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**Carie Essig Joins Stearns History Museum as New Executive Director**

ST. CLOUD—The Board of Directors for the Stearns History Museum is pleased to announce that Carie Essig will be joining the museum as the new Executive Director.

Essig will begin her tenure on May 7. Essig comes to Stearns County from the YMCA of the Rockies in Colorado. There, as the organization's first professional historian, she helped develop museums programs at YMCA properties. She also oversaw operations of two museums at YMCA that are 70 miles apart and separated by Rocky Mountain National Park and the Continental divide.

"Carie will be a great addition to our leadership team and staff at the museum. Carie's vision, leadership and experience will benefit the museum and the community, arriving at a time when the museum is taking important steps to transform into a must-see venue," said John Bodette, Chair of the Board of Directors for the Stearns History Museum. "We are very happy to welcome her back home to Minnesota."

Previously, Essig held positions with Ramsey County Historical Society and the Minnesota Historical Society. She currently serving as the treasurer of the Steering Committee for the Minnesota Association of Museums. A native Minnesotan, Essig has a bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree from Northern Illinois University.

"I'm a historian by profession and in my heart. Knowing our past helps us see a path to our future, whether it's a family understanding their genealogical roots or connecting people who seem socially, economically, or culturally different in a new community," said Essig. "I'm excited for the opportunity to lead the Stearns History Museum and our community in creating a space where we learn to explore our past and learn from each other."

The public will get their first opportunity to meet Essig at the Stearns History Museum's annual History Maker Gala from 5:30-8:30pm on Thursday, April 19 at the Gorecki Center at the College of St. Benedict. The gala features dinner, a silent auction and award-winning KARE-11 journalist Boyd Huppert, host of "Land of 10,000 Stories." Tickets (\$70) are still available and can be purchased at the museum, online ([www.stearns-museum.org](http://www.stearns-museum.org)), or by calling (320) 253-8424.

The Stearns History Museum is looking forward to the coming year with greater visibility, expanded programming and a fascinating upcoming exhibition (details announced soon). The museum continues to live out its mission to connect people to the power of history and culture by collecting, preserving, and interpreting its historical and cultural resources. Exhibition hall hours, including the children's playroom and research center, are 10am - 5pm on Monday - Friday,

10am – 4pm on Saturday. More information on visiting the Stearns History Museum can be found at [www.stearns-museum.org](http://www.stearns-museum.org).