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## **WESTERN ARTS ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES ITS NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Portland, OR — August 30, 2022**— Western Arts Alliance (WAA) — the West’s membership organization for touring and performing arts professionals — has announced Joshua Heim as its next Executive Director following an extensive 10-month search process.

Heim, a dedicated arts leader focused on areas of advocacy, cultural planning, racial equity, and social justice, joins WAA beginning September 19, 2022, to succeed accomplished leader Tim Wilson, who is departing in September after 25 remarkable years leading the organization.

Since establishing in 1967, WAA’s annual booking conference and its year-round programs advance excellence in performing arts presenting in the West by connecting and serving members and the field at large. In his role as ED, Heim will continue to help shape arts programming presented in the region and create vision and strategy for the sector to identify and navigate current challenges and find solutions which inspire lasting change.

*“My entire professional career has been based around furthering the arts because I believe culture is the original basic need,”* said Heim. *“We cannot live without shared identity and meaning, and I consider it a privilege to have a career helping people and communities make connections and use creative expression to become better versions of themselves. I am honored and humbled to lead WAA into its next phase, and I know the mission of WAA is one I can fully support and grow.”*

Prior to joining WAA, Heim served as Deputy Director at 4Culture, a cultural funding agency for King County Washington, overseeing a portfolio of grant funding and technical assistance programs that invests \$10 million annually. At 4Culture, Heim focused on working with program managers to shift programs toward greater equity, centering people and communities of color who have been historically underserved by traditional arts philanthropy. Joshua also helped to lead an impactful COVID-19 response that included distributing over \$12 million of federal disaster relief to cultural organizations and individual cultural workers.

Previously, Heim served as the Arts Program Manager and Diversity Liaison for the City of Bellevue, WA, following four years as Cultural Arts Administrator for the city of Redmond, WA.

*“Josh’s vision and experience, paired with his proven ability to align culture and community development in complex organizations and ecosystems, makes him a perfect fit for WAA at this critical time of change and growth,”* said WAA Board President and Edmonds Center for the Arts Founding Executive Director, Joe McIalwain. *“We are overjoyed to have Josh leading WAA into this new phase, and we would like to thank executive search firm KEES for skillfully guiding our committee through an extensive search process that produced an extremely talented, diverse, and competitive pool of final candidates.”*

Heim holds a Master of Arts in Cultural Studies from the University of Washington in Bothell, WA and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Anthropology from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR. Additionally, Heim holds an International Development Policy and Management Graduate Certificate from the University of Washington in Seattle, WA. He is originally from Hawaii, where he worked for a short time as a professional hula dancer.

*“I am so excited for the future of WAA and truly thrilled that Josh Heim will succeed me. WAA is lucky to land someone of his talent, vision, and experience,”* said Tim Wilson.

Leading the search efforts were Board President and Search Committee Chair Joe McIalwain and Search Committee members Aisha Ahmad-Post, Gail Boyd, Joseph Copley, Antonio Gómez, Pamela Green, Leilehua Lanzilotti, Nadhi Thekkek, Cathy Weiss, and Marty Wollesen. This was the first search partnership for KEES and WAA, following a competitive consultant selection process. The comprehensive search attracted candidates from across the nation.

## **ABOUT WESTERN ARTS ALLIANCE**

WAA is recognized by its peers as a leader in promoting social equity in the arts profession, and commitment to equity is a vital part of its mission and values. WAA’s pacesetting leadership fosters professional development, mentoring, networking, and recognition through its comprehensive slate of programs. WAA’s signature annual conference provides opportunities to spark industry connections, discover and learn, strengthen ties, and generate business opportunities. For more information, please visit <https://www.westarts.org>.

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