

## COCA Staff Bios



**Kathleen Spehar**  
***Executive Director***

Kathleen oversees all COCA strategic and business initiatives, board development, operations, funding, and programming. She has served the arts in many leadership roles, including director, manager, educator and advocate, in organizations throughout the Midwest, Florida and Japan. Her experience includes the creation of strategic community partnerships, marketing, communications and sales campaigns, community engagement events, project grants and fund development initiatives, and business and administrative operations. She has presented and produced a variety of performances by national and local artists, and managed collaborative projects between the for-profit and non-profit sectors. Kathleen has served in advisory and board capacities for organizations including the New England Foundation for the Arts, Minnesota State Arts Board, Minnesota Theatre Alliance, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, and the Arts Leadership Certificate program, University of Minnesota. She has been a leadership fellow with the Association of Performing Arts Presenters and the Shannon Institute. Kathleen holds a bachelor's degree in music from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, and a master's of liberal studies from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She's a flautist, enjoys entertaining, and loves to garden and travel.



**Nick Pavlovik**  
***Business Manager***

Nick is charged with strengthening and aligning administrative and financial functions with COCA's core missions of assisting and service. In this role, Nick oversees budget and financial planning, purchasing and contracting, and administrative functions related to personnel. A Macedonia native, Nick is a Garnet and Gold Scholar that graduated from the Florida State University, College of Business with Bachelor of Science degrees in multinational business, accounting and finance, and Master of Business Administration degree. Nick has over 10 years of accounting and finance experience and has brought to this position a broad range of operation management, finance, accounting, and budgeting experience.



**Sahara Lyon**  
***Arts Education Manager***

Sahara moved to Tallahassee to complete her Bachelor's degree in Art History at Florida State University and has lived here for over five years. During her time in Tallahassee, she has worked to curate community art exhibitions, interned with FSU's Museum of Fine Arts as an education and curatorial intern, and volunteered at art and cultural institutions. Sahara recently received her Master's in Art History from Florida State University while working as a Museum Educator at The Grove Museum. During her time at The Grove, Sahara further expanded upon her interests in art education, community engagement, and public programming. She has a passion for writing and research and has been accepted to and presented at conferences including the Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC). While not working, Sahara enjoys cycling, reading, and cooking for her fiancé and friends.



**Samantha Sumler**  
***Marketing & Communications Manager***

Samantha focuses on the marketing, communications, public relations, and promotions of COCA's mission, brand & services. With her background as a communications professional, Samantha has a range of marketing, project management, visual branding, and content management experience in the private and non-profit sectors. They also have over twelve years of experience in the performing arts, volunteering at theatres throughout the Midwest and Florida. Samantha's love for the arts started when she was three and performing plays for her grandma. Samantha earned their BA in Theatre Performance and holds a master's degree in Integrated Marketing & Management Communications from Florida State University. When she's not participating in theatre productions, Samantha loves shopping at antique stores, playing video games, and walking the trails of Tallahassee with her wife, Holly, and their dog, Rey.



**Sam Joslin**

***Public Art & Exhibitions Manager***

Sam oversees the Art in Public Places public art programs. She coordinates special public art projects and art engagements within the community, curating shows for the Artport and City Hall galleries and serving as a liaison between community groups regarding cultural initiatives. Sam has been involved in community-focused artistic projects for the past six years and is a practicing artist and art educator. Sam has relocated several times since she left her hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, living in Alabama, Montana, and Indiana to push her art education. Still, Sam is happy to call Tallahassee now her home. She holds a BFA from the University of Alabama with concentrations in Ceramics and Sculpture. Sam also completed a post-baccalaureate program at the University of Montana and recently graduated with her MFA in Sculpture & Intermedia from Ball State University. Sam feels passionate about the inclusive nature of public art and believes in its potential to bring a community together by curating a shared sense of creative expression. She is excited to get to know the city of Tallahassee through her work with COCA. When she is not pursuing work for COCA, Sam enjoys spending time with her dog, Daisy, renovating her A-frame home with her partner, Will, and working on her organic sculptures in her home studio.



**Summer Callahan**

***Grants Manager***

Summer manages all aspects of COCA's grant programs, including the Cultural Grant Program, the Cultural Tourism Marketing Grant Program, and the Cultural Facilities Matching Grant Program. Though she is a native of the Midwest, Summer moved to Jacksonville, Florida as a child, where she attended Douglas Anderson School of the Arts. She then earned a BA in English and an MA in Historical Administration and Public History from Florida State University. In her previous role at the Division of Arts and Culture, she developed a passion for folk art and sustainable public arts programming. She has enjoyed being a patron of Tallahassee's many arts-focused local businesses, such as the 621 Gallery, Cap City Video Lounge, and more. When she's off the clock, Summer is usually working on her novel or spending time with her wife and their above-average number of animals.