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The UNI Museum originated as a “Cabinet of Natural History” in the late 19th Century, as the science laboratory needed objects to support classroom instruction. As educational programming developed across campus, so did the need for diverse collections. The museum responded, and the collection began to incorporate ethnographic, historic, and other educational resources. In 2012, the museum closed to the public, and many thought that was the end. Happily, this is not the case.

The UNI Museum recognized a need across campus, and with great effort, was able to reopen to the public in 2015. This new museum was not a continuation of the old building on Hudson, but an entirely new concept dedicated to education and research. While exhibits are still part of the mission, student and Iowan education is the primary objective. With the addition of the Culture Lab and a new Center for the History of Rural Iowa Education and Culture opening in the fall of 2018, the museum continues to grow and serve the students of UNI and the people of Iowa.

**UNI Museum**

Located on 1st floor of Rod Library

**Exhibit Hours:**
Monday - Thursday 7 a.m. - midnight
Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 2 p.m. - midnight

museum.library.uni.edu
Since the grand reopening in 2015, the UNI Museum continues to build on its contributions to student success and preserving the history of our university, state, and beyond. Through collaborative work with faculty, students have access to rare collections and projects that relate directly to their field of study.

The Friends of the UNI Museum help the university offer unique and high-quality educational experiences to students across a variety of majors and disciplines at UNI. Projects such as the conservation of the museum’s mastodon tusk and renovation of the rural Iowa schoolhouse (stories on pg. 5) are great examples of how the UNI Museum promotes research, teaching, and learning. As the UNI Museum continues to grow, we are also excited about its key role in preparing future museum professionals.

As we approach UNI’s sesquicentennial in 2026, it is critical that we continue building support for preserving the university’s rich legacy while setting a bold vision for decades to come. Thank you for being such an important part of UNI’s past, present, and future.

Panther Proud!

Mark A. Nook
President
VISION FOR THE FUTURE

James Ehmen, President
Friends of the UNI Museum

“When the museum moved to Rod Library, I began my term as the president of the board. During this, the board revisited how we could support the museum under new leadership and a new mission. Our goal was to create opportunities to impact student learning on campus. Incorporating students on the board improved communication regarding campus needs and expectations. They have also provided additional avenues to inform the campus community of museum events and friends activities.

As the museum moves forward, we are excited to have a voice in the change. By providing funding for on-site student jobs, we hope to have a significant impact on the future of museum education in Iowa.”

Nathan Arndt,
Assistant Director and Chief Curator
UNI Museum

“Being a university-based museum gives us a different perspective, utilizing collections not just for exhibits, but for the educating and training of the next generation of museum professionals. The UNI Museum serves as a safe space where faculty, students, and staff can experiment with new ideas and concepts freely while expanding the educational influence material culture has across all academic fields.

My vision for the UNI Museum is to help shape these new ideas through interaction with our students and giving them the chance to build and create something special to them. Our future is not cemented in big exhibits, but in education. It is in the transformation of our institution to a research center and classroom where we can train our future colleagues. It is a future that we will work with the community to strengthen and one that I am genuinely excited to pursue.”
Ellie Akers
UNI Student Perspective

“During my sophomore year at UNI, I completed an internship within the museum’s anthropological collections and fell in love with the work that I was doing. I applied for a position shortly after and have been working for the museum for the past two and a half years.

My job at the UNI Museum has helped me shape my degree to best fit my goals and has given me the skills needed for my career after I receive my undergraduate degree. The most beneficial part of my experience is that I am given the freedom to create projects and learn from professionals while taking classes that help solidify the information presented in a unique way. As a student, finding hands-on training outside of the classroom can be challenging, and the museum has provided me with the right set of tools to be successful in the future.”

Bill Blair
Donor Perspective

Bill Blair has ties to UNI not only as a 1970 graduate of the General Science program, but also through his interest in African art. Over the years, he has built his own collection of objects, primarily masks and statues, that fill the walls, shelves, and cupboard of his home. When asked about his collection, Blair comments, “I am very aware of the spiritual presence the African art objects bring to and even impose upon my home and life. We seem to be mutually respectful. The ambiance has been tranquil, but they obviously, if silently, pose some metaphysical questions.”

One of Blair’s long-standing aspirations has been to return something significant to his alma mater. After almost 40 years of collecting and promoting African art, Blair is gradually donating these objects to the UNI Museum, hoping the collection contributes to its educational, cultural, and aesthetic mission, and ultimately the quality of student education.
One of the most exciting projects is the conservation of the museum’s mastodon tusk. Discovered in 1933, the 12-foot mastodon tusk was removed from an Iowa gravel pit and donated to the museum. Previous conservation attempts were unsuccessful, and stability concerns due to water damage made immediate action necessary.

With the award of a grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, the museum now has the opportunity to hire a conservator and purchase the equipment needed to preserve this valuable part of Iowa history. Museum staff are working with conservators, various academic departments at UNI, and community groups to complete this process. This project provides an excellent opportunity for interdisciplinary research, community engagement, student training, and the preservation of one of UNI Museum’s largest objects.

Through the summer of 2018, the museum staff worked diligently to rehouse and reorganize the Center for the History of Rural Iowa Education and Culture from its temporary storage within the UNI Archives and Special Collections. The rural school center is housed on the first level of the Rod Library with a new workspace for public researchers and student employees. Along with a new storage space, the collection was added to a new online database, easily accessible for students and researchers alike.
Ceramics have fulfilled a variety of needs throughout human history. From simple cooking implements to creative expressions of identity, clay has played an important role in expressing who we are. With the opening of its latest exhibit, Cultural Impressions: Identities Molded in Clay, the UNI Museum will explore the relationships between ceramics, culture, and individual identity. Cultural markers such as gender, class, and individual identity are all connected and help shape the importance of ceramics throughout the world. Cultural Impressions will look at a large range of ceramics and examine how cultures directly represent themselves through their pottery and how ceramics have been a forum for cultural expression and change.

Featuring objects from the UNI Museum and the UNI Gallery of Art, this exhibit highlights the broad scope of identities and cultures found throughout these two collections. Incorporating ethnographic and art objects from pre-history to modern day, Cultural Impressions will afford visitors the opportunity to experience mankind’s ongoing relationship with clay.

2nd Annual Friends Speaker Series:
The World Comes to the Cedar Valley, Iowa Embraces Diversity

Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. at the Marshall Center Schoolhouse:
2301 Indiana Street, UNI Campus, near Hudson Road and 23rd Street

October 20
Most Recent new Residents- Latin Americans, the Balkan States, Sudan, Somalia

December 2
Holiday Festival of Lights; Christmas traditions of Iowa’s new population groups

February 16
Family Perspectives on a new Life in Iowa; Women New to the Heartland

April 20
What it Takes; Questions about the test to become an American Citizen
Greetings from the University of Northern Iowa! All of you have played an important role in supporting the UNI Museum through your membership and providing new and unique objects to our growing collection. I sincerely thank you for all that you do. Please consider joining or renewing your membership today!

There are several ways to join or renew your yearly membership:

• Online at uni-foundation.org/give and note “Friends of the UNI Museum” in the description box.
• Mail your renewal or new membership support directly to the UNI Foundation, please note “Friends of the UNI Museum” in the memo line.
• Create a legacy for the future with a bequest or other planned gift. By including UNI in your estate planning you can help the museum in a way you never dreamt possible.

To learn more about these and other ways to impact the Museum, please feel free to contact me at 800-782-9522, 319-273-7111 or Jeremy.Rosel@uni.edu. I look forward to hearing from you!

Jeremy Rosel, MPP ’15,’17
Leadership Annual Giving Officer
University of Northern Iowa Foundation
I’m a senior BFA studio art major emphasizing in photography and minoring in art history. I have also dedicated a portion of my schooling and my extracurricular activities to museum studies. This last semester I assisted with some large collections organizational projects. I am confident that the opportunities available to me through my position at the UNI Museum have and will continue to provide me with valuable knowledge and experience.

I am a senior anthropology major here at the University of Northern Iowa. My time working as a Friends sponsored student allowed me to more deeply explore the inner workings of my field and granted me a better understanding of daily life within a museum. This will allow me to pursue my goals of working within the museum field and handling artifacts.

I am a history major, and this last semester I was the Friends of the Museum Educational Assistant. Because of my work in this position, I got to experience for the first time the outreach side of a museum. I connected with area educators to better tailor our Traveling Trunk program, programmed activities for special events hosted by the museum, and helped consolidate the educational collection to better fit the museum’s mission. Without the help of the Friends group, I perhaps would have never had the chance to experience any of this, and I am grateful for the opportunity they have afforded me.
The UNI Museum is always looking to expand its collection to better serve our patrons. If you have an object you believe would serve our mission or would fill a void in our collection, please contact our curator to discuss your options. Your donation is tax deductible and will directly impact a student’s experience at UNI.

UNI Museum Curator: Nathan Arndt (319) 273-2188 Nathan.Arndt@uni.edu

From top to bottom:
“Talking Drum” donated by Richard Maze
“School Photograph” donated by Dennis & Marlys Mitchell
“Kurt Warner Jersey” donated by Susan Moore
“Kongo Mask” donated by William F. Blair
THANK YOU

On behalf of the Rod Library and the University of Northern Iowa, we express our sincere appreciation for all of the alumni and friends who have joined or renewed their membership with the Friends of UNI Museum. We are profoundly grateful for your support. Below you’ll find our membership roster, please consider becoming a Friends member this year or renewing your membership. Your contributions help us enhance the Cedar Valley’s educational and cultural quality of life!

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Ben & Pat Allen
American Association University Women/CF Branch
Augusta Schurrer
Revocable Trust
Hank & Jo Bagelmann
Stacey Bartz
Barnes & Noble Booksellers
Robert & Rosemary Beach
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Xpressions

Do you like to travel? Visit our website at www.astc.org/passport to see a list of more than 330 participating museums where you can enjoy benefits such as free general admission. Join the Friends and discover a taste of the world at the UNI Museum!