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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS SAMA'S MUSEUM/HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Johnstown – In 2003, the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art first 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 health care providers to develop residencies and workshops aimed at providing relief for patients dealing with physical pain and discomfort. Nearly ten years later, SAMA's Johnstown Museum is celebrating some of the work created during these residencies with *The Art of Healing Exhibition: Reflections 2012*. On view May 4 through August 10, the exhibition features approximately twenty works, including drawings, paintings, collage, and woodcarvings created by patients during residencies at the John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute.

Since its early beginnings as a partnership with the Conemaugh Health System and a series of Artist-in-Residence programs at the John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute, SAMA's program has grown to work with six separate organizations. Recently, the program has been expanded to include working with veterans groups. During the residencies, patients have the opportunity to work with a number of professional artists and learn various artistic disciplines, such as painting, sculpting, puppetry, dance, collage, storytelling, and Native American music and crafts, among others. Since its inception, SAMA's Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program has benefited more than 500 individuals throughout central and western Pennsylvania.

"SAMA's Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program has been incredibly successful during the last ten years," said SAMA-Johnstown Coordinator, Tina Lehman. "This exhibition has been a long time in coming and will be a great opportunity for the community to see what these individuals have been able to create and how this program helps them deal with their various conditions. Please stop in and see what they have accomplished."

The Museum will host an exhibition reception from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, July 12. The reception is open to the public free of charge, though reservations are

requested by July 10. For reservations or more information, please call the Museum at (814) 269-7234.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Johnstown is located in the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Museum is a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.