



For Immediate Release

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CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION ANNOUNCES TOM DECAIGNY AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The California Alliance for Arts Education is pleased to announce that Tom DeCaigny has been named the new Executive Director, beginning in late February. DeCaigny brings more than 20 years of leadership experience in nonprofit, arts, education, cultural, philanthropic and government institutions.

“The California Alliance for Arts Education is truly excited for Tom to become our next leader. He possesses a unique range of executive, strategic and policy expertise, substantial experience advancing diversity, equity and inclusion, and a deep commitment to arts education. Tom also has great vision and is a natural coalition-builder. He is the perfect person to lead the Alliance boldly into the future, building on the excellent progress we’ve made during the past decade under the leadership of retiring executive director Joe Landon. This is truly a great moment for the students of California, especially those who have been underserved and lack access to quality arts education programs. We are confident Tom will be relentless in advocating for them,” said Paul Richman, Chair of the Board.

Tom DeCaigny knows the Alliance well, having served on the Committee for Legislation and as Board Treasurer from 2008 to 2015. Most recently, DeCaigny was the Director of Cultural Affairs at the San Francisco Arts Commission, a \$40 million city department that champions the arts as essential to daily life. During his eight years at the Arts Commission, DeCaigny turned around a struggling City agency, led a successful ballot measure (Proposition E) which increased hotel tax funding for the arts and arts education, set a responsive policy agenda advancing space affordability and racial equity, strengthened relationships with the grantmaking field and tripled grant dollars for the arts sector. He also held leadership positions with a variety of national and global organizations including the U.S. Urban Arts Federation and World Cities Culture Forum.

Prior to his tenure at the San Francisco Arts Commission, DeCaigny spent nine years as Executive Director of the Performing Arts Workshop, a Bay Area nonprofit dedicated to helping young people develop critical thinking, creative expression and essential learning skills through the arts. There he led several U.S. Department of Education funded research initiatives and was a member of the San Francisco Unified School District’s Arts Education Master Plan Steering Committee. He joins the Alliance with a deep understanding of the California arts education landscape and proven leadership in advancing racial equity, diversity and inclusion.

“I’m honored to accept the appointment as the California Alliance for Arts Education’s next Executive Director. As a working-class kid growing up in rural northern Minnesota,

a public school drama teacher helped save my life. All young people, especially those young people who face barriers because of racial inequity and economic inequality, deserve the right to a high-quality public arts education and the opportunities that follow. The Alliance is an organization that's been near and dear to my heart for decades and I couldn't be more excited to build on its demonstrated success as a policy and advocacy leader in the State of California." DeCaigny said of the appointment.

DeCaigny officially begins his post on February 24th.

CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION advocates for high quality arts education for all students by providing policy expertise and by mobilizing a statewide network of advocates and allied partners. The Alliance is in its fifth decade of working to build a brighter future for our state by making the arts a core part of every child's education. A statewide leader and convener, the Alliance galvanizes California's educators and other experts in arts and culture to increase access to quality arts education and improve the quality of arts education. Visit our website at <http://www.artsed411.org/>.