

Gallup hires MainStreet director

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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New hire is third in GALLUP'S MainStreet history

A new executive director for MainStreet is onboard.

Jennifer Lazarz — theatre manager at the El Morro Theatre, interim city marketing tourism manager, and secretary of the board of directors at MainStreet — said Liz Hannum was recently hired for the job. Hannum, a Massachusetts native, begins the job Nov. 1.

“We are pleased with the hiring and look forward to introducing Liz to the community” Lazarz said. “The Gallup MainStreet is very excited for her to begin work.”

New Mexico MainStreet is a program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department. MainStreet combines historic preservation with asset-based economic development to work with local affiliates and partners in rebuilding Main Streets.

Lazarz said Hannum previously worked as an entrepreneurial coordinator at Northern State University in South Dakota. Hannum also began her own organization to help startups, StartHUB, in Aberdeen, S.D.

Hannum is a geography graduate of Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pa. She holds a master's degree in international development and social change from Clark University in Worcester, Mass.



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Lazarz said Hannum's professional background includes working with students, entrepreneurs, city officials, business owners, service providers and the like in Aberdeen. Hannum reportedly helped get nine businesses started in Aberdeen's downtown, and helped 22 businesses make the move to full-time or hire their first employee.

Brett Newberry, who was part of the Gallup selection committee that hired Hannum, said there are a couple goals he'd like accomplished once Hannum gets settled. Community awareness of MainStreet's role is key, he said, and maintaining a relationship with the city's Business Improvement District is equally important.

"People have to know what a MainStreet does and how such an organization can benefit them," Newberry, a Gallup accountant, said. "Secondly, I think you have to be in touch with [BID] on a daily basis. Those two entities to some degree work practically hand-in-hand with each other."

Neither Lazarz nor Newberry disclosed Hannum's annual salary — MainStreet is a nonprofit 501(3)c organization, and as such, it's not required to do so. He said an annual 990 tax return can be requested at the end of the year from the New Mexico Attorney General's Office.

An informal meet-and-greet session with Hannum was held Oct. 19 at Gallup Coffee Company.

Gallup has had two prior MainStreet executive directors over the years, dating back to 2006:

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Sarah Luginbuhl and Lindsay Mapes. Gallup is the only entity in the state with MainStreet and an Arts and Cultural District designations, officials have said.

An arts-and-cultural designation is given by the state and comes with tax credits, financial advantages, and other resources. Gallup previously lost its two MainStreet designations, but the most recent one surfaced under the Mayor Jackie McKinney administration.

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