DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MOURNS THE LOSS OF COLLEAGUE MARLOWE STOODAMIRE

DETROIT, March 25, 2020 – The staff and Board of Trustees of the Detroit Historical Society join our community in mourning the devastating loss of our friend and colleague, Marlowe Stoudamire. Marlowe served as the Project Director for the transformational Detroit 67: Looking Back to Move Forward project at the Detroit Historical Museum and was a true catalyst for change for our organization.

“Marlowe was a member of our family, and we feel his loss deeply,” said Elana Rugh, Detroit Historical Society President and CEO. “Marlowe has left an indelible legacy here in the museum and throughout the city of Detroit. His passion for Detroit and its history made him a remarkable leader, connector and advocate – throughout the local community and ultimately the world.”

Society Board of Trustees Chairman John Decker added “Marlowe was a man who led with his heart and touched and connected us all. We will miss Marlowe and honor his memory in a way that gives tribute to an inspirational life cut far too short. My prayers to his family and to all of us as we navigate this difficult time.”

Launched in 2015, the internationally award-winning project Detroit 67: Looking Back to Move Forward brought together hundreds of organizations and individuals in partnership to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Detroit’s 1967 civil unrest. In joining this project and the Detroit Historical Society team, Marlowe showed the kind of leadership and outright bravery that was his hallmark. He navigated questions of motive, agency and ability from throughout the community with an open heart, creating authentic relationships and inclusive processes that forever changed the way we do our work. In many ways, Marlowe initiated the Society’s newly central commitment to creating museums that are inclusive and equitable at their hearts.

Marlowe remained engaged with the Detroit Historical Society and our mission to tell Detroit’s stories and why they matter throughout the rest of his life. He was our very first “Detroiter” member when we launched our new membership program last November, and he had just agreed to continue his professional relationship with the Society by becoming our inaugural Entrepreneur in Residence, propelling us once again into innovative new spaces that he was uniquely qualified to help us envision and implement. Detroit and the Detroit Historical Society are immeasurably better for having been blessed with Marlowe’s talent, energy and love. We are incredibly sad to have lost our Detroiter so soon.

Watch Tracy Irwin and Marlowe Stoudamire’s Detroit 67 presentation from the 2019 Best in Heritage Conference, where they were awarded 2nd place honors: https://youtu.be/WUDkQAhjeHU
Detroit 67: Looking Back to Move Forward is a community engagement project of the Detroit Historical Society that brings together diverse voices and communities around the effects of an historic crisis to find their place in the present and inspire the future. It has received numerous awards, including the 2018 History in Progress Award from the American Association for State and Local History and the 2018 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services. Learn more at detroit1967.org.

The Detroit Historical Society, established in 1921, is a private, nonprofit organization located in Midtown, the heart of Detroit’s cultural center. Founded in 1921, its mission is to tell Detroit’s stories and why they matter. Today, the Society operates the Detroit Historical Museum and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. In addition, the Society is responsible for the conservation and preservation of more than 250,000 artifacts that represent three centuries of our region’s rich history. Through its museum exhibits, school tour programs, community-based programs and history-themed outreach efforts, the Society serves more than 180,000 people annually.

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