



SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT CULTURAL COALITION

For Immediate Release

Media Contact

Name: Wendy Bury

Title: Executive Director

Phone: (860) 448-5135

Email address: W.Bury@CultureSECT.org

Cultural Coalition Elects Six Directors

Leaders from arts, education, heritage, and tribal entities join board of region's cultural organization.

NEW LONDON, JUNE 27, 2017 - The Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition announces the election of six new members to its Board of Directors following its annual meeting on June 23rd. Leaders representing a cross section of the region's industries, towns, and populations joined the organization that contributes to the cultural identity, economy and quality of life of Southeastern Connecticut by advocating and supporting arts, cultural, heritage and creative business activities and organizations.

Executive Director Wendy Bury says, "Our six new board members represent the diverse community of our region and leaders within their organizations and communities. They bring talent, expertise and perspective to the table." She continues, "This is a very exciting time for our organization with the formative years behind us and our focus now on capacity building, advocacy and economic development for our 500+ partners in the region's arts, cultural and creative sector."

New board members elected:

AUNDRE BUMGARDNER

Bumgardner most recently served in the state legislature from 2015-2017 representing Groton and New London in the Connecticut House of Representatives.

He was elected in 2014 and served on the Education, Transportation and Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committees. He played an active role in the Southeastern Connecticut legislative delegation, newly formed Young Legislators Caucus, and served as the Assistant Secretary of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

Bumgardner was born in New London and grew up in Groton. He attended The Regional Multicultural Magnet School and The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications and attended the Cambridge School Weston having earned an academic scholarship as an A Better Chance Scholar. He graduated CSW after serving as student representative to the institution's Board of Trustees. Rep. Bumgardner attended Stetson University, before moving back to Groton to attend Three Rivers Community College.

JOSE GARAYCOCHEA- Executive Director, Expressiones Cultural Center
Garaycochea has been the executive director of Expressiones since its foundation. Prior to coming to USA in 2004, he developed a career as Civil Engineer in Chile. In 2000, Jose, and his husband Guido, founded Expressiones in Chile, then, in 2004, they moved to USA and they settled in CT. In 2009, they became a non-for-profit organization, where they help build multicultural bridges through artistic and educational endeavors. Expressiones celebrates diversity by inspiring the community to immerse themselves in the music, art, and customs of our multicultural population.

Garaycochea is member of the Rotary Club of New London, The Thames Club in New London, and a board member of Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London. In 2015 was appointed as an advisor to the President of Three Rivers Community College in Norwich. In 2014 was appointed as a community member advisor by New London Board of Education. During 2012 and 2013, he was appointed as CCSP & PACE Advisor at Three Rivers Community College. Since 2013 is a Math Instructor at Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT. also, since 2008 is a Spanish Instructor for youth and adults at Expressiones Cultural Center - New London, CT.

KRISTINA JORDAN- Director of Special Services, New London Public Schools
Since 2014, Kristina has served as the Director of Special Services at New London Public Services, which provides programming for students ages three to twenty-one based on the student's individual goals and objectives outlined by the Individualized Education Plan in the least restrictive environment. Previously Kristina served as District Supervisor for New London Public Schools and Assistant Principal at Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC). She received a Master's degree from Southern Connecticut State University and a Bachelor of Arts from Eastern Connecticut State University.

DEBORAH MACDONNELL- Director of Public Relations, Connecticut College
Deborah is director of public relations at Connecticut College where she promotes and enhances the reputation of this highly selective, residential, liberal arts institution and leverages opportunities to raise its national profile. A strategic communications professional with more than 25 years of experience, she has managed communications at public and private corporations; provided strategic communications counsel to a range of companies and organizations, from Fortune 500 corporations to small, community-based not-for-profits; and worked in the field as a newspaper reporter and editor.

A graduate of the University of Rhode Island, MacDonnell also completed the Investor Relations Certificate Program through the University of Connecticut's Center for Professional Development and School of Business Administration. She is a graduate of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council's Leadership Greater Bridgeport program and is an active local volunteer through her membership in the Rotary Club of New London, Conn. She has provided peer education programs to communications professionals through the National School of Banking and the Public Relations Society of America.

DR. JASON MANCINI- Executive Director, Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center

Mancini is currently overseeing the restructuring and strategic direction of the museum, a tribally owned educational institution. Formerly, Mancini was a Senior Researcher at the museum, Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at the University of Connecticut, and Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Connecticut College. Mancini holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Connecticut with expertise in the archaeology and ethnohistory of New England.

His research is focused on Indian histories after 1700 and involve Indian social networks, Indian mariners, urban Indian communities, race and ethnicity in New England, cultural landscapes, and oral histories. He is founder and director of the Indian Mariners Project and co-director of a cultural and educational exchange between the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, the Inupiat Village of Point Lay, Alaska, Mystic Aquarium, and the North Slope Borough (Alaska) Department of Wildlife Management.

JOSEPH SMITH- Councilor, Mohegan Tribal Council, Mohegan Tribal Nation
Joseph William Smith began his first term on the Tribal Council in October of 2015, following a decade of experience working for the Mohegan Tribe and Mohegan Sun. At Mohegan Sun, he worked in communications and publications, and later moved to a position as a publicist for the Sports and Entertainment department. For the Mohegan Tribe, Smith worked as a manager of communications and public affairs for eight years, responsible for internal and external outreach for the Tribe. Smith grew up in Uncasville, and later moved to both New York City and Los Angeles. Over a twenty-year career as a story editor and story analyst, Smith held positions at ABC, The Walt Disney Company, Paramount Pictures and 20th Century-Fox. He holds both Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees from Columbia University, and lives in Old Lyme, Connecticut.

Officers were also elected at the Cultural Coalition's annual meeting:

Chair - Lisa McGinley, Retired Deputy Managing Editor, The Day

Vice Chair- Robert Richter, Director of Arts Programming, Connecticut College

Treasurer- Wes Pulver, Executive Director, National Coast Guard Museum Association, Inc.

Secretary- Regan Miner, Consultant for the Norwich Historical Society

About Southeastern CT Cultural Coalition

The Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, contributes to the cultural identity, economy and quality of life of Southeastern Connecticut by advocating and supporting arts, heritage,

cultural and business activities and organizations.

Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition | (860) 448-5135 |
Info@CultureSECT.org | www.CultureSECT.org

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Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, PO Box 95, New London, CT 06320

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