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### **Rice Museum of Rocks and Minerals Announces Aurore Giguet as New Executive Director**

Beginning August 1, 2020, Aurore Giguet will become the new Executive Director at the Rice Museum of Rocks and Minerals.

Most recently head of the Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science and Art in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Giguet was the finalist in an exhaustive nationwide search. With previous museum leadership experience including the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) Marjorie Barrick Museum, she is a proven museum professional.

Gail Copus Spann, president of the Board of Directors for the Rice Museum, lauded the hire as proof that the Rice Museum has a bright future. "Aurore Giguet is a goal-driven, results-focused entrepreneurial leader with over twenty-five years of experience," Spann said. "She has a track record of creating and implementing successful programs as well as team-building, process improvement, and creativity. We are thrilled to have her on board in such tumultuous times."

Current interim director Garret Romaine also expressed appreciation for Giguet's skill set. "This is a great hire," he said. "When I stepped down from the board 18 months ago to serve as interim director, I quickly learned on a day-to-day basis how challenging and rewarding the museum is. The legacy that Richard and Helen Rice built when they converted their rock & gem collection into a world-class museum continues to grow. I look forward to working closely with Aurore and making the transition as smooth as possible."



Giguet noted the dedication of the museum staff in keeping operations running so she could step into the leadership role in the midst of a sweeping pandemic. “I’m already aware of the passion and enthusiasm of the team in place, and I look forward to seeing them in action,” she said.

While “normal” operations for this Washington County institution are still in doubt, the museum will survive the pandemic. After overhauling its online presence with numerous video labs, lectures, and specimen deep-dives, the museum opened to in-person visits through an online reservation system on July 10. There are new exhibits, including the famed Carter Collection of world-class minerals and new 3D-printed replica of a sea-going reptile discovered in central Oregon and now hanging from the rafters. Several infrastructure projects were completed as well.

Still, the new executive director will have her hands full navigating multiple challenges at once. Paid admissions, school tours, and summer events have all seen precipitous drops, and the 2020 budget has undergone continual revisions.

“Honestly, challenges are a fact of life in the museum world,” Giguet admitted. “I know this will be a tremendous task to navigate through the rest of 2020. I’m extremely grateful to have a fully functional board of directors who helped steer this local treasure through the worst of the shutdown, and I salute their diligence in preserving the museum’s promise. I believe the Rice Museum has a bright future, expanding on the earth sciences education where its team has already established a strong reputation.”

The Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks and Minerals exists to engage, inspire, and educate generations on the splendor and complexity of our Earth.



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