

arts scottsdale news release

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SCOTTSDALE ARTS NAMES GERD WUESTEMANN AS NEW CEO

Louisiana senior executive has almost 40 years of experience in the arts



Gerd Wuestemann

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona – Louisiana arts executive Gerd Wuestemann, D.M.A., has been appointed the new president and CEO of Scottsdale Arts.

Scottsdale Arts Board of Trustees Chair Kathy Wills made the announcement on Thursday that Wuestemann, executive director of the Acadiana Center for the Arts in Lafayette, Louisiana, since 2008, will take the top job for the nationally recognized not-for-profit arts organization with an annual operating budget of \$11.5 million.

“Gerd was the unanimous choice of our board,” Wills said. “His extensive experience working with a city to develop its vision for the arts, managing a multi-disciplinary arts organization, fundraising experience and enthusiasm for the Scottsdale Arts’ mission make him the ideal choice to lead and take this organization to the next level. We look forward to working with him.”

Wuestemann, an arts administrator for 10 years who has a total of 38 years of experience in the arts, will begin his new duties on March 19. He will succeed Scottsdale Arts’ Interim President and CEO Mike Miller, who will continue to serve on the Scottsdale Arts board.

“We are pleased to welcome Gerd Wuestemann as the new leader of Scottsdale Arts after conducting an extensive national search that produced many quality candidates” said Board of Trustees Vice Chair Gerri Smith, who led the CEO search committee.

In his new job, Wuestemann will oversee 71 full-time and 104 part-time staffers at Scottsdale Arts, whose mission is to create diverse visual, performing and public arts experiences that engage the community.

Scottsdale Arts operates the Scottsdale Center for Performing Arts, the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art and Scottsdale Public Art. It administers arts and cultural affairs for the City of Scottsdale and provides a robust education and outreach program in the form of tours, hands-on activities, master classes, lectures, workshops and classroom-based and community outreach activities.

Over the past nine years, Wuestemann has led the transformation of a small arts council into the Acadiana Center for the Arts (AcA), which in 2016 and 2017 won the Governor's Culture Award. He developed public and private funding that allowed the arts center to build two new facilities, hire more staff and create a strong board to jointly develop a vision and implement it. AcA has since quadrupled in size, annexed another arts organization and created a growing endowment, along with building local, regional and national partnerships.

The Acadiana Center for the Arts now presents 140 events annually in two venues, curates 35 exhibits in five spaces, works with 25,000 students in the local school system, provides \$300,000 in grants to eight counties and is proceeding with the installation of a one-mile sculpture corridor. It also serves artists and the community with creative career development and outreach.

Wuestemann was part of the class of 2015 at the National Arts Strategies Executive Leadership Group, is a member of the board of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, has chaired Louisiana Citizens for Arts Advocacy since 2009 and is founder of the INNOV8 Festival of Creativity & Entrepreneurship.

He holds a doctorate of musical arts from the University of Arizona, a masters of musical arts from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, spent a post-graduate year at The Julliard School in New York City and holds a masters of music from Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt, Germany.

The new job represents a kind of homecoming for Wuestemann, who said he “developed a strong affinity for Arizona” while working on his doctorate at the U of A.

“I am excited for the opportunity to expand existing programs, create new initiatives and partnerships and further the mission of Scottsdale Arts and the arts and cultural life in the City of Scottsdale” Wuestemann said. “Great culture reflects our sense of community and in turn allows a community to come together, grow together and experience something new. I hope to serve my new community through engagement, partnerships, focus on artistic quality and innovative and diverse programming.”

SCOTTSDALE ARTS

Through its partnership with the City of Scottsdale, the nonprofit Scottsdale Arts (formerly known as Scottsdale Cultural Council) creates diverse, inspired arts experiences and educational opportunities that foster active, lifelong community engagement with the arts. Since its founding in 1987, Scottsdale Arts has grown into a regionally and nationally significant, multidisciplinary arts organization offering an exceptional variety of programs through three acclaimed divisions – Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA) and Scottsdale Public Art – serving more than 400,000 participants annually.

HOW TO REACH US

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