



# Chestnut Hill Local

(/)

Monday, March 13, 2023

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## \$750,00 grant for Woodmere's new building

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**Woodmere CEO William Valerio (left) chats with State Rep. Tarik Khan at the Tempesta di Mare classical music concert on Saturday to celebrate the \$750,000 state grant for the museum's new building, the Frances M. Maguire Hall for Art and Education.**

Posted Wednesday, March 1, 2023 12:00 am

Woodmere Art Museum announced Saturday that it has been awarded a \$750,000 Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) Grant for the Frances M. Maguire Hall for Art and Education redevelopment project in Chestnut Hill.

The award, along with other gifts from the community, will fund renovation plans that include turning the spacious parlors and bedrooms of the 19th-century mansion into galleries for the museum's permanent collection of works by Philadelphia artists, as well as a hands-on children's art and education center and other public programming spaces.

The announcement was made to a crowd of more than 100 people by Woodmere's director and CEO, William Valerio, and State Rep. Tarik Khan prior to a classical music concert held at the museum.

"Woodmere is proud to be able to further expand its footprint with the addition of Frances M. Maguire Hall for Art and Education," Valerio said. "We are extremely grateful to Rep. Kahn, to the governor, and to all our elected officials in Harrisburg for this RACP grant award which will play a significant role in helping us achieve state-of-the-art facilities to better serve our community."

Khan said he sees the grant as an opportunity to invest in "community institutions" in the wake of the COVID pandemic and help return life back to normal.

"Coming out of the pandemic, we see a continuation of troubling cases like social isolation, economic stresses and mental health strains showing up in higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicide," Khan said. "With the societal problems that are symptoms of a disinvestment in our community, including the gun violence epidemic, it's clear we need more community institutions and spaces like the Woodmere that are robust cathedrals of healing, respite and restoration."

Woodmere Art Museum purchased Maguire Hall, formerly known as St. Michael's Hall, in October 2021 (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/stories/woodmere-art-museum-acquires-saint-michaels-hall,21463>). Maguire Hall is located just steps away from the museum's main building.

## About Woodmere Art Museum

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Housed in a 19th-century stone mansion on six acres in Chestnut Hill, Woodmere offers a unique museum experience that centers on the art and artists of Philadelphia.

Throughout the year, Woodmere offers family events, tours, gallery talks, lectures, panel discussions, studio art classes, film and music performances. The core of Woodmere's collection is the gift of Charles Knox Smith, who built his fortune in the mining industry before becoming a city leader and passionate art collector. In 1898, he purchased the Woodmere estate with the intent of creating a museum of the fine arts immersed in the green beauty of Chestnut Hill. He expanded and transformed his home into a showcase for his art collection as a gift to the people of Philadelphia. Smith focused much of his collecting on Philadelphia's artists, but his Hudson River paintings remain on view as the best in Philadelphia to this day. For almost 40 years up to 1978, the artist Edith Emerson was Woodmere's director, and she established a focus on women artists, especially collecting those in the circle of her life partner, Violet Oakley.



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