



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330

Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: (402) 474-2131 Fax: (402) 474-4852

E-mail: nhc@nebraskahumanities.org

Website: www.nebraskahumanities.org

N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: April 20, 2011

Contact: Chris Sommerich, (402) 474-2131, ext. 105

2011 brings changes to Humanities Council staff

Several recent changes to the Nebraska Humanities Council staff have followed in the wake of Jane Renner Hood's retirement after 23 years as NHC director.

Chris Sommerich was selected as the NHC's executive director. Sommerich came to the council in 2004 as development officer and became development director in 2007. Prior to that he began his non-profit career with Audubon Nebraska for four years.

Marijane Hancock, the council's new fiscal officer, brings a wealth of experience in administration, finance, and management. She was dean of administration at BryanLGH College of Health Sciences, where she managed a \$5 million budget. Before that she was assistant vice president and director of institutional research and planning for the University of Nebraska system.

Heather Thomas will orchestrate fundraising activities as development officer. For three years she was membership coordinator at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and she spent 10 years in development for the University of Virginia. Since moving to Nebraska in 2006, she has been education director and grants coordinator for the Haydon Art Center in Lincoln.

Mary Yager has been promoted from senior program officer to associate director. She will assist Sommerich with operational oversight, continue to manage the Speakers Bureau and the Museum on Main Street (MOMS) partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, co-manage the council's regrants, and work with history-related organizations statewide. She became an NHC program officer in 2006.

Erika Hamilton has been promoted from senior program officer to director of literary programs. She served as statewide coordinator for the Prime Time Family Reading Time program since joining the council as a program officer in 2005. As director of literary programs, she will help the council continue to grow Prime Time and find ways to expand into other reading, storytelling, and discussion programs.

Julie MacDonald has been promoted to development coordinator. She joined the council in 2008 as development assistant and played a critical role in the council's transition to a new comprehensive database for program, fundraising and other activities. Her support role for fundraising activities is being expanded to include more coordination responsibilities.

Program officer **Kristi Hayek** joined the council staff in the fall of 2009 to coordinate the 2010 Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua. She now assists with grant review activities and has taken over coordination of the Capitol Forum on America's Future program. She previously participated in Capitol Forum in Indiana while a social studies teacher in Fort Wayne.

Aimee Poor continues to serve as office manager, as she has done since joining the council in 2004, and **Bob Ferguson** continues to support program activities as he has done since 2006 as administrative/program assistant.

###