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Arts Center Task Force Names New Executive Director

More than 30 years of performing arts center management and operations

RICHLAND, Wash. (Feb. 7, 2024). Arts Center Task Force (ACTF) has hired Blake Smith, Townsend, Tenn., as its new Executive Director. Smith, who has more than 30 years of experience in managing and operating performing arts centers, assumed the role Monday, Feb. 5. He was chosen after a national search launched in November.

“Blake is a perfect fit for our organization with his wealth of experience with performing arts centers,” said ACTF Board Chair Steven Wiley. “He will be invaluable to our mission to build and operate the Mid-Columbia Performing Arts Center.”

The Arts Center will be sited in Columbia Park West near The REACH Museum. The 800-seat venue will be a vibrant, state-of-the-art facility for local and touring group performances. “It will enhance cultural access and quality of life for the community, promote economic vitality, and support the wide variety of local arts organizations in the Tri-Cities,” said Wiley.

Most recently, Smith was chief executive and general manager of the Clayton Center for the Arts in Maryville, Tenn. He previously was Director of Operations and Facility Technical Director at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts in Houston and served as Director of Concerts and Conventions at the Delta Center Arena, Salt Lake City.

Smith also is past president of the Tennessee Presenters Association, was trained in technical theatre at Arizona State University, and is a member of the International Association of Venue Managers.

“Joining a team committed to bringing a professional performing arts center to the Tri-Cities area is the culmination of my years spent supporting and promoting live arts. It’s an exciting challenge I couldn’t pass up,” said Smith. “With the strong support this community gives its local arts organizations, it was clear to me that this endeavor to provide a home for their work and the opportunity to host a broad variety of touring performances will provide a positive cultural boost to this community and its residents.”

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