

Ellen Owens named director of Castellani Art Museum at Niagara University

Artist, educator and arts administrator Ellen Owens was named director of the Castellani Art Museum at Niagara University.

A press release stated, "In her new role, which begins Nov. 1, she will provide dynamic leadership for the museum, which has a permanent collection that includes more than 5,000 pieces of primarily modern and contemporary art."

The Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., Niagara University president, said, "Ellen Owens is a talented, innovative and collaborative leader with a great passion for the arts and an unwavering commitment to the educational mission of museums. These qualities will serve her well as she develops programs and initiatives to strengthen the presence and impact of the Castellani Art Museum as a vibrant resource for the visual arts on campus, as well as for the entire Western New York region."

Throughout her career, in positions that include education director, executive director, curator and board member, Owens has created meaningful visitor, student and staff experiences. For the past seven years, she has provided strategic guidance as part of the executive leadership team of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the largest anthropology museum in the U.S. This team recently completed an \$80 million institutional transformation project to reimagine 10,000 square-feet of galleries and public



Ellen Owens (Image courtesy of Niagara University)

space, rebrand through a massive marketing campaign, and unveil new programming.

During her tenure, Owens assisted in raising more than \$4.5 million for her department through grants, sponsorships and other fundraising initiatives; new collaborations and partnerships were established; and program attendance grew significantly. Owens and her team launched "Unpacking the Past," a multistage education program that serves more than 6,000 public middle school students annually. She also spearheaded the groundbreaking "Global Guides" program, which hires local immigrants and refugees to lead gallery tours that relate personal stories to history from their countries of origin.

Owens served as coordinator

and senior lecturer in the master's degree program in museum education at University of the Arts, and has held several positions at art-, history- and science-based institutions in and around the Philadelphia area, including executive director of Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, a folk art gallery and museum; and manager of education at the American Philosophical Society Museum, with galleries focused on history, art and science. She began her career at Creative Oasis Arts Studio as assistant manager of the gallery and coordinator and instructor at its arts camps.

An energetic advocate and volunteer for the arts, Owens has held numerous nonprofit trustee roles with The Print Center, The Museum Council of Greater

Philadelphia, the Arts and Business Council of Philadelphia, and Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania. She is a graduate of notable leadership programs such as the Getty Leadership Institute and Nonprofit Executive Leadership Institute at Bryn Mawr College.

"The Castellani family and I welcome and look forward to Ellen joining the museum team and the NU family," said Carla Castellani, daughter of the museum's founders, Armand and Eleanor Castellani. "Her museum acumen and experience in the education arena will be a terrific asset. She is dedicated to building on the past, supporting the museum's mission, and developing a stronger future in serving the community and region."

Owens said, "As I became more familiar with the Castellani Art Museum, I was compelled by its origin story of Armand Castellani's successful business ventures and his passion for modern

and contemporary art. The Castellani's commitment to diverse audiences through its folk arts and education programs, along with its integration of learning projects for Niagara students, directly align with my own values and professional experiences. I am thrilled to take the helm, as I believe the museum is an incredible resource for the region."

A frequent speaker at professional conferences and a published author, Owens holds a Master of Arts degree in museum education from the University of the Arts, and Bachelor of Science in art education and Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees from Pennsylvania State University, State College.

Say You Saw It In The



City of Niagara Falls Halloween hours

Mayor Robert Restaino recently announced Halloween in the City of Niagara Falls will be observed from 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 31.

His office said, "The City of Niagara Falls urges that, as resi-

dents plan ways to celebrate Halloween this year, they use caution and common sense when deciding how to spend the holiday weekend."

The city reminds residents that those who are not vaccinat-

ed against covid-19 are required to wear masks in public settings – and costume masks are not considered to suitable substitutes for cloth masks.

New 28,000-square-foot facility to open in spring 2023

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State Park over the last several years have been nothing short of extraordinary. A new, state-of-the-art facility that provides visitors with year-round access to a superior experience is a much-needed and highly anticipated addition to the park. I commend New York State Parks for developing a facility that tells the stories of our region and its rich history, which will encourage visitors to explore our entire destination."

This project will complement the \$150 million revitalization of Niagara Falls State Park landscape. Launched in 2011, the Niagara Falls State Park landscape revitalization plan was a multiyear commitment to renew the park in a manner that better reflects noted park designer Frederick Law Olmsted's vision for the landscape. The plan renovated the park's major viewing areas, including Luna Island, Prospect Point, Lower Grove, Three Sis-

ters Island, North Shoreline Trail, Luna Bridge and Terrapin Point with new pedestrian walkways, enhanced landscaping, new benches, light posts and railings. The interactive Cave of the Winds pavilion, which highlights the natural and cultural history of Niagara Falls, opened in 2017.

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