The Norman Rockwell Museum illuminates the power of American illustration art to reflect and shape society, and advances the enduring values of kindness, respect, and social equity portrayed by Norman Rockwell.

The leading museum dedicated to American illustration in the nation, the Museum helps the public understand how published illustration art – the people’s art – both influences, reinforces, and invites us to question dominant cultural values.

As a museum devoted to the most accessible art form, established by grassroots popular demand, we hold central the value to be a welcoming and inclusive place to all.

For centuries, images have documented and shaped society. Propelled through mass media, illustration performs a persuasive cultural visual role in defining values, positive and negative.

Illustration has uplifted and called us to our highest selves, mobilizing pivot points in history, inspiring acts of selfless service through propaganda influence.

Published illustration has also contributed over centuries to deeply rooted systems of dehumanizing racial stereotypes, shaped and controlled by historically white male power structures controlled by government, publishers, editors, and artists, to establish, embed, and maintain structural systems and expressions of inequality, both conscious and unconscious, in the minds of viewers.

Humanity demands that every museum think deeply about how it advances or impedes justice and equity in society; how it reinforces or breaks down barriers of structural and systemic racism.

As Norman Rockwell did, Norman Rockwell Museum places humanitarian compassion, equality, and inclusion at the center of its work. The work must go deeper to uproot and acknowledge with humility, the systemic authority systems in published illustration that have for centuries denied subordinated groups and citizens their rightful dignity, expression, and representation.

To redress centuries of structural inequity and historical prejudice, Norman Rockwell Museum commits to being a learning organization and to reflecting on how to deconstruct and reconstruct a just and equitable representative visual narrative for America through the art of illustration.
Norman Rockwell Museum is committed to:

- Understanding and deconstructing the centrality of the dominant White cultural narrative in the history of American illustration art

- Educating audiences about decoding racism and inequality through understanding the persuasive and normative power of a visual image

- Decentering Whiteness in the curatorial voice of the museum by centering curation with representative voices in the Museum’s work

- Broadening the collection to include representation created by artists of color

- Deliberate engagement and expansion of audience to reflect the diversity of the American people locally and nationally

- Continuing to deepen authentic partnerships in the community with underserved audiences

- Inviting the community to advise and co-create how the Museum partners in cultural participation

- Inviting discourse among scholars and general public on how illustration shapes and reflects perceptions of society, history and opinion

- Expanding underrepresented voices and authority on the board and in senior leadership positions of the Museum

- Ensuring that the Museum’s advisory councils are representative of authentic voices on the subjects we examine, exhibit, publish, and curate

We pledge to communicate our progress on this journey, to reevaluate, and to invite the community to hold the Museum accountable to these promises.

This is a journey without end, to make the Museum, the community, and the nation equitable, inclusive, and socially-just. The work will never be finished, and must always stand in the forefront of our values and commitment of resources to be true to our mission and communities, stewarding the most publicly accessible art form, illustration art, in pursuit of evolving a more equitable society.

Laurie Norton Moffatt
Director/CEO