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**SUU ART PROFESSOR DESIGNS
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE® CELEBRATORY FOREVER® STAMP
COMMEMORATING NEVADA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF STATEHOOD**

Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah: With a portfolio that includes whimsical children's book illustrations, vibrant designs for electronic games and breathtaking landscapes of the Southwest, SUU Art Professor Ron Spears continually explores and challenges his creativity with each new project. Now Spears' latest project found him collaborating with the U.S. Postal Service® in creating the art for a Forever® Stamp celebrating Nevada's 150th anniversary of statehood. The stamp is scheduled for release on May 29, 2104. The Nevada 150 Sesquicentennial Committee is a sponsor of this event.

The stamp showcases one of the state's most hauntingly beautiful landscapes, a section of Fire Canyon, part of the Valley of Fire, Nevada's oldest state park. Spears' painting is an oil-on-Masonite panel which captures the locale at dawn, with the sandstone formations aglow in shades of vibrant reds and yellows which are a result of various quantities of iron in the rock itself. The landscape is highlighted by deep purple and blue shadows. The colors contrast dramatically with the whiteness of the silica formation in the foreground. The stamp spotlights not only one of Nevada's wonders but the mastery of Spears' craftsmanship.

Spears hiked into Fire Canyon and created his sketches on-site and from his renderings developed various visual concepts in his studio. He executed the final painting last fall, when the light was low and strong. Facing south, he captured the scene at dawn. He was especially keen to paint the scene in the morning light. "I wanted to be at Fire Canyon when the sun broke over the horizon," he explained. "It only lasts a few moments, but seeing the rocks come to life as the morning sun hits them is definitely worth getting up early for."

Ron Spears splits his time between Reno, Nevada, and Cedar City, Utah, where is an Assistant Professor of Art at Southern Utah University. He has created hundreds of illustrations for *Magic: The Gathering*,

Dungeons and Dragons, Harry Potter Card Game, Upper Deck, Blizzard Entertainment and others. He also illustrated book covers, magazine articles and the children's book *Dad Are You The Tooth Fairy?* written by actor and comedian Jason Alexander. As a Lead Illustrator for International Game Technology, and an Art Director for Sierra On-Line, Ron has created countless illustrations for dozens of video games. He was selected as a Zion National Park Artist-in-Residence enabling him to produce a series of stunning landscapes from throughout the park. Ron is member of the New York Society of Illustrators and has recently returned from teaching master classes and technique workshops at Renmin University in Beijing, China. This summer Spears' art is featured in the Southern Utah Art Invitational Exhibition and Sale at Southern Utah University's Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery, June 23 through September 13, 2014. For more information on spears and his art, please visit www.RonSpearsArt.com

Nevada's Sesquicentennial, the 150th anniversary of Nevada's admission to the Union, will provide opportunities for celebration and reflection as we come together statewide to commemorate our shared history and build a foundation of cultural appreciation for generations to come. Nevada's one of a kind and diverse history will be celebrated throughout the state for an entire year in order to promote pride in the shared heritage of all Nevadans. Nevada's Sesquicentennial celebration will commence on Nevada Day 2013 and conclude with an expanded Nevada Day celebration October, 2014. For more information, please visit www.nevada150.org.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

The **Southern Utah University College of Performing and Visual Arts** is comprised of nationally accredited departments of Art and Design, Music, Theatre Arts and Dance, as well as a graduate program in Arts Administration and Center for Shakespeare Studies. The College offers 16 different degree areas, including liberal arts Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees; professional Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Fine Arts in art and theatre degrees; and a Master of Fine Arts in Arts Administration degree. More than 60 full- and part-time faculty and staff are engaged in teaching and mentoring over 550 majors in the College. Over 1100 students enroll each year in over 195 arts classes on the SUU campus. The College presents 100 performances, lectures, presentations, and exhibitions each year. The College's affiliate organizations include the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery, Utah Shakespeare Festival, the SUU Ballroom Dance Company. For more information about the College of Performing and Visual Arts, contact the Office of the Dean at (435) 865-8561, or by e-mail at cpvamktg@suu.edu.