He earned his bachelor's and master's degree in education from the State University of New York at Buffalo, his hometown, and is a recipient of an honorary doctorate degree from Otis. Hoffman began his professional career as an art teacher and department head for Grand Island Public Schools in New York.

During the last two years, he has served as associate director of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, responsible for managing the accreditation processes for 40 institutions of higher education in the Western region. He also served for five years as a consultant in college and non-profit development and is currently writing a book on the management of non-profit institutions.

Hoffman's community involvement has been as extensive as his administrative success. He has served as a regional member of the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, chair of the California Arts Council's Steering Committee for the creation of a statewide plan for the visual and performing arts and chair of the City of Oakland's Cultural Planning process. He has also made numerous presentations to professional organizations regarding the significance of arts education in secondary schools.

Hoffman has been honored throughout his career by virtually every city or state in which he has worked, including as Oakland Chinese Community Council Man of the Year for his leadership in developing the city's cultural plan and by art education associations in California and Illinois.

A professional and exhibiting photographer, he participated in the first major U.S. exhibition to feature photography at Western New York's Albright-Knox Art Gallery, and he has served as a member of the American Film Institute's Advisory Committee.

Hoffman succeeds Mary C. Schopp, who served as MIAD's acting president since Robert Rindler's resignation in August 2006. She will return to her former position of executive vice president.

Hoffman and his wife, Sue, are planning to attend Creative Fusion, a new celebratory benefit at the college on May 5 hosted by Madeleine and David Lubar.

MIAD is Wisconsin's only college devoted exclusively to the education of artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it enrolls 650 talented students from across the country who are taught by artists and designers recognized regionally and nationally for their professional and educational accomplishments. Its unique academic approach blends curricular and extracurricular experiences, a community service course requirement, and liberal studies in 11 majors toward the bachelor of fine arts degree. With 80% of its 2,000 graduates living and working in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital "brain gain" to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.