

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 10, 2023

Contact Name: Kimberly Vagner

Phone: 503-647-2418

Email: kim@ricenorthwestmuseum.org

**RICE MUSEUM OF ROCKS & MINERALS ANNOUNCES KIMBERLY VAGNER AS
NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks and Minerals is pleased to announce the appointment of Kimberly Vagner as Executive Director.

With a strong knowledge of gems and minerals, and a background in museum operations and management, Vagner is charged with creating a plan for the museum that includes updating content and galleries, expanding outreach to the Hillsboro community, and aligning with STEM education initiatives. The board recognizes the vital role the museum plays inspiring visitors to appreciate the wonder and complexity of our earth, and is excited to create a new vision with the director. Board President, Gail Copus Spann, praises the hire saying “With her passion for the subject matter, and understanding of how museums run, Kim is the right person to grow and expand the museum and its offerings, while honoring the legacy of the Rice family.”

Vagner most recently served as director of the Gems and Minerals Center of Excellence at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, Texas. She also worked for the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), and credits her start in the profession with volunteering in the mineral sciences department of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History. She has a Masters Degree in Decorative Arts & Design from Parsons School of Design, and has a Graduate Gemologist diploma from GIA. Vagner has relocated to the Hillsboro area and is excited to get to know and engage in the local community.

Says Vagner “rocks, minerals, and gems are not only beautiful, but play an important role in our everyday lives. Take diamond for instance, while our first thought might be of an engagement ring, the majority of mined diamonds are used for industrial applications.” She continues “The Rice Museum is beloved within the community for its world-class collection in an unique setting. It is a great honor to be the next leader of this museum, and I look forward to cultivating new partnerships and inspiring visitors to delve into this exhilarating field of science that touches our lives in so many ways.”

About the Rice Museum

Housing a world-class collection of rocks and minerals, the Rice Museum is recognized as the finest in the Pacific Northwest and one of the best in the nation. Its educational programs include organized school field trips and ongoing educational outreach throughout the community

at large. The Museum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its unique architectural style and natural stone, and extraordinary native Oregon woodwork.

The Rice Museum is a Smithsonian Affiliate, one of only three in Oregon. The Affiliation serves as an endorsement of the quality of a museum's facilities, the training and professionalism of its staff, and its mission to educate the public. More information about the Smithsonian Affiliations program and Affiliate activity is available at www.affiliations.si.edu.

