



News Release
For Immediate Release

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Friends of the Riverfront Names Valerie Beichner Executive Director
New Leader to Host a 30 Day Coffee with Valerie Listening Tour

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – December 20, 2017 - Friends of the Riverfront, a pioneering non-profit organization working to build safe, clean and accessible riverfront trails as part of the Three River Heritage Trail system, announced today the addition of Valerie Beichner as its new Executive Director.

Beichner joins Friends of the Riverfront after serving as Director of Operations and Analytics at Conservation Consultants, Inc (CCI), bringing a decade of nonprofit management experience to the organization. During her time at CCI, Valerie ushered in organizational efficiencies across multiple program departments and streamlined financial policies and procedures, while managing the Ann Jones Gerace Center. She previously spent several years with the Green Building Alliance as Vice President of Development. An avid trail user, Valerie and her husband ran the 335-mile Great Allegheny Passage trail over 11 days in 2016 to raise money for "Moir's Mission" - a fundraiser designed by their then 10 year old daughter to benefit the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC's Free Care Fund.



"Valerie brings an energy and understanding about how to take a non-profit to the next level," said Stacey Vernallis, Chair, Board of Directors, Friends of the Riverfront. "She's already revitalized our entire board's excitement about our mission to protect and restore our rivers and riverfronts."

To kick-off the New Year and her new role, Beichner will host a 30 day coffee with Valerie listening tour at various locations along the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. The tour will celebrate local businesses located along the trail while providing partners, volunteers, trail users and other various stakeholders the opportunity to share their trail experiences and ideas. Exact locations of these events will be posted weekly with many open to the public.

Beichner states this tour will provide Friends of the Riverfront great perspective as it heads into 2018 with a commitment to BUILD, STRENGTHEN and COLLABORATE. "Pittsburgh's rivers and trail systems play such an important role in the social, cultural and economic fabric of our region," said Beichner. "I'm proud to take on this role and help advocate for and build even stronger riverfronts for the City of Pittsburgh."

Beichner earned her Masters in Organizational Leadership from Robert Morris University and her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Clarion University.

She begins her new role and the listening tour on January 2, 2018.

About Friends of the Riverfront

Friends of the Riverfront's mission is to build safe, clean and accessible riverfront trails as part of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail system to create and maintain an outstanding experience for trail users while providing economic, environmental, and health benefits to the Pittsburgh region. Since its inception in 1991, Friends of the Riverfront has been a pioneering organization working to protect and restore the Pittsburgh region's rivers and riverfronts after decades of legacy pollution. The Three Rivers Heritage Trail now encompasses over 25 miles of urban riverfront trails along both banks of the mighty Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers. Through broad and diverse collaborations, we continue the work of providing environmental restoration, economic vitality, and public health benefits to the Pittsburgh region through the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. For more information, please visit www.friendsoftheriverfront.org.

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