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Photo Available Upon Request

Oberlin Heritage Center Is First Ohio Museum and First Lorain County Non-Profit to Achieve OANO Excellence Certification

Jennifer Williams, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations (OANO), announced on April 6 that the Heritage Center has achieved certification in OANO's "Standards for Excellence" program. The program recognizes organizations that are well-managed and responsibly governed and which achieve their mission and serve their communities effectively.

The Oberlin Heritage Center is the first museum and historical organization in Ohio, and the first nonprofit organization in Lorain County, to achieve this "Seal of Excellence." The Center joins more than 30 other nonprofits in Ohio that have achieved the Standards certification.

The Standards for Excellence certification reflects a conscientious and lengthy review of a nonprofit organization's program operations, governance, human resources, financial management and fundraising practices. It sets rigorous benchmarks for ethics and accountability to boost public trust in the nonprofit sector. Nonprofits from around the state are eligible to apply for the Standards program. "It takes great dedication to undergo the certification process. We are proud to give this honor to the Oberlin Heritage Center. Their work shows the commitment they have to those who benefit from their programs, their contributors and to the public," said Williams.

The Oberlin Heritage Center is an award-winning small museum, historical society and historic preservation organization, which is accredited by the American Association of Museums. It offers guided tours, history walks, educational programs for all ages, children's summer camps, and special events both at its complex of historic sites and throughout the community, often in collaboration with other organizations. The Heritage Center also houses a Resource Center for researchers of local history or family genealogies. It has been in existence for more than 100 years, initially operated as an all-volunteer organization and presently led by a small professional staff with the assistance of hundreds of volunteers.

The Standards program was created in 1995 with grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to advance the efficacy of nonprofit organizations. Shortly after the formation of the trial program in Maryland, Ohio was selected to participate. OANO is a statewide membership association of nearly 600 organizations that provides leadership, education and advocacy to enhance the ability of Ohio's nonprofit organizations to serve their communities. The Oberlin Heritage Center will receive special recognition at the Sixth Annual Ohio Nonprofit Excellence Award Luncheon on May 5 at the Ohio Statehouse.

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