



PHS Announces Resignation of Drew Becher as President

Margaret McCarvill Named Interim Executive Director

PHILADELPHIA (April 7, 2015) – The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has announced that Drew Becher, President of the nonprofit organization since 2010, has resigned, effective June 1. Margaret Sadler, Chair of the PHS Board, said the Board accepted Becher’s resignation with regret, citing his accomplishments and the growth of the organization during his tenure.

Becher is leaving PHS in order to relocate to San Francisco, where his partner, Eric Lochner, has accepted the position of President and CEO of Achievers, one of the largest cloud-based employee success platform companies in the world.

Margaret McCarvill, a PHS Board member and the Board President of the Neighborhood Gardens Trust, will serve as Interim Executive Director of PHS, effective May 1, while a national search for a new President is underway.

“On behalf of the Board, I thank Drew for his commitment, energy and contributions to the work of PHS,” Sadler said. “Under Drew’s leadership, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has thrived, evolving to meet the changing needs of the region.”

Sadler noted that under Becher’s leadership, PHS membership surged from 20,000 to 75,000, with a strong focus on attracting young members; PHS Pop Up Gardens have become an iconic brand in Philadelphia; Plant One Million, the nation’s largest multi-state tree-planting campaign, was initiated and will hit the 500,000 mark this year; the PHS City Harvest community garden program was expanded; a master plan was initiated for Meadowbrook Farm; the Hamilton Horticult and interactive elements were added to the Philadelphia Flower Show; and the PHS magazine, *GROW*, was relaunched with exciting new content and design. During Becher’s tenure, PHS also secured \$4 million in funding, including major grants from the William Penn Foundation and the sponsorship of Bank of America and other partners, to support the organization’s programs and services.

Becher became President of PHS in June 2010 after serving four years as Executive Director of the New York Restoration Project. He served as Deputy Director of Washington, D.C.’s Office of Planning and led the creation of the district’s Department of Environment. Becher also served as Chief of Staff for the Chicago Park District, and helped forge Mayor Richard M. Daley’s acclaimed environmental agenda.



In announcing his decision to the PHS staff today, Becher said, “I am extremely proud of the accomplishments we’ve achieved over the past five years. While there is still much more to do for our city and region, the PHS tradition of building beauty and community will certainly attract excellent new leadership to expand the role of PHS.”

Becher thanked the staff for their unwavering commitment to the PHS mission and told them to continue making an impact on the city and its neighborhoods. “This is an important pivot point for this organization, but there is no better team to continue this vital work. I would also like to thank PHS’s many partners, sponsors and volunteers, without whom our work would not be possible.”

Sadler said PHS will have an excellent interim leader in McCarvill, who serves on the PHS Finance and Administration Committee and has led the Neighborhood Gardens Trust, Philadelphia’s largest land trust, since its relaunch in 2014. She is President of MMM, a supply chain, finance and information technology consulting company, and has held global corporate executive positions for chemical and materials companies.

In retaining the well-respected recruiting firm Phillips Oppenheim, the PHS Board will be focused and deliberate in conducting a national search for a new President, Sadler said.

“Drew has been a wonderful leader of PHS, and we will miss him. But we’re excited to find the next leader who will take this organization forward and help refine our impact,” Sadler said. “We are in a strong position, both as an organization as well as in our role in the community. We are confident that we will be successful in recruiting a dynamic new leader.”

ABOUT PHS

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1827, dedicated to creating beauty and building community through gardening, greening and learning. With 75,000 members nationwide, PHS offers programs and events for gardeners of all levels, and works with volunteers, organizations, agencies and businesses to create and maintain vibrant green spaces. Proceeds from the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show -- which was named the top event in the world by the International Festivals & Events Association -- and donations from foundations, corporations, government and individuals support PHS programs, including Plant One Million and PHS City Harvest. For information, visit PHSonline.org.

MEDIA CONTACT: Alan Jaffe, PHS Communications Director, 215.988.8833, ajaffe@pennhort.org

