

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Sarah Sledge  
618-242-1236 ext.223  
sarah@cedarhurst.org  
[cedarhurst.org](http://cedarhurst.org)

## **Cedarhurst's Carrie Gibbs named Museum Professional of the Year**



MT. VERNON - Cedarhurst Center for the Arts received statewide recognition last week when Carrie Gibbs, Director of the museum's Shrode Art Center, was selected as the 2022 Museum Professional of the Year by the Illinois Association of Museums. Gibbs received the award during the virtual session of IAM's annual statewide conference on Friday, April 21.

"I am honored and grateful to have been selected to receive this award," stated Gibbs.

"I am very passionate about my career in the arts and my community", she continued. "This has inspired me and I look forward to what new opportunities may come from this recognition, not only for myself, but for Cedarhurst and our southern Illinois region".

"The awards committee was especially impressed by the nominee's depth and breadth of commitment, both to the arts and to every level of her community," said Debbie Fandrei, IAM's Secretary who served on the 2022 Awards Committee. "Gibbs' passion and commitment have made Cedarhurst stronger, the southern Illinois art community more connected, and Mt. Vernon schools more vibrant. The community is lucky to have her, and the committee is proud to honor her as Museum Professional of the Year."

Gibbs has worked at Cedarhurst since 2006. As director of the art center, she coordinates five visual arts exhibitions annually, as well as all of the museum's hands-class offerings - more than 75 each year - serving as a teacher for many including early childhood, elementary, teen, and adult offerings; and she coordinates outreach efforts to bring the arts to Mt. Vernon's underserved audiences. These among other things.

According to the nomination letter submitted by executive Director Hillary Esser, "Carrie is compassionate by nature, and she has single-handedly nurtured and mentored hundreds of southern Illinois artists to help them establish successful careers. She has done the same for thousands of children who have found confidence and independence by the encouragement they receive in Miss Carrie's classes... Carrie is a leader within our southern Illinois community, both through her work at Cedarhurst and through her affiliations outside of her job. She promotes equity within our region and gives selflessly of her time."



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"We have an amazing team at Cedarhurst, and Carrie, especially, is always willing to go above and beyond for our organization and our community," Esser said. "She is more than deserving of this award and recognition."

IAM is a statewide organization whose mission is, "to provide advocacy, promote best practices, and foster the exchange of ideas for the Illinois museum community."

"This is quite an honor for Carrie and for Cedarhurst," said Sharon Bradham, former Cedarhurst ED and member of the IAM Board of Directors. "It's just another example of the quality and recognition that Cedarhurst brings to Mt. Vernon and southern Illinois."

***About Cedarhurst Center for the Arts:*** Opening in 1973, the Mt. Vernon, IL museum and nonprofit celebrates the arts year-round with exciting visual/performing arts, galleries, outdoor sculptures, classes, music, and other special programming. It services the 40 most southern counties in Illinois through its mission to generate enthusiastic participation and support for the arts, and provide opportunities for enjoyment, increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the arts.

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For more information contact:

Sarah Sledge, Communications Director, [sarah@cedarhurst.org](mailto:sarah@cedarhurst.org) 618-242-1236 ext. 223

Carrie Gibbs, Director of the Shrode Art Center, [carrie@cedarhurst.org](mailto:carrie@cedarhurst.org) 618-242-1236 ext. 249

Hillary Esser, Executive Director, [hillary@cedarhurst.org](mailto:hillary@cedarhurst.org) 618-242-1236 ext. 228