



For Immediate Release
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NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTED TO SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY'S GREEN MUSIC CENTER

University of Iowa's Dynamic Programming Director Jacob Yarrow Will Succeed Zarin Mehta

ROHNERT PARK, CA -- Sonoma State University President Judy K. Sakaki announced Thursday that Jacob Yarrow, who for the past eight years has been programming director for Hancher Auditorium—the main performing arts center at the University of Iowa—has accepted the position of Executive Director of Sonoma State's Green Music Center.

Yarrow, 45, will succeed Zarin Mehta, the former president and executive director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra who has been at the helm of Sonoma State's renowned performing arts venue since 2013; and Stan Nosek, the university's interim vice president for administration and finance who has served as the GMC's co-executive director since last summer.

"Jacob is a talented and versatile arts executive with two decades of experience in programming, fundraising, performance, higher education, marketing and non-profit

management,” President Sakaki said. “I feel confident this is going to be an excellent fit for him and his family and for the university and community.”

Yarrow’s appointment followed a comprehensive national search led by the Catherine French Group after Mehta announced his retirement last fall and Yarrow will begin his new position in June.

“The opportunity to play a leadership role at SSU represents an exciting chance to make an impact on the lives of students and faculty while contributing to the vibrant arts community in the North Bay,” he said of his move to Sonoma State. “I am particularly impressed by Weill Hall and the current programming as well as ambitious plans to deepen academic connections and to make the GMC that much more central to campus and community life.”

President Sakaki has been working to more fully integrate the GMC into everyday campus life since she became Sonoma State’s 7th president last July and Yarrow had considerable success achieving that connection with Hancher at Iowa.

As Hancher’s programming director, Yarrow led development of all programming and education efforts in a multi-disciplinary season of up to 40 artists a year and more than 100 education activities for all ages. He also has overseen marketing and played a key role in managing the organization, advancing a number of strategies that helped position Hancher at the center of both academic life and the Midwest arts community.

Henry Hansel, a leading owner of automobile dealerships in the North Bay and chairman of the GMC’s Board of Advisors, said everything about Yarrow’s background and experience makes him a perfect fit for the GMC job.

“I am elated with whom the university has selected,” Hansel said. “His diverse experiences as an arts industry leader and as an educator are exactly what the GMC needs right now. His background and experience are such that he’s really going to be able to connect with all the constituencies we serve: our audience, the university and especially students. I could not be more excited to start working with him.”

Prior to the University of Iowa, Yarrow spent six years as executive director of Garth Newel Music Center in rural Bath County Virginia, where he founded the Virginia Blues & Jazz Festival and directed all aspects of the organization including strategic planning, fundraising, financial management, public relations and a gourmet food program.

He also worked as education director at the Association of Performing Arts Presenters in Washington, DC, where he ran professional development seminars for arts professionals throughout the United States.

A native of Beckley, West Virginia, Yarrow began his career as a touring musician and as a junior high school music teacher. For the past several years, he has played saxophone in a 1920’s-era New Orleans-style jazz band; in the mid-1990s he played alto saxophone, clarinet

and flute while touring internationally and nationally with the acclaimed Glenn Miller Orchestra. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan and a Master of Music degree from the University of North Texas. He will be moving to Sonoma State with his wife, Debbie, who is also a musician and musical educator, and their two teenage daughters.

ABOUT THE GREEN MUSIC CENTER

Nestled in the picturesque foothills of Northern California's esteemed wine country, the Green Music Center (GMC) is a focal point for arts in the region, with its spectacular 1400-seat Weill Hall, an acoustically exceptional venue with a modular rear wall that opens to terraced lawn seating, providing picturesque views of the surrounding countryside, and the 240-seat Schroeder Hall, a cathedral-like recital hall designed specifically to accentuate instruments, organ and voice in a small, intimate setting. A program of Sonoma State University, the GMC presents year-round programming of top classical, contemporary, jazz and world music artists and is home to the Santa Rosa Symphony.

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