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## Vietnamese refugee exhibit to tour Michigan

*Great Michigan Read exhibit will debut in Grand Rapids on December 1. Five other sites sought*

(LANSING)-----On December 1, 2009, the Michigan Humanities Council will debut *Their Journey: Vietnamese in Michigan*, a new exhibit about the history of Vietnamese refugees in Michigan, at the Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL). The exhibit will remain at the GRPL through December 28. The exhibit was created by the Council to augment Bich Minh Nguyen's *Stealing Buddha's Dinner*, selected by the Council for the 2009-10 *Great Michigan Read*.

In addition, the Council is now accepting applications to host the exhibit at five other Michigan locations during the following periods: January 1-26, 2010; February 1-24, 2010; March 1-26, 2010; April 1-26, 2010; and, May 10-31, 2010. Applications and requirements are available on the Council's website at [www.michiganhumanities.org](http://www.michiganhumanities.org) and are due no later than November 23, 2009. Applications will be evaluated based on opening statement, supporting programs, publicity plan, and geographic distribution. The announcement of the remaining exhibit schedule will be made on November 30, 2009.

"The Council is pleased to be able to bring the people of Michigan an exhibit which helps to provide greater understanding of the experience of Vietnamese refugees in our state," said Janice Fedewa, executive director of the Michigan Humanities Council. "This is another opportunity for the public to become engaged in humanities programs through the Great Michigan Read."

"Given the historical role that the City of Grand Rapids played in the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees, we are pleased to be the opening venue for this exhibit," said Kristen Krueger-Corrado, Marketing & Communications Manager of the GRPL. "It adds texture to the fabric of our community, and contributes context to our collections and archives."

*Their Journey: Vietnamese in Michigan* consists of eight banners with the following topics:

- About Vietnam
- Vietnam and the Cold War
- What was the United States fighting in Vietnam?
- How did Vietnamese refugees come to Michigan?
- Bich Minh Nguyen's *Journey, In Her Words* (Pt. I & II)
- What was life like for Vietnamese refugees in Michigan?
- Bich Minh Nguyen and *The Great Michigan Read*

(more)

The exhibit and the *Great Michigan Read* are funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Meijer, and Citizens Bank – Saginaw.

**About *Stealing Buddha's Dinner***

*Stealing Buddha's Dinner* is a memoir chronicling author Bich Minh Nguyen's migration from Vietnam in 1975 and her coming of age in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the 1980s. Along the way, she struggles to construct her own cultural identity from a menagerie of uniquely American influences.

**About the *Great Michigan Read***

With a statewide focus on a single book, the Michigan Humanities Council's *Great Michigan Read* encourages Michiganders to learn more about their state, their history, and their society. The Council's free supporting programming will focus on three themes: immigration stories, cultural understanding, and contemporary history. As of October 30, 223 organizations across the state joined the Council as partners, including 96 schools and classrooms, 84 libraries, 16 book clubs, and 9 colleges. Additional organizations are encouraged to join. Partner organizations can register online for **free copies** of supporting materials and will be eligible for Council grants for related programming.

The Michigan Humanities Council, founded in 1974, is a private, non-profit organization, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. For additional information, please visit: [www.michiganhumanities.org](http://www.michiganhumanities.org) or call 517-372-7770.

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