

OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA WELCOMES NEW COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST ASHLEIGH RICHELLE

Ten-Year Communications Professional Joins Organization to Lead Media Relations and Promotion for Upcoming OMCA Exhibitions, Programs, and Projects

(OAKLAND, CA) January 13, 2021—Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) announces Ashleigh Richelle (she/her/hers) as its new Communications Specialist, effective January 5.



Richelle joins OMCA with a breadth of communications and marketing experience that intersects with her commitment to equity, inclusion, and community. Prior to her role at OMCA, she led digital marketing for a startup, and was the Communications Manager for SMASH, the signature education program of the Kapor Center in Oakland. During her four-year tenure at SMASH, Richelle led the program's 2018 rebranding efforts, grew its social media presence by five times and organized media launches of five new national SMASH sites. Her efforts have resulted in articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Chicago*

Sun-Times, the *Atlanta Black Star*, and SMASH's first press hit in a Spanish-language media outlet, *Univision 14*. She is also an alumna of SMASH, and uses this platform to mentor and speak about her lived experience as a first generation Latinx professional in tech.

"I am so thrilled that Ashleigh has joined the Communications team to help share OMCA's programs, exhibitions, and institutional commitments with our community and beyond," said Associate Director of Communications Lindsay Wright (she/her/hers). "As we remain closed to the public due to the impacts of COVID-19, Ashleigh's creativity and passion for storytelling will surely be an asset while we continue to find new ways to connect with our current audiences and reach new ones. Once we are able to reopen, she will also be instrumental in helping us welcome the community back on campus to enjoy our newly-refreshed gardens and cafe."

A Bay Area native, Richelle graduated from the University of Chicago with a degree in Cinema and Media Studies and a minor in Human Rights. As the Communications Specialist, Ashleigh will focus on public relations and outreach to media for upcoming exhibitions such as *Mothership: Voyage into Afrofuturism* and *Edith Heath: A Life in Clay* and OMCA's future dining destination, Town Fare by Tanya Holland. She is also charged with developing new creative ways to engage with media and influencers in the time of COVID-19.

"One of the joys of living in the Bay Area is having a gem like the Oakland Museum of California so close to home. Between its multidisciplinary approach, and special exhibits that tackle social, cultural

and political issues, to its programming like Friday Nights at OMCA, the Museum strives everyday to live up to its nickname, *Museum of the People*,” says Richelle. “I’m excited to bring my experience to an institution that values progress, engages with the community, and creates space for untold stories to be heard and discussed.”

Richelle can be reached at arichelle@museumca.org.

ABOUT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) tells the many stories that comprise California, creating the space and context for greater connection, trust, and understanding between people. Through its inclusive exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and cultural events, OMCA brings Californians together and inspires greater understanding about what our state’s art, history, and natural surroundings teach us about ourselves and each other. With more than 1.9 million objects, OMCA brings together its multidisciplinary collections of art, history, and natural science with the first-person accounts and often untold narratives of California, all within its 110,000 square feet of gallery space and seven-acre campus. The Museum is a leading cultural institution of the Bay Area and a resource for the research and understanding of California’s dynamic cultural and environmental heritage for visitors from the region, the state, and around the world.