

Dallas Museum of Art Announces the Meaningful Moments Access Program, A Community Partnership with the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Dallas

The Dallas Museum of Art is pleased to announce that Meaningful Moments, a monthly community partnership with the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Dallas presenting free programming designed specifically for individuals with dementia and their family members or caregivers, will be offered year-round at the DMA beginning January 18, 2011.

Held on the third Tuesday of each month from 10 to 11:30 AM, each Meaningful Moments program will be built around a theme. Activities will include a gallery discussion, an interactive component, and an art-making activity in the Art Studio. The focus of the program changes to correspond with the Museum's collections and the exhibitions on display, allowing participants and their family members or caregivers to explore and expand their Museum experience each month. Participants relax with art in the galleries, share stories, and gain inspiration in the studio. January's program is titled *En plein air: Impressionist Landscapes*, and it will include a discussion of the new second-floor European art galleries to view paintings by Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Gustave Courbet, among others.

"As the number of people affected by Alzheimer's disease continues to grow, so does the demand for meaningful activities that are educational, social, and creative; therefore, we are pleased to offer this community partnership with the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Dallas," said Amanda Blake, Manager of Family Experiences and Access Programs at the DMA. "With the Meaningful Moments access program, we are now able to help people with Alzheimer's have personal experiences with works of art and stay involved in the community."

"Individuals facing a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease become overwhelmed at the prospect of losing their abilities and independence, and as a result, isolation and depression are common," said Gail Atwater, Alzheimer's Association Early Stage Group Coordinator. "Many people struggle with forming connections to others after the diagnosis as well as finding new ways to bring meaning and value to their life. The benefits of socialization, engagement, learning and creativity to both cognitive function and overall quality of life have been well documented. Meaningful Moments accomplishes this by offering participants a chance to explore an artistic theme, create something interesting, and enjoy one another's company in a warm, friendly environment of a small group setting with the personal attention of DMA and Alzheimer's Association staff."

Meaningful Moments is the fourth in the Museum's growing series of Access Programs for visitors with special needs organized by the Family Experiences staff of the DMA's education department. Other programs include Autism Awareness Family Celebrations four times a year and Art Beyond Sight programs each October for visitors with vision impairment. Meaningful Moments is the first program of its kind for a museum in Dallas. In June 2010, a pilot program of Meaningful Moments was featured on CBS *News Sunday Morning* in a segment on Alzheimer's titled *Jan's Story: Love and Early-Onset*.

The program is free, but reservations are required and space is limited. For more information or to register, call 214-922-1251 or e-mail access@DallasMuseumofArt.org.

Meaningful Moments is also available for groups from assisted-living facilities and community organizations. Please call to check date availability and to schedule a visit.

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Located in the vibrant Arts District of downtown Dallas, Texas, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and groundbreaking educational programs. At the heart of the Museum and its programs are its encyclopedic collections, which encompass more than 24,000 works and span 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Established in 1903, the Museum today welcomes more than 500,000 visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary readings, and dramatic and dance presentations.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of Museum members and donors and by the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas/Office of Cultural Affairs and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit www.alzdallas.org.

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