

# HCC welcomes new Taber Art Gallery director

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has appointed Rachel Rushing as director of the college’s Taber Art Gallery.

Originally from Louisiana, Rushing is an interdisciplinary artist with a special interest in photography. She comes to HCC by way of Dallas, where Rushing worked with the Nasher Sculpture Center to develop the visitor experiences program and manage special projects, such as the 2022 exhibition of *CARNE y ARENA*, a virtual reality exhibition written and directed by Academy Award winning Mexican filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu that integrates viewers into the true accounts of refugees in their journey across the southern U.S. border.

Rushing also founded and co-directed Sunset Art Studios, a social practice art gallery, residency, and studio in Dallas. She now lives in Holyoke.

“Hit the ground running” is an overused phrase, but it absolutely describes the energy Rachel’s brought to the position,” said Kim Hicks, dean of Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities. “In the brief time she’s been at HCC, she’s made connections with faculty, students, and the Holyoke Public Library, one of our most reliable community partners. She’s mounted her first exhibit and has been working with the grants office on an application to the Holyoke Cultural Council. Rachel has been making things happen.”

Rushing becomes only the second director since the gallery opened in 1998, succeeding founding director Amy Johnquest, who retired last spring.



Rachel Rushing has been named new art director at Taber Art Gallery.

*Submitted photo*

“I’m really excited,” Rushing said. “Gallery work and working with artists is something I’ve always been really passionate about. I think galleries on college campuses are really important ways to connect students with the bigger art world.”

Her first show as Taber director was an exhibition of photographs by John Leni Marcy titled “The City on Paper: Representations of HolyoRícan Life,” which was curated and captioned by HCC students enrolled in Latinx Studies classes.

“I was thrilled to bring this project to HCC as my first exhibition as the Taber Art Gallery director,” said Rushing. “It

combines many of my goals as gallery director, particularly cross-departmental collaboration, community connection, and inclusion through multilingual content. I’m looking forward to the Taber becoming an active space for students and the broader Pioneer Valley community through contemporary art and programming that expands the imagination and invites connection and creative exchange.”

The Taber Art Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. during regular school sessions.