



November 9, 2018

Contact: Kellee Reinhart
[kreinhart@uasystem.edu](mailto:kreinhardt@uasystem.edu)
www.uasystem.edu

UA System Art Trail is Inaugural Recipient of the McMahon-Pleiad Prize

A collaborative public art trail on the three University of Alabama System campuses is the inaugural recipient of the McMahon-Pleiad Prize, according to an announcement today by the UA System Board of Trustees.

Established by the Board to honor Trustee Emeritus John J. McMahon, Jr., the McMahon-Pleiad Prize advances collaboration in the System, consistent with the vision and leadership of Trustee Emeritus McMahon. The Prize includes a \$75,000 one-time award, underwritten by the McMahon family, which will be shared equally among the three UA System art departments to cover the cost of project materials and related expenses.

The McMahon-Pleiad Public Art Trail initiative is led by visual arts faculty members Stacey Holloway (UAB), Chris Taylor (UAH) and Craig Wedderspoon (UA), who are working side-by-side with student teams. Each group will design and create a durable, well-crafted public sculpture that enhances the visual aesthetic of each System campus.

The three outdoor pieces will rotate every two years, then return to their originating campus for permanent installation. Each team plans to unveil their work before June 2019.

A primary goal of the public art trail is to create opportunities for faculty and students in all three System art departments to discuss, develop and install projects collaboratively. Students will be able to share their designs with new and expanded audiences. According to the proposal, which was chosen from more than a dozen entries, “The McMahon-Pleiad Public Art Trail has the potential to visually enhance the entire UA System with an innovative, world-class public art program.”

The goals of the McMahon-Pleiad Prize are to fund projects that advance the integrity and excellence of the System, incentivize innovation, and promote unity among the UA System and its institutions.

“We want to congratulate professors Holloway, Taylor and Wedderspoon on capturing the spirit of the McMahon-Pleiad Prize with this ambitious and high quality public art project,” said Board president pro tem Ronald Gray in announcing the award today. “It represents the essence of collaboration and creative excellence that defines our friend and colleague John McMahon and our System.”

###