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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**The Bakersfield Museum of Art Announces Appointment of New Executive Director**

**Bakersfield, CA - August 26, 2016** - The Bakersfield Museum of Art announces the appointment of Amy Smith as its new executive director, effective September 26, 2016. Smith replaces Mark Engelen who retired in May.

A familiar face in Bakersfield and well known to many in nonprofit circles, Smith comes to BMOA after three years at the American Red Cross as Director of Development for the Central Valley & Kern Chapters.

With more than 20 years of experience in nonprofit management, Smith is uniquely qualified to assume the helm of the museum, which is currently celebrating its 60th year of operation. “The Board of Trustees underwent a three month search for the new executive director,” said Catherine Bennett, BMOA Board Chairwoman. “We were looking for a strong nonprofit manager with proven fundraising and development skills who knows Bakersfield well and is passionate about advancing the arts in our community. Amy’s history of successful non-profit work made her the ideal choice.”

In addition to her work with the Red Cross, Smith has worked for Kern Community Foundation, San Joaquin Community Hospital Foundation, and United Way of Kern County among others. In regards to her recent appointment, Amy Smith said, “I am honored to be joining an organization which has been the cornerstone of arts and culture activities in Bakersfield for sixty years. I look forward to working with our dedicated Board of Directors, highly qualified staff and volunteers, as well as community stakeholders to chart the museum's course for growth and sustainability.”

Bennett concludes, “In this, its 60th year, the museum is poised to continue its growth and development, and with this transition the museum will further

secure its role in enhancing the quality of life for everyone in Bakersfield through the arts.”

## **ABOUT BMOA**

The Bakersfield Museum of Art is among the most distinguished art museums in California and the only accredited art museum in the southern San Joaquin Valley. In celebration of BMOA’s 60<sup>th</sup> Year, the museum is offering free regular admission throughout 2016.

BMOA is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturday and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Museum will be closed Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Visit [www.bmoa.org](http://www.bmoa.org) or call 661-323-7219 for more information.