

Date: 2/20/2019

Media Contact:
Evan Wofford
MP&F Strategic Communications
ewofford@mpf.com
(615) 259-4000

National Museum of African American Music Adds Development and Education Executives

New development director joins from Fisk, while education head comes from Syracuse

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Feb. 20, 2019) – The National Museum of African American Music (NMAAM) has named Vincent PremDas as the director of development and Tamar Smithers as the director of education programs.

PremDas joins NMAAM from Fisk University, where he most recently served as the associate vice president for institutional advancement. He will be responsible for the museum’s capital campaign, annual fundraising and membership efforts.

In his 20-year career, PremDas spearheaded major giving and development campaigns across various industries, including education, nonprofit, health care and government. His work resulted in significant philanthropic gifts while at the University of Florida College of Medicine and Levin College of Law, Vanderbilt Law School, Radford University College of Business and Economics in Radford, Va. and Fisk University.

PremDas will replace current NMAAM director of development LoLita Toney, who will be leaving at the end of the month.

“Vincent’s expertise in fundraising and donor cultivation is topnotch,” said H. Beecher Hicks, III, president and CEO of NMAAM. “He has facilitated major donations for a number of well-known organizations, and with the museum’s grand opening approaching quickly, Vincent will be integral to helping us continue our fundraising momentum and secure the support that will make NMAAM an international destination.”

Smithers joins NMAAM from Syracuse University’s Community Folk Art Center, where she has served as the director of education since 2013. Prior to Syracuse, Smithers served as the director of education for Barbizon USA.

At NMAAM, Smithers will be responsible for youth and adult programming, as well as education initiatives in the Metro Nashville Public Schools system. NMAAM’s educational programs include “From Nothing to Something,” teaching students musical history by introducing them to cultural instruments, and “Music, Legends and Heroes,” exposing students to artists and music industry leaders through interactive conversations.

“Educational programming was one of the first and most important initiatives that we implemented,” Hicks said. “Telling the story of the American soundtrack demands that we pass down the techniques and influences that were foundational to today’s music. Tamar’s passion for education and performing arts makes her the perfect candidate for sharing these stories with children both in Nashville and across the country.”

PremDas received his Bachelor of Science degree in sports management from the University of Florida. He is currently a Master of Business Administration candidate at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management. He is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Smithers received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting from Syracuse University. She also received her certificate of advanced study in higher education leadership and Master of Science degree in arts administration from Le Moyne College. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC

The National Museum of African American Music, set to be completed in late 2019, will be the only museum solely dedicated to educating, preserving and celebrating the influence African Americans have had on music. Based in Nashville, Tenn., in the Fifth + Broadway development, the museum will share the story of the American soundtrack by integrating history and interactive technology to bring musical heroes of the past into the present. For more information, please visit www.nmaam.org.

###