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SAMA TO RECEIVE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S CULTURAL AFFAIRS AWARD

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art will be the recipient of the Cambria Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual Cultural Affairs Award. The award is designed to honor corporations, organizations or individuals who have significantly fostered business/art partnerships or who have rendered creative and/or innovative support of the arts in our community.

“SAMA is honored to receive the Chamber of Commerce Cultural Affairs Award,” said SAMA Executive Director G. Gary Moyer. “The diverse art exhibitions, award-winning educational outreach, and robust cultural programs highlighted in the Museum's calendar of events underscores our mission to drive museum excellence. The Chamber's Cultural Affairs Award is a testament to our commitment to serve the people of this region and to establish a cultural legacy for generations to come.”

SAMA joins a distinguished list of recent honorees that includes Veterans Community Initiative, Cambria County War Memorial, Roxbury Bandshell Preservation Alliance and Somerset Trust Company. The award will be presented at the Chamber's annual dinner at the Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center on March 1. Keynote speaker for the event will be Olympic gold medalist and philanthropist Joey Cheek. Tickets are \$55 for Chamber members and \$65 for non-members. Reservations are required by February 21 by calling (814) 536-5107.

“It is my honor to present this prestigious award for recognizing the significant contribution to the arts in our region to the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art,” said Mary P. Borkow, Cultural Affairs Chair of the Cambria Regional Chamber of Commerce. “SAMA's permanent collection as well as its exhibits and educational programs play a critical role in preserving and advancing the arts.”

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art has served the rural populations of central and southwestern Pennsylvania since 1976. The nation's longest running satellite museum system, SAMA operates four museums in Altoona, Johnstown, Ligonier and Loretto, and a fifth site in Bedford is scheduled to open in the spring. The Museum maintains a permanent collection that numbers nearly 4,500 pieces and boasts a strong representation of Pennsylvania artists, as well as works by many of the nation's most acclaimed and influential artists. SAMA also oversees an ambitious education program that has provided critical arts programming to more than 100,000

children throughout Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland counties. Another outreach, the Museum Healthcare Partnership Program has benefitted more than 15,000 individuals suffering from physical pain and discomfort, as well as veterans and children with autism spectrum disorder. SAMA is accredited through the American Association of Museums and has been a partner of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts since 1998.