

Freer House Shines Bright in National Spotlight

The Friends of the Freer House and MPSI celebrated the completion of a new cedar shake roof and other improvements to the Freer House on October 8. The event also recognized the recent designation of the Freer House as a site of National Significance on the National Register of Historic Places. WSU President Allan Gilmour joined city and state officials and WSU guests to acknowledge these achievements and thank those who made them possible.

State Historic Preservation Officer Brian Conway presented President Gilmour with an official decree from the U.S. Department of the Interior elevating the Freer House to a site of National Significance. In his remarks, President Gilmour complimented the Friends of the Freer House for their dedication and commented on the importance of the Freer House and Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute to the ongoing revitalization of Ferry Street and the WSU/Cultural Center neighborhood. He also got big laughs from the crowd. "When I worked at Ford, I was given the task of renovating the historic Dearborn Inn," he said. "I'd never done anything like that before so I asked a friend for advice. He told me to make sure I got three reliable bids for the work. Then take those bids and add them all together. That's your budget to renovate a historic building."



(left) Chair Phebe Goldstein
Honored guests join new
Matsuda and his wife Na



The roof restoration project was supported through funds generously provided by the WSU Board of Governors. In addition to the historically appropriate roof, the project included new copper gutters and flashing, energy efficient insulation, an electronic ice melt system and masonry cleaning of the entire exterior.

This six-month, \$750,000 project not only secured the historic Freer House from the elements but also enhanced its beauty by revealing the subtle colors and textures of the original stonework buried under 120 years of grime and dirt.

Over 100 guests joined Phebe Goldstein, chair of the Friends of the Freer House, MPSI Director Peter Lichtenberg, and Vice President of Research Hilary Ratner in applauding the work of the various contractors, architects, and the WSU Facilities, Planning and Management team for their efforts. Special appreciation was extended to WSU Project Manager Steven Pecic.

On October 24, the Friends hosted a lecture at the Detroit Institute of Arts entitled, "A Discerning Taste for Japanese Art: The Formation of Charles L. Freer's

The Freer House

received an Americana Grant of \$42,150 for 2011 to conduct a public lecture series, continue to analyze the paint colors originally used in the Freer House, and begin implementing suggestions from consultants in museum design to improve awareness of and accessibility to the Freer House.



eting rooms.



in presents plaques to the "New Roof" team.
Consul General of Japan to Detroit, Mr. Kuninori
Matsuda (far right).



Collection," by Ann Yonemura, senior associate curator of Japanese Art, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. The lecture attracted 225 people, and more than 100 visitors gathered later at the Freer House for a benefit reception and tours.

The Friends of Freer were especially pleased to have esteemed guests from the Japanese business and cultural communities in attendance. A special Bento Box lunch was held to honor the new Consul General of Japan to Detroit, Mr. Kuninori Matsuda, his wife Mrs. Naoko Matsuda, as well as Ms. Yonemura and other invited guests.

The event marked the first visit to the Freer House for many guests and generated great interest in the major contributions of Charles Freer toward fostering cultural relations between the United States and Japan. The event was co-sponsored with the Japan America Society and the Asian & Islamic Art Forum/DIA, with support from the Americana Foundation and Blossoms, Birmingham.

- by William Colburn
Historic Preservation Specialist and
FOFH Board Member

Professionals Flock to Trainings on Autism, Speech Delays

Explorations in Development, MPSI's enhanced professional development seminar, trained nearly 200 social workers, speech/language pathologists, nurses, counselors and teachers this October on high impact topics. The series spans two age groups: Explorations in Infancy looked at early indicators and interventions for autism spectrum disorders; and Explorations in Children, Youth and Families provided training in speech delays and sensory integration challenges.

Speakers discussed the latest research and treatments for clinical approaches and got high marks across the board for relevance, knowledge, and clarity of presentation. Attendees came from as far as Kalamazoo to attend the conference at the Wayne State University Oakland Center. MPSI's infant mental health clinical coordinator, Carla Barron, coordinated the Explorations in Infancy program. "Our goal was to expand the already excellent training and attract more professionals," Carla said. "Autism spectrum disorders are increasing and clinicians are trying to keep pace with the latest research."

The day included research on early diagnosis and interventions, a treatment approach called P.L.A.Y. (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters), and remarks from the mother of two young sons with autism on its effects on the family. "Attendees were deeply moved by Holly's story," Carla said of the parent presentation. "Her honesty gave us all a new



Internationally known therapist Nancy Kaufman explains her speech-to-language protocol.

perspective on the ripple effects of autistic behavior."

Explorations in Children, Youth and Families examined speech and sensory problems in autism and other disorders. Nancy Kaufman, founder of the Kaufman Children's Center, explained her work and successes with children who struggle to speak. Nancy is an internationally known lecturer on childhood apraxia of speech, and the author of several books and kits to help develop speech. KCC treats about 300 children a year from around the world.

MPSI Outreach Coordinator Bev Weatherington organized the program which included KCC's director of occupational therapy, Jessica Hunt's, overview of sensory integration challenges and treatments.

The enhanced Explorations in Development continuing education programs were a success by every measure and the new format will continue next year. A full 95% of attendees found the presentations worthwhile and said they would recommend the program to colleagues. For more about programs or to join the mailing list, contact Carla Barron at ac7863@wayne.edu.

Looking for a speaker for your community group, support group, or church event?



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