

Buffalo arts leader tapped for national post

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A Buffalo nonprofit arts executive is taking a big leap with a new appointment at the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C.

Jax Deluca has accepted a post as director of media arts at the NEA, beginning Jan. 11.

It's a significant jump from Squeaky Wheel Film & Media Art Center, which operates on a budget of less than \$250,000.

Deluca will manage the federal agency's grantmaking in media arts and represent the agency to organizations in the field.

The move follows a 10-year career at Squeaky Wheel, starting as director of programming and rising to executive director in 2012. Her tenure included expansion efforts, including fundraising, updating media equipment and revitalizing youth media arts curriculum. The organization also relocated into updated facilities at the Market Arcade downtown.

J.T. Rinker, board chair, said the board is proud of how Deluca grew into and now out of her role as executive director.

"We've been excited and supportive of the transformations Squeaky Wheel has undergone during her tenure," he said.

Founded in 1985 as Buffalo Media Resources, the agency provides education, equipment access and exhibition programming to help individuals explore the field of film and digital media arts. It has consistently received competitive funding from national sources such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts as well as state funders like the Regional Economic Development Council and local foundations.

Last year, it was nominated as Cultural Organization of the Year by the Arts Services Initiative of WNY.

The agency expects to announce a new leader in the coming months as it works toward a seamless transition.

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