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Kimberly Scrafano Named New Executive Director of the Mechanics' Institute

SAN FRANCISCO - The Mechanics' Institute today announced that Kimberly Scrafano is the organization's new executive director.

"We are thrilled to work with Kimberly as she leads the Mechanics' Institute forward," said Lindsey Crittenden, president of the Board of Trustees. "During an extensive search with many qualified candidates, Kimberly stood out for her expertise, knowledge, and passion for the work of the Mechanics' Institute, as well as her vision for the role of the Institute in today's San Francisco and the larger Bay Area. Kimberly's career has shown dedication to bringing people together and to fostering learning and engagement, and with her at the helm, the Mechanics' is optimally placed to grow and thrive in meeting the needs of its members and the wider community."

"Kimberly's commitment to fostering communities and access to knowledge is a perfect fit with the Mechanics' Institute's mission to provide a center for intellectual and cultural advancement, said Lindsey Tonsager, Mechanics' Institute Trustee and a member of the Executive Director Search Committee. "The breadth of her experience in program development and strategic engagement with policymakers and community leaders will ensure that the Mechanics' Institute remains a vibrant cultural oasis in the heart of San Francisco."

Scrafano replaces Ralph Lewin, who left in January after four years of serving the Mechanics' Institute in the lead executive position. Scrafano most recently served as the President of Calidad Industries and Chief Program Officer of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay, where her passion and advocacy helped create equitable access to resources, information, and services.

"I am very honored to have been chosen to help lead such a vital cultural institution," Scrafano said. "Mechanics' Institute is a leader in providing cultural and literary experiences for the diverse communities of San Francisco and the Bay Area. Whether attending one of the Institute's unique literary or film events, learning to play chess in the oldest and one of the most venerable chess rooms in the country, or finding that rare book in our extensive and historic library, there is something for everyone at the Institute. I am very excited to join the dedicated board, staff, and membership on this

journey to help enhance and grow the opportunities the Mechanics' Institute provides for members and the general public to explore and create new cultural experiences."

In her career, Kimberly Scrafano has led a number of initiatives dedicated to ensuring equitable access to cultural and educational opportunities. She has worked with local community colleges, the Friends of the Library, the Oakland Museum, and the East Bay Children's Book Project to support increased access to education, literature, and academic resources for students. She also oversaw the acquisition of a post-secondary school and the accreditation of vocational and education programs while at Goodwill. Her skills in communications and public relations include the production of videos showcasing the impact of education programs in the community, which have aired on local and national platforms.

Kimberly earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in English Literature and Creative Writing and a second BA in Women's Studies with a concentration in Art History and Film Studies from Barnard College, Columbia University. She also received a Master of Science (MS) degree at the Academy of Chinese Culture & Health Sciences. Kimberly has served as a leader on a number of committees and boards and is also active in her community, volunteering for her local PTA and coaching youth sports. She enjoys writing prose and poetry. Kimberly lives in Alameda with her wife and two children.

About the Mechanics' Institute

The Mechanics' Institute is a general-interest membership library, cultural event center, and chess club located in our 9-story landmark building in the Financial District of San Francisco at 57 Post Street. Founded in 1854 to serve the educational and social needs of mechanics — artisans, craftsmen and inventors — and their families, the Institute today serves avid readers, writers, downtown employees, students, film lovers, chess players, and the 21st century nomadic worker in search of a place for literary pursuits, thinking, research and study, and connection.

For more information, visit the Mechanics' Institute website at www.milibrary.org or contact Jessica Neaves at jneaves@milibrary.org.
