

Erika Wesley Named New Executive Director of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County



Fairfield County, CT (August 31, 2023) - The Board of Directors of the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County (CAFC) announced today that Erika K. Wesley has been named as the new CAFC executive director, effective September 18, 2023. Wesley will provide strategic, financial and operational leadership for the non-profit organization that serves as a Regional Service Organization (RSO) designated by the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA).

The leading arts and culture network for coastal Fairfield County, CAFC connects and supports a membership base of some 600 artists, arts and cultural organizations, and creative businesses from a 15-town region. Wesley will work with the network to continue its mission to provide marketing, capacity building, professional development, and advocacy services to the arts and culture community of Fairfield County.

"We are delighted that Erika is joining the Cultural Alliance. Erika brings a wealth of talent and experience with non-profit organizations to CAFC and will continue to do its good work for the Fairfield County arts and cultural community," explains Board President Cheryl Williams. "Erika's thoughtfulness, creativity, love of the arts and commitment to community-building are just a few of the qualities that will take the organization to the next level. The Board looks forward to working with Erika as she brings her vision and leadership to the organization."

Wesley is a nonprofit leader with over 10 years of experience, including constituency management, program development, and strategic planning. Most recently, she served as the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for the Westport Country Playhouse. She has also worked with

Fairfield County's Community Foundation and The Carver Foundation of Norwalk.

As a higher education and community educator with teaching experience in business writing and creative writing, Wesley is especially passionate about providing women & girls opportunities to engage in literary arts. She has facilitated community-based creative writing workshops for various organizations. Wesley is also the chairperson of BLaC (Building Leaders and Communities) Strategies, an emerging nonprofit focused on cross-community leadership development and community messaging.

A longtime Fairfield County resident, Wesley holds a B.A. from University of Connecticut, an M.F.A. from Manhattanville College, and is completing an Ed.D. in organizational leadership from Abilene Christian University. Former Editor of the Manhattanville Review and INKWELL literary journal, she was named the 2014 Manhattanville Writing Alumni Contest winner. She is the author of the book "For the People to Drink" and the creator and host of the "Show of Hands" podcast.

Wesley states, "I am incredibly honored to lead the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, a prestigious organization that plays a critical role in our community as a convener and networker for countless artists and art institutions. I look forward to helping the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County move forward in a way that widens arts access and opportunity in our region, and I am excited to continue strengthening our community's artists and the artistic and cultural hubs that make Fairfield County a thriving and creative place to live and work."