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JO ELLEN PARKER NAMED PRESIDENT OF
CARNEGIE MUSEUMS OF PITTSBURGH

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—The Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh board of trustees today named Jo Ellen Parker, Ph.D., the institution’s 10th president. Currently president of Sweet Briar College, a liberal arts college for women in central Virginia, she will assume her new post on August 18.

President of Sweet Briar since 2009, Dr. Parker led the college in creating a strategic plan that has increased applications, produced a more inclusive and diverse student body, brought about greater transparency in all areas of governance and administration, realized efficiencies in operations and staffing, and introduced an entrepreneurial approach to liberal education. She previously served as executive director of the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE), where she turned a series of grant-funded programs into a sustainable not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping nearly 150 liberal arts colleges in the United States and abroad advance undergraduate education in the digital age. Dr. Parker also previously served as president of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), a consortium of 12 selective liberal arts colleges, where she promoted pedagogical innovation, established diversity best practices, and spearheaded an initiative to explore new models in international education.

“Jo Ellen has spent most of her career leading complex, education-based organizations, and she’s done so with great passion and enthusiasm,” said Lee Foster, chairman of L. B. Foster Company and chair of the Carnegie Museums board of trustees. “She immediately stood out to us as a visionary, an advocate for the transformational power of education at all levels, and a leader whose pathway to success is always collaboration.”

“We could not be more excited about welcoming Jo Ellen to Carnegie Museums and to Pittsburgh,” said Bill Hunt, president of The Elmhurst Group and a Carnegie Museums life trustee, who headed the search committee. “Her work has always been about creating

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cross-institutional initiatives that advance the cause of bringing the liberal arts and sciences to the world. And she possesses an amazing entrepreneurial drive and spirit that is so essential for success in any organization.”

Earlier in her career, Dr. Parker served her alma mater, Bryn Mawr College, as a faculty member and an academic affairs and student life administrator. Before joining the faculty at Bryn Mawr, she taught in the English department at Swarthmore College. She earned her A.B. in English from Bryn Mawr, her M.A. in English from the University of Kansas, and her Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Pennsylvania.

“One of the dominant themes of my career has been inter-institutional collaboration and not-for-profit entrepreneurship,” Dr. Parker said. “That’s why I’m so honored to have the opportunity to work with these four wonderful museums. Each is in itself a treasure, and together they are an unparalleled resource. The four Carnegie Museums are places where the public of all ages meets the liberal arts and sciences. Helping to strengthen each of them and extend their reach by supporting their collaborative efforts is intellectually exciting to me. To do that in a city where cultural and educational institutions are so strongly supported and beloved is all the more appealing.” She will succeed current president of Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh David M. Hillenbrand, Ph.D.

Dr. Parker is married to Richard G. Manasa. Her son John attends graduate school in Boston and her stepdaughter Morgan lives and works in Chicago.

“President Parker has been a dedicated and conscientious leader, as well as a force for change while honoring deep traditions at Sweet Briar,” said Paul Rice, chairman of the Sweet Briar College board of directors. “While we regret her departure, we understand the opportunity the Carnegie Museums present comes once in a lifetime.”

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. The museums reach more than 1.28 million people annually through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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