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**CHRYSLER MUSEUM OF ART OFFERS FREE ADMISSION BEGINNING SEPT. 2**  
***Sponsors' support removes barriers and increases access to world-class museum***

NORFOLK, Va. – (August 2009) – Chrysler Museum of Art announces free general admission to all visitors all the time starting Sept. 2. By widening access to the Chrysler's permanent collection the Museum will ensure the success of its mission – to bring art and people together to enrich and transform lives.

“This is something we've been dreaming about for a long time,” says William Hennessey, director. “We work hard to make the Museum meaningful, relevant and welcoming. By removing the barriers associated with an admission fee, we are able to reach out to our community and invite everyone to experience this world-class collection of art and beautiful environment.”

The museum initiated free admission on Wednesdays several years ago with great success. More than twice as many people come to the museum on that day, and the crowd is diverse and enthusiastic. “The museum comes alive on Wednesday with people of all ages and from all different walks of life,” adds Hennessey. “We want to see that every day of the week.”

The initiative is being undertaken during a difficult economic climate, when many cultural organizations are increasing admission charges. The Chrysler Museum of Art's Board of Trustees is taking a bold step in the opposite direction. The Board believes that the personal experience of art can make a real and positive difference in the lives of people in our community.

Under the new policy, some special exhibitions will carry an admission charge, but all 62 of the Museum's collection galleries will be open and accessible for free. Museum Members will receive added benefits—among them, unlimited free admission to all special exhibitions.

The Museum is also organizing a range of programs to coincide with the new admission policy. There are new tours and gallery programs, special events exclusively for Members, new partnerships with

performing arts groups, and a new schedule of programs for Wednesday evenings, all designed to make the Chrysler an even more lively and enjoyable place.

“We hope that free admission will open up the Museum to a whole new audience,” says Hennessey. “We want to build a sense of shared community ownership of the Chrysler and its collections. And, we want to make it easy for people to drop in and spend a few minutes in the galleries whenever they feel a need for some beauty, inspiration or insight.”

The launch of the new “Free to All” policy is made possible by special gifts from a number of generous donors and foundations. Membership retention and recruitment are vital to ensure the program is sustainable.

“Chrysler membership now carries with it the satisfaction of knowing that an investment in the Museum makes the Chrysler’s resources available to others who might not otherwise be able to visit,” adds Hennessey. “And, we are adding some wonderful incentives and programming to reward our members for their continued support.”

### **About The Chrysler Museum of Art**

The Chrysler Museum of Art is one of America’s most distinguished mid-sized art museums with a world-class collection of more than 30,000 objects including one of the great glass collections in America. The Museum is located at 245 West Olney Road in Norfolk and is open Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Thursdays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sundays, noon-5 p.m. The Chrysler is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, as well as major holidays. For exhibitions, programming and additional information, visit [www.chrysler.org](http://www.chrysler.org).

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