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SAMA TO HOST SECOND ANNUAL *HEALING ARTS CONFERENCE*

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art will offer its second annual *Healing Arts Conference* this fall. The two-day event is designed to highlight the importance of art therapy programming and to showcase how the arts can aid in the healing and recovery of patients. The 2013 conference will focus on how the arts can be beneficial to individuals on the autism spectrum.

The conference opens on Friday, November 15 with a dinner and keynote address at the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto. On Saturday, November 16, the conference moves to the DiSepio Institute for Rural Health & Wellness, also on the Saint Francis University campus. The second day features presentations by three guest speakers, as well as a panel discussion. Attendees will participate in hands-on activities and experience art therapy projects similar to those offered to patients. Those in attendance also will have an opportunity to network with other art therapists, artists, administrators, teachers, parents, and even patients who have benefitted from this type of programming.

“The *Healing Arts Conference* was designed as a way for attendees to incorporate the arts, whether visual or performing, into their practices and everyday lives,” said SAMA Education Coordinator Jessica Campbell. “It is also a perfect opportunity for the public to see how important the arts are when it comes to health and healing, specifically how the arts can be beneficial to a child on the autism spectrum.”

Delivering the keynote address will be Dr. John A. Biever, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at Quittie Glen Center for Mental Health in Annville, PA. Board certified in adult, child, and adolescent psychiatry, Biever also is a consultant to the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and is a lecturer for the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Mental Health. He was an assistant professor of psychiatry for nearly twenty years at Penn State University College of Medicine, and in 2003 was named a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.

Opening Saturday’s schedule of presentations is Jim Donovan. Perhaps best known as a drummer and founding member of the multi-platinum ‘90s band Rusted

Root, Donovan is a musician and educator who uses music as a vehicle for personal growth, healing, and the creation of community. He is currently completing his Master's in Education Leadership at Saint Francis, where he is also on faculty.

Following Donovan will be a pair of artists rostered with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. No stranger to SAMA, master storyteller Jan Kinney will discuss the benefits of storytelling as it relates to autistic patients. Kinney has been a featured storyteller at festivals and events throughout the eastern United States. In her residencies, she has worked successfully with special populations such as autistic children, the physically and mentally challenged, and Alzheimer and dementia patients. Also scheduled to present is Alison Zapata. A visual artist who has developed child-centered arts programming in classrooms throughout Pittsburgh for the past fourteen years, Zapata has a B.A. in art education from Carlow University and has received additional art education through Gateway to the Arts, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, and other venues.

Cost for the conference is \$125 per person or \$50 for students. Continuing education credits are available, with admission costs for those individuals at \$150. For reservations or additional information, please call the Loretto Museum at (814) 472-3920.

In 2003, SAMA introduced its Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program, an initiative designed to help area residents suffering from mental and physical disabilities. Through the program, SAMA's trained artists and educators work with healthcare providers to develop residencies and workshops aimed at providing relief for patients dealing with physical pain and discomfort. In recent years, the program has been expanded to include working with disabled veterans, as well as placing a greater emphasis on mentally challenged citizens. Ten years later, the Museum's program has benefitted more than 1,000 individuals throughout central and western Pennsylvania.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is located on the campus of Saint Francis University. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays. For more information, call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.