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### **Camille Giraud Akeju Is Named Director of the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum**

Camille Giraud Akeju has been named director of the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum, effective Dec. 12. She is currently the president and chief executive officer of the Harlem School of the Arts Inc. in New York City.

"With her many talents, her broad experience and her insightful creativity, Camille brings new energy to the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum," said Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence M. Small. "Under her leadership, we'll be able to further expand our education and outreach services to the community."

Akeju, 55, has served since 1999 as president and CEO at The Harlem School of the Arts, where she was responsible for administration, programming, fundraising and community relations. Since 1964, The Harlem School of the Arts has provided beginning to advanced instruction in dance, music, theater and the visual arts from preschool students to young adults.

From 1998 to 1999, she worked at The Valley Inc. in New York City as chief operating officer, where she oversaw all issues and activities relating to personnel and contract and funding requirements. The Valley Inc., based in central Harlem, is a youth services organization, offering employment services for jobs and internships; dropout-prevention programs and after-school activities; and leadership development.

From 1991 to 1998, Akeju worked as executive director at Mind-Builders Creative Arts Co. Inc. in Bronx, N.Y., forging new program partnerships with such organizations as the Museum of Modern Art; instituting new policies and procedures to strengthen the organization's infrastructure; expanding community outreach with an in-school arts-access lecture and artists residencies series; and forming effective volunteer networks to support the needs of the organization.

As curator and collections manager at the New York Transit Museum from 1986 to 1991, she established a fine arts gallery within the museum to highlight the work of established and emerging artists who use mass transit as a theme in their artworks; mounted the museum's first

major interpretive exhibition; participated in the museum's major fundraising campaign and assisted in coordinating the NYC Transit Authority's first auction of mass transit memorabilia.

"I look forward to working with a great staff at the Anacostia Museum and I am proud to join the Smithsonian family," Akeju said.

Akeju has served as a peer reviewer with the Multicultural Arts Initiative in Pittsburgh and as a member of the board of directors and site/program evaluator for the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts. She also is a judge for the NAACP's ACT-SO Fine Arts Competition in Westchester County, New York.

She received the Crowned Jewel Award for Women in Leadership (2003) from C. Ottley Strategies Inc., New York City, and the Recognition of Service to Youth Award from Open Eyes Productions Inc. (1996).

Akeju earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts, with a concentration in printmaking and secondary art education, in 1974, and a master's degree in art history, with a concentration in African American art in 1981 from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Akeju was born in the Bronx and grew up in Mount Vernon, N.Y. She has two grown children.

She succeeds James Early, who served as interim director of the Anacostia Museum since March 2004. Early will return full time to his duties as director of Cultural Heritage Policy at the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. The previous museum director was Steve Newsome who served for more than 12 years and retired in February 2004.

The Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum opened in southeast Washington in 1967 as the nation's first federally funded neighborhood museum. Today, its collection is national in scope and features significant holdings in African American art, religion and photography, with a focus on community and family history. In addition to creating original exhibitions and installing significant traveling exhibitions on a variety of African American topics, the museum produces innovative educational programs and publications. Anacostia Museum is located at 1901 Fort Place S.E., Washington, D.C., and is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Information: (202) 633-4820. Tours: (202) 633-4844. Web site: [www.anacostia.si.edu](http://www.anacostia.si.edu).

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**Note to Editors:** High-resolution, downloadable images are available at <ftp://160.111.16.40/opa>.