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## **Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Announces New Executive Director for First Time in 25 Years**

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) today announced Karl Blischke as its new executive director. Blischke joins the PCA by way of Florida, where he served in several senior level positions within the state’s Department of Economic Opportunity and Governor’s Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development.

In these roles, Blischke focused on Florida’s efforts to diversify its economy, promote business location and expansion in the state, rural economic development initiatives, and access to capital for small businesses. From 2000-2009, Blischke worked for the PCA, ultimately overseeing the agency’s partnership programs, which annually provide services, programming, and more than 1,000 grants to organizations in all 67 counties in the commonwealth.

“I am delighted that Karl is rejoining the agency, bringing with him important experience, especially regarding economic development programs,” said Jeffrey Parks, Chairman of the PCA. “I believe he will bring new perspectives and opportunities to the PCA.”

“It is a pleasure to return to Pennsylvania where my previous work with the PCA’s many programs and initiatives taught me the business of state arts agencies,” said Blischke. “My family and I look forward to being Pennsylvanians, me for the second time and my family for the first. Pennsylvania is a great state for the arts, with unbeatable opportunities for meaningful employment in creative industries and for everyone to experience arts and culture in every region. Having been away for nine years, I have come to appreciate even more the richness and diversity of the arts in the Keystone State.”

Blischke succeeds Philip Horn, who is retiring from state government after leading the PCA for 25 years, under five governors and through four strategic plans. Horn is the longest serving executive director in the PCA’s nearly 52-year history, and one of the longest serving state arts agency leaders in the country.

Under Horn’s tenure: the PCA implemented a radically different approach to grantmaking, which has received various forms of national recognition; initiated Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour (PennPAT), the state-based program of support for performing artists; and successfully navigated many changes in the national and state grantmaking landscape. Horn has received numerous honors and recognitions for this work.

“I know Karl well and have great respect for his experience and knowledge,” Horn said. “I am looking forward to seeing him work with the agency’s Council and staff to take the PCA to new heights in serving all Pennsylvanians. I’ve had a richly rewarding tenure at the PCA and I am grateful to all my colleagues around the state who are integral in bringing the arts to their communities.”

The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) is a state agency under the Office of the Governor. The Council’s mission is to foster the excellence, diversity, and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania, and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the state. For general information about the PCA, visit [arts.pa.gov](http://arts.pa.gov) or call 717-787-6883.

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