MICA PRESIDENT FRED LAZARUS IV ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Lazarus is the longest serving president of a four-year college in Maryland

BAITMORE—MICA President Fred Lazarus IV today announced that he will retire after nearly 35 years of service and leadership, effective at the close of the 2013-2014 academic year in May 2014. As president since 1978, he is the longest serving president of a four-year college in Maryland today. The president formally informed the Board of Trustees at its annual April meeting on Friday, April 26.

Under Lazarus’ leadership, MICA has grown from a locally focused college with an emphasis on undergraduate programming in the fine arts to a nationally recognized institution with a broad range of undergraduate programs and a rapidly expanding range of graduate level programs, including new areas of study in design and the digital arts. The past three years alone have seen an explosion in graduate programming, the construction and renovation of two major buildings along Baltimore’s North Avenue, and MICA’s largest incoming class ever. Since 1978, MICA’s enrollment has more than doubled; the size of the campus has increased tenfold; the endowment has grown by more than 25 times; three research centers have been created; and 18 undergraduate and graduate academic programs have been added. Today, MICA’s MFA graduate programs are ranked in the top 10 nationally by US News and World Report. Parade magazine recently promoted MICA’s undergraduate studio arts programs as one of the top two nationwide, and GDUSA named the institution one of the top 20 design schools. Programming instituted by the College in both interdisciplinary study and community and social engagement have sparked international trends in higher education.

Lazarus is married to Jonna Lazarus, an award-winning landscape designer and founder of Lazarus Design Associates.

“I am very proud of MICA’s international reputation as a place where the most talented artists and designers come to understand and begin to realize their potential as cultural and communication leaders,” Lazarus said. “I have been able to watch gifted young people come in as freshmen, graduate with all of the promise in the world, and then take their places as art and design leaders, business owners, and catalysts for societal change. Our amazingly accomplished faculty, dedicated staff, and incredible supporters have built this institution into a center for the reinvention of art and design education. Working with them has been my greatest honor.”

President Lazarus has been widely recognized as a national leader in the advancement and integration of the arts, education, and community and economic development. He was instrumental in launching Artscape, the nation’s largest free arts festival, which is anchored on MICA’s campus. He also helped found the Baltimore Design School, served as founding chair of both Americans for the Arts and the National Coalition for Education in the Arts, and has also chaired the Maryland Independent College and Universities Association, the Arts Education Committee of the American Council for the Arts, and the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance. He is the chair of Central Baltimore

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Partnership, a founding board member of both the Midtown Development Corporation board and the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design, and serves on numerous other boards of directors, including Partners for Livable Communities, Arts Every Day, and Americans for the Arts.

Upon awarding Lazarus the Honorable Mention for Marylander of the Year in 2012, The Baltimore Sun said, “Maryland Institute College of Art President Fred Lazarus IV is transforming a section of Baltimore through his understanding of the connections among art, education and community development. MICA under his leadership has grown and increased in prominence, but his most permanent contribution to the state may be in the flowering of the Station North Arts District.”

“Fred Lazarus has long been a tireless advocate to advance art and design education, revitalize our communities and raise awareness about the importance of culture in the lives of every Marylander,” said Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley. “His leadership has not only helped empower countless cultural organizations, but also strengthened the state’s colleges, arts education in K-12 schools, and even the economy through the thousands of visitors who attend the annual Artscape festival. Because of Fred’s legacy, I know that MICA will continue to attract the most creative students to Maryland to learn and eventually become key members of the innovative workforce that makes Maryland unique.”

Lazarus has garnered numerous additional honors and awards. He was featured in Baltimore magazine’s 2011 “power” listing of the city’s most influential people, and was awarded the 2010 Founders Award for Civic Leadership from Partners for Livable Communities. He has also received the Baltimore City Mayor’s Award, the National Art Education Association’s Distinguished Service Award, and an honorary doctorate from Osaka University for the Arts in Japan.

A formal search committee, consisting of trustees, faculty, and students, will identify candidates for the new president over the coming months, according to Fredye Gross, chair of the MICA Board of Trustees. “Both the cultural and academic worlds have been blessed through Fred’s leadership,” Gross said. “In every way possible, he has transformed the way academia approaches art and design education, and the way that artists and designers integrate into and affect society at large. He is truly an education pioneer. MICA, and everyone who loves art, owes him a debt of gratitude.”

During his tenure, Lazarus has been a prolific fundraiser, securing well over $100 million in external support, which has been crucial to MICA’s programmatic and physical growth. The College has won national acclaim for its cutting-edge new buildings, as well as innovative reuse of historically significant structures.

“My association with Fred goes back to 1978 when I chaired the Search Committee that selected him as MICA’s president, and it was one of the best decisions in which I ever have participated,” said George L. Bunting, Jr., a long-time MICA Trustee and major benefactor to the College. “Since then, Fred’s vision, energy and talents have transformed MICA into a national leader in arts education, a world-class institution and one of Baltimore’s true jewels. His leadership has inspired me, and countless others, to see MICA’s great potential, and to work closely with him in achieving it.”

More information about the leadership and legacy of President Lazarus, including high resolution photos, can be found at mica.edu/lazarus. For interviews with Lazarus or Gross, contact the MICA Office of Communications at 410.225.2300 or news@mica.edu.

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Founded in 1826, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) is the oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design in the nation. The College enrolls nearly 3,500 undergraduate, graduate and continuing studies students from all 50 states and 57 countries in fine arts, design, electronic media, art education, liberal arts, and professional studies degree and non-credit programs. Redefining art and design education, MICA is pioneering interdisciplinary approaches to innovation, research, and community and social engagement. Alumni and programming reach around the globe, even as MICA remains a cultural cornerstone in the Baltimore/Washington region, hosting hundreds of exhibitions and events annually by students, faculty and other established artists.