

## KAREN GAHL-MILLS

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16 April 2018

Joseph P. Gibbons  
President, Board of Trustees  
Cuyahoga Arts & Culture  
1501 Euclid Avenue, Suite 407  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115

Dear Joe:

It has been an honor to serve as CEO + Executive Director of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. However, with this letter, I wish to inform you of my intention to resign from my position effective Thursday, June 7, 2018.

I am proud of the work that we have done since I arrived in February 2010. The board at that time charged me, CAC's second executive director, with helping the agency clarify its mission and build and expand its programs in service to the residents of Cuyahoga County. During my tenure, we have done just that: we have gotten clear about our mission and our purpose – to ensure that the residents of the County benefit from the public investment that our community makes in arts and culture organizations – and we have aligned all of our programs around that purpose. We have built a strong management team, and we have raised the profile of the agency, such that we now are serving more organizations than ever before, and such that our levy passed in 2015 with an overwhelming margin. The Auditor of State has recognized our exemplary stewardship of our financial resources each year of my tenure. And through our groundbreaking organizational planning work, we set forth a roadmap for the next ten years that brings a commitment to equity in line with our ongoing dedication to good grantmaking.

It has been a privilege to work with the people who have served on the board and staff during my tenure. After eight years, however, I have decided that it is time for me to move on. It is time for new leadership that will help CAC continue to move forward, and it is time for me to seek new challenges. My husband and I will be moving to Chicago this summer, where I am going to expand my teaching practice to include courses at Northwestern University as well as at my alma mater, the University of Chicago. I am also exploring consulting projects with the Civic Consulting Alliance.

I will do everything I can to ensure a smooth transition and am confident that CAC is in good hands and has a bright future ahead.

With every good wish,



Karen Gahl-Mills

## **ABOUT KAREN GAHL-MILLS**

Karen Gahl-Mills was appointed CEO + Executive Director of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture in November 2009. Under her leadership, CAC has invested more than \$170 million in more than 350 organizations who serve millions of area residents.

During her time with CAC, it has become one of the most respected local arts agencies in the nation. She has helped the organization clarify its mission and purpose – to ensure that area residents benefit from substantial public support for arts and culture organizations – and she has ensured that all CAC programs are aligned around that purpose. She has built a strong management team and was instrumental in ensuring the overwhelming passage of CAC’s ballot initiative in 2015. She is the chief fiscal officer of the agency, and the Auditor of State has recognized CAC’s exemplary stewardship of its financial resources each year of her tenure. And, in 2016, she spearheaded a groundbreaking organizational planning process that set forth a roadmap for the agency’s future that brought a commitment to equity in line with its ongoing dedication to good grantmaking.

She is also a respected civic leader, both locally and nationally, serving on the boards of Destination Cleveland, Midtown Cleveland, the Old Town School of Folk Music, and the United States Urban Arts Federation. A member of the Leadership Cleveland class of 2011, her work has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Crain’s “Women of Note” award in 2016.

She holds a bachelor of music degree from DePaul University and an MBA from the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business. She is proud to teach (part time) at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago and the School for Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University. And she still makes music, singing regularly in the community choir at Oberlin College.