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ARTSFUND

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ArtsFund chooses new CEO/President

Business and community leader Mari Horita named to succeed Jim Tune

ArtsFund Chair Jim Duncan today announced the Board of Trustees has found “a leader for the future” in Mari Horita, saying Mari’s leadership in business and nonprofit sectors, demonstrated fundraising acumen, and passion for the arts, make her the ideal candidate to succeed Jim Tune as ArtsFund president and CEO.

“This position attracted more than 30 outstanding candidates from around the country, underscoring ArtsFund’s reputation as a national model in how to support and grow vibrant and diverse arts and cultural programs,” said Duncan, chairman of the board of Sparling and chair of the ArtsFund Search Committee.

Horita will assume her new position on January 2, 2012. A former practicing attorney, Horita is managing director in the Seattle office of Major, Lindsey & Africa, which provides recruitment and placement of lawyers and legal professionals.

Horita has an extensive background in civic and community involvement and has served on a number of nonprofit boards including ArtsFund, the Asian American Bar Association of Washington, Washington Appleseed, and Youthcare. Currently, she serves on the boards of the United Way of King County, and the Densho Project, whose mission is to promote civil liberties and preserve the testimonies of Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War II. She holds an advanced degree in nonprofit management and is considered an expert in board governance and leadership, volunteerism and legal considerations for nonprofit organizations.

Tune announced last April that he intended to retire after six years at the helm of ArtsFund.

“Mari was the standout candidate, ranking at the top of all the ‘desired attributes’ the Board was looking for in its next leader,” Duncan said. “Mari’s passion for and knowledge of the arts, her demonstrated ability to develop enduring relationships with corporate and individual donors as well as her demonstrated leadership abilities earned her the unanimous endorsement of the Search Committee.”

The 10-member Search Committee included representatives from the ArtsFund board, the business and nonprofit communities and arts groups.

“Having been active in the arts and involved in non-profits for the past 15 years and involved in ArtsFund for the last 17 years, the opportunity to lead ArtsFund is an extraordinary privilege,”

said Horita. “I believe strongly in the mission of ArtsFund, which is to strengthen arts in the region by raising and responsibly allocating funds to promote artistic and organizational excellence and by advocating for all the arts. I possess a passion for the arts and an unwavering commitment to making the arts accessible to all members of the community.”

Former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, president and CEO of the Seattle Foundation and a member of the Search Committee, commented, “Mari has a great depth of knowledge of the region and a good understanding of who cares about our region, about our arts and culture – and how to motivate them to participate to support the arts. I believe she will take ArtsFund to another level not only in terms of ability to raise funds but in cultivating new audiences who represent our community’s diverse cultures and different backgrounds. That’s important for ArtsFund’s future.”

Representing the arts community on the Search Community was Kelly Tweeddale, executive director of the Seattle Opera, who said, “Mari offers a wonderful background that is firmly rooted in both the business and nonprofit sectors – a background ideally suited to lead an organization that raises money for the arts. As a musician herself, she understands the dedication and commitment it takes to succeed in the arts, and as a passionate supporter of the arts she understands what motivates a donor to give.”

Elizabeth J. Warman, Boeing’s director of Global Corporate Citizenship for the Northwest Region and a member of the Search Committee, said, “Mari brings to ArtsFund a strong background in business and organizational management.”

Other members of the Search Committee included: Leonard Garfield, executive director of the Museum of History & Industry; and ArtsFund board members Judi Beck; Ray Heacox (president and general manager, KING Broadcasting); Stellman Keehnel (partner, DLA Piper); Scott Redman (president, Sellen Construction); and Mary Snapp (corporate vice president & deputy general counsel for Products & Services, Microsoft Corporation).

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