WILMINGTON, DE (February 7, 2012) – One hundred years ago, on a winter evening in early 1912, a small group of Delawareans gathered in Louisa d’A. duPont’s living room. Some were artists; others were entrepreneurs and businessmen and women of Wilmington; but all were good friends of Howard Pyle – the famous illustrator and artist from Wilmington who unexpectedly passed away in November 1911. That evening, in celebration of the artist’s life and work, these Pyle supporters created what would become the Delaware Art Museum. Today – 100 years later – we honor the Museum’s founding and Pyle’s continuing legacy with an ambitious $10 million Centennial fundraising campaign.

Fueled by $6 million in pledges and donations, including three generous $1 million gifts, the Centennial Campaign – the first major fundraising effort since the Museum’s 2005 renovation – is off to an exciting start. Gerret and Tatiana Copeland gave $1 million for unrestricted support; Anthony (Tony) N. Fusco, Sr. donated $1 million to re-name the Museum’s special exhibition space as the Anthony N. and Catherine A. Fusco Gallery; and an anonymous $1 million donation will partially endow the position of Curator, Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Collection.

Though these – and other – major gifts have given the initial momentum to the Campaign, Danielle Rice, the Museum’s Executive Director, is confident that the Museum will also be well-supported by gifts from the many loyal donors and community members who have contributed to the success of the Museum’s first 100 years.

“This Museum was founded by community members who were passionate about connecting the public with art, and we need financial support to keep that mission alive,” Rice said. “Large gifts are important, but the small gifts are often the most meaningful. They come from ordinary people who are connected to the Museum and care deeply about our programs, exhibitions, and educational services.”
To ensure that the Museum remains a strong community resource for the next 100 years, the Centennial Campaign will raise funds to focus on four important areas of need:

- **Leadership in education**: Funds will endow critical educational programs, such as the Red Apple Fund for Student Enrichment, which offers scholarships to schools and individuals (youth) who are unable to afford Museum visits and art classes.
- **Economic vitality through exhibitions**: Funds will maintain existing gallery space, grow the Museum’s renowned permanent collections, and support engaging temporary exhibitions.
- **Access to art through technology**: Funds will help the Museum serve a broader constituency more effectively by making the collection publicly accessible online.
- **A sustainable future**: Funds will provide the Museum with long-term operational stability to ensure that generations to come will enjoy the Museum’s art, exhibitions, and programs.

Now that the Campaign is in its “public phase,” efforts are focused on encouraging long-time, returning, and new donors to become part of this historic fundraising effort. Donations are accepted online at [www.delart.org](http://www.delart.org) or can be mailed to Delaware Art Museum, 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806. Questions should be directed to Susan M. Zellner, Director of Development, at 302-351-8558 or szellner@delart.org.

**About the Delaware Art Museum**

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: Adults (19 – 59) $12, Seniors (60+) $10, Students (with valid ID) $6, Youth (7 – 18) $6, and Children (6 and under) free. Admission fees are waived every Sunday. For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at [www.delart.org](http://www.delart.org)

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum is best known for its large collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art, works by Wilmington-native Howard Pyle and fellow American illustrators, and urban landscapes by John Sloan and his circle. Visitors can also enjoy the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden and a number of exhibitions throughout the year.

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