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Ashley H Pollock, Public Relations & Information Coordinator  
College of Performing and Visual Arts  
Southern Utah University

Office: (435) 865-8667  
Cell: (435) 590-0961  
[pollocka@suu.edu](mailto:pollocka@suu.edu)

## **SUMA Welcomes Jessica Farling as Director/Curator**

**Southern Utah Museum of Art, Cedar City, Utah:** Southern Utah Museum of Art is excited to announce our new director/curator, Jessica Farling, coming to Cedar City on July 1, 2017. She received her Master of Arts in Museum Studies from the University of Oklahoma. She focused her studies on museum administration and museum education.

Farling began her career at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, located at the University of Oklahoma, as a student employee working part-time in education. She became a full-time museum educator and eventually took a position as the Director of Public Engagement. Through these various roles, she has over seven years of experience in a number of areas and has gained a better understanding of general museum operations.

Part of what drew her to SUMA was the mission to be a student-centered experiential learning environment. She said, "Being a university museum, the SUU campus is an important part of the community in which SUMA serves. Seeing that students were at the heart of SUMA's mission, I knew that I could draw on my own experiences to inspire SUU students beginning their own museum careers."

Farling fell in love with art and museums as a student in high school. She said, "I was a sophomore when I took my first art history class and thought, 'I want to work in a museum!' I find that museums are rejuvenating and even have a calming effect. Museums help us see the world through a different lens. They show us other perspectives, cultures, and periods of time all in one place. The way that I feel about art and museums is something that I want for everyone-- no matter their background!"

Cedar City is the perfect place for Farling to continue her career. She not only loves visual arts, but the outdoors and performing arts as well. "My husband and I have traveled to Utah many times. We love the outdoors: hiking, camping, fly fishing, and National Parks. We started a National Park passport a couple of years ago and quickly filled the Rocky Mountain Region because it is our favorite. Zion National Park is one of the most amazing places! In addition to getting to work at SUMA, I cannot wait to see every production at the Utah Shakespeare Festival. I also look forward to taking my National Park passport to Cedar Breaks National Monument for a new stamp!"

We look forward to this next chapter with Jessica at the helm. Her vision and passion for museums brings an excitement to the future of the museum. When asked about her plans as she begins at SUMA, she said, "I am eager to meet everyone that played an integral role in

SUMA's start. I want to hear their ideas and aspirations for this newly-opened institution. This is an exciting time for SUMA because we will shape the future of the museum and develop its identity for future generations. I am honored to be leading the SUMA team!"

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