



Honoring an Extraordinary Leader



A Campaign to Strengthen the NCSML President's Endowment

A unique opportunity to celebrate a remarkable career with a lasting gift to the institution and the community for which Gail has given so much.

Make a Gift

After 16 years of dedicated and visionary leadership at the helm of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, our friend and colleague, Gail Naughton, has announced her retirement. To permanently honor Gail, and to continue to expand the reach and impact of the NCSML, the Board of Trustees has announced a campaign for the NCSML President's Endowment in Gail's name.

We hope you will show your appreciation of Gail and help to make this great honor possible.

Under Gail's leadership

Participation at the museum has grown by 40 percent, including a notable increase in attendance by families and children since re-opening. Thanks to Gail's expertise in fundraising, and her commitment to the museum's sustainable future, the museum has no debt and endowment holdings have moved from \$600,000 to over \$12 million during Gail's tenure. Gail leaves the NCSML in a sound financial position with a dedicated and experienced staff and a committed Board of Trustees.



During Gail's tenure, the NCSML has moved from a regional attraction to a nationally acclaimed, world-class museum with stunning exhibits, educational programs, films, lecture series, and research programs that puts it in the top tier of ethnically based museums in the United States.

Building on the strength of generations

The first iteration of the museum opened in a small house in 1978. It served as a repository where great-grandma's wicker trunk, the family Bible, historical documents, and intricately embroidered folk costumes could be protected and displayed. It was a place where traditional songs were sung, children learned the language that rolled off their grandparents' tongues, and many came to appreciate the restorative powers of a lively folk dance. This early effort became the foundation for something beyond early imagining—a national museum that was dedicated by Presidents Clinton, Havel, and Kováč, in 1995. Since then, there have been many successes and some significant challenges, as well.



No one close to the NCSML will ever forget the flood of 2008, which resulted in over \$11 million in damage. For many organizations, that kind of setback would have been crippling. But thanks to Gail's unflinching leadership, the resolve of the NCSML board, and the support of donors like you, the NCSML not only recovered, but prospered.

More than \$28 million was raised to move the building to higher ground. And in four short years and with a major expansion, the NCSML re-opened with an exceptional exhibition on Alphonse Mucha. Visitors numbered in the tens of

thousands in just a few weeks. Since re-opening, the NCSML has become a symbol of resilience and of the fortitude that is a hallmark of Cedar Rapids and the Czechs and Slovaks who helped build this community.

(Over)



“The museum couldn’t have had a better leader after the flood of 2008. She believed in a big vision for this place, and she had a way of getting other people to believe it too. She worked day and night to marshal all of her resources and kept smiling through it all. We are the lucky beneficiaries of her skill and perseverance.”

-Lu Barron, NCSML past chair

A Legacy of Success

This amazing post-flood transformation was recognized when the NCSML was awarded the Institute for Museum & Library Services Award in 2013, which was presented to Gail by Michelle Obama in a White House ceremony. The legacy of success in the past 16 years is remarkable for its breadth but is, perhaps, most praiseworthy for the strength of the NCSML today and for its ability to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.



Be a Special Part of Our Future

Today we honor Gail’s legacy by strengthening the NCSML’s President’s Endowment. But this campaign is really about our community and its future.

The success of this campaign will enhance our financial sustainability by providing funds in perpetuity for this critical leadership position, and will allow the NCSML to strengthen its succession plan by enhancing the museum’s ability to attract and retain the highest level of management leadership going forward.



Attracting top talent for this position helps ensure that the NCSML continues to grow and innovate, to stand as the foremost US institution preserving Czech and Slovak history and culture, and to become a key partner in civic education in Cedar Rapids and nation-wide.

By addressing issues that resonate with people today, like **freedom, family, community, and human dignity**—the NCSML is forging new ground. We need a leader who can maintain our incredible momentum and continue to strengthen our impact on important issues like **youth education, cultural preservation, and civic engagement**.

You have been an important part of our museum’s success through the years. We appreciate your support for the NCSML’s vision for the future and our role in civic education. We hope you’ll make a gift to the NCSML Presidents Endowment to honor Gail and make this vision possible.

Your gift will honor one of the most deserving leaders we know—one who has led the museum you love to become one of international significance. Your gift will reach far beyond the museum itself—to the community, to the nation, and to the world.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,
NCSML President’s Endowment Committee:

George V. Drost
George Drost, NCSML Board Chair

Robert Becker
Robert Becker, Community Volunteer

Terri Christoffersen
Terri Christoffersen, NCSML Board Member

Tom DeBoom
Tom DeBoom, NCSML Past Board Chair

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