

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 1, 2009**

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## **Six Sites to Host *Vietnamese in Michigan* Exhibit**

*Fremont, Ann Arbor, Traverse City, Morenci, and Hartland join Grand Rapids to host exhibit*

(GRAND RAPIDS)-----The Michigan Humanities Council announces six sites will host its new exhibit, *Their Journey: Vietnamese in Michigan*, from December 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010: Grand Rapids Public Library, Fremont Area District Library, University of Michigan Library (Ann Arbor), Dennon Museum Center (Traverse City), Stair Public Library (Morenci), and Cromaine District Library (Hartland). The exhibit was created to augment the 2009-2010 *Great Michigan Read*, the Council's statewide reading program and its book selection, *Stealing Buddha's Dinner* by Bich Minh Nguyen. Each of the host sites in 2010 will also create programs in support of the exhibit. The Council's announcement was made at the Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL) on December 1. The GRPL is the first site to host the exhibit through December 28, 2009. The exhibit is free and open to the public during the GRPL's normal business hours.

"The Michigan Humanities Council is pleased to create an exhibit that helps Michigianians understand the context and the stories behind *Stealing Buddha's Dinner*," said Janice Fedewa, executive director of the Michigan Humanities Council. "The Council looks forward to working with each of the communities in 2010 to create additional opportunities to explore immigration stories, cultural understanding, and contemporary history."

*Their Journey: Vietnamese in Michigan* offers audiences a greater understanding of *Stealing Buddha's* historical basis. The exhibit includes photos from Grand Rapids and from Vietnam, and includes political, cultural, and personal perspectives of the journey of Vietnamese immigrants to Michigan following the Vietnam War. It consists of eight, thematically arranged banners, each 39" x 84".

Applications to host the exhibit were evaluated on an opening statement, supporting programs, publicity plan, and geographic distribution. The dates and location of each site hosting the exhibit are:

- December 1-28, 2009: Grand Rapids Public Library (Grand Rapids).
- January 1-26, 2010: Fremont Area District Library (Fremont).
- February 1-24, 2010: University of Michigan Library (Ann Arbor).
- March 1-26, 2010: Dennon Museum Center at Northwestern Michigan College (Traverse City).
- April 1-26, 2010: Stair Public Library (Morenci).
- May 10-31, 2009: Cromaine District Library (Hartland).

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Applicants selected to host the exhibit included a variety of potential community programs, including: cultural food showcases; memoir writing workshops; film and discussion presentations; cultural panel discussions for adults, high school students, and young children; Vietnamese-American oral history projects; incorporation of the themes and the book into college history, philosophy, and English composition courses; discussion forum for Vietnam veterans; art exhibits; and additional history discussions by scholars. The media and public are encouraged to contact each host site to learn about specific programs and event details.

For high-resolution photos and more information about the exhibit, please access the Council's website at [www.michiganhumanities.org/programs/tgmr](http://www.michiganhumanities.org/programs/tgmr)

### ***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 December 1, 223 organizations across the state joined the Council as partners, including 101 schools and classrooms, 87 libraries, 16 book clubs, and 11 colleges. Additional organizations are encouraged to join. Partner organizations can register online for **free copies** of supporting materials and are 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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