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## Plains Art Museum to Name Ceramics Studio for Arts Educator Robert Kurkowski

**FARGO, N.D.** – Plains Art Museum announced today that an anonymous donor has put forth \$80,000 toward the \$100,000 necessary for the naming of the Robert Kurkowski Ceramics Studio at the Katherine Kilbourne Burgum Center for Creativity.

Kurkowski, a ceramic artist, worked as an arts educator at the Creative Arts Studio at Clara Barton Elementary for nearly 30 years before retiring in 2003. He passed away on December 12, three days before last week's announcement of a key donation from the Katherine Kilbourne Burgum Trust and challenge grant from the Burgum family toward construction of the Center for Creativity, a facility that will take the place of the Creative Arts Studio at Clara Barton Elementary and expand its activities.

"Naming the ceramics studio for Bob Kurkowski was something we were discussing when we learned that Bob was so ill, and we were so pleased to identify a donor who designated a huge portion of the \$100,000 in Bob's name," said Colleen Sheehy, director and CEO of the Museum.

"He inspired the lives of so many who passed through the Creative Arts Studio at Clara Barton," she said. "His legacy stands as a testament to the power of arts education. We want to honor that history as we open the Center for Creativity."

The public can make contributions toward the naming of the studio in honor of Kurkowski by visiting [plainsart.org](http://plainsart.org), by visiting <http://bit.ly/kurkowskistudio>, or by calling the Museum at 701-232-3821. Contributions made by December 31 will qualify to be matched by the \$200,000 challenge grant set up by the Burgum family and will allow construction of the Center for Creativity to begin in early 2012.

Plains Art Museum is located at 704 First Avenue North. It is accredited by the American Association of Museums and is a nonprofit, regional fine arts museum with plans to significantly expand its programs through its "Little Artist in All of Us" campaign. The campaign is raising funds for the Center for Creativity and Lifelong Learning which includes working with Fargo Public Schools and other educational entities to build teaching studios. The campaign is also strengthening operations by enhancing the Museum's endowment and visitor services.

Museum programs are made possible, in part, by major funding from members of the Museum, The FUND at Plains Art Museum, the cities of Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo through The Arts Partnership, The McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, the North Dakota Council on the Arts through an appropriation by the North Dakota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. More information is available at 701.232.3821 or at [www.plainsart.org](http://www.plainsart.org).

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