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Photo Available Upon Request

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Pat Murphy Appointed to American Association of Museums Accreditation Commission

The American Association of Museums (AAM) recently announced the appointment of Oberlin Heritage Center Executive Director Patricia Murphy to serve on its nine-member Accreditation Commission for a five-year term. Commissioners are senior museum professionals with significant experience in all aspects of museum management and operations. The Commission meets three times a year in Washington, D.C. to render decisions regarding accreditation status for all museums. Accredited status from AAM is the highest national recognition achievable by an American museum. Of the nation's estimated 17,500 museums, 778 are currently accredited. To earn accreditation, a museum first must conduct a year of self-study, then undergo a site visit by a two-person team of peers. The Accreditation Commission considers the self-study and site visit report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation. While the time to complete the process varies by institution, it generally takes as much as three years.

Pat Murphy led the Oberlin Heritage Center's work to obtain museum accreditation which it achieved in 2005. Murphy stated: "Achieving accreditation by the American Association of Museums was by far the most difficult and most gratifying accomplishment that the board, staff and volunteers and I have worked on since I arrived at the Oberlin Heritage Center (then the Oberlin Historical and Improvement Organization) in 1993. I am deeply honored to be asked to serve on the Accreditation Commission as a representative of small museums. I believe very strongly in the importance of advancing museums and historical organizations through standards and best practices."

Murphy has been instrumental in establishing the Oberlin Heritage Center as a regional visitor attraction and community asset and in promoting heritage tourism and historic preservation. Previous positions include working in historic house museums, historical societies and historic preservation organizations in Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Los Angeles and Cleveland. She is a graduate of the Getty Leadership Institute/Museum Management Institute (2003), Leadership Lorain County (2001) and the Seminar for Historical Administration (1999). She has served as a peer reviewer for the American Association of Museums for the past five years. She holds a B.A. in History and French and an Alumni Award from Grinnell College and has a Master of Architectural History degree from the University of Virginia. She serves on the City of Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission and is the new president of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums.

- For more information on accreditation, visit <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/accreditation-commissioner-bios.cfm> or <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/about.cfm> or contact the American Association of Museums Press Contact, Dewey Blanton at 202-218-7704.
- For more information about the Oberlin Heritage Center, visit www.oberlinheritage.org.

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