Five new Trustees elected to Berkshire Museum Board at annual meeting

[Pittsfield, Mass.] - Five new trustees are joining the Berkshire Museum’s Board of Trustees, bringing to the board significant expertise in community development, diversity and inclusion, STEM education, entrepreneurship, leadership, marketing and communications, and art.

New members elected by the board to two-year terms and welcomed at its annual meeting on Monday, September 24, include:

- **Catharine B. Deely**, a resident of Pittsfield, is a marketing and communications professional and a proponent of the creative economy and economic development.
- **Rachel Melendez Mabee**, a resident of Pittsfield, is a communications professional with over 13 years of experience developing and executing end-to-end marketing plans for local to national organizations.
- **Josh Simpson**, a resident of nearby Shelburne Falls, is a world-renown glassmaker and artist whose work is on view at the Museum. He served as Honorary Chair of the Museum’s 2018 “GALAxy” fundraiser along with former astronaut Cady Coleman.
- **Jeffrey Thomas**, a resident of Williamstown and a scientist, educator, and entrepreneur, is the founder and Executive Director of Lever, the North Adams-based startup incubator.
- **Michael Wynn**, a resident and Chief of Police of Pittsfield, attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduated from Williams College, and directed the Westside Neighborhood Resource Center (Pittsfield) before beginning his career in law enforcement.
“These new board members bring diverse and valuable skills to the Museum at a time of renewed energy, enthusiasm, and optimism about what’s possible here,” said Elizabeth McGraw, President of the Board of Trustees. “We are fortunate to have their knowledge and passion as we implement our interdisciplinary plans to interpret the three pillars of our mission; art, history, and science, and we guide the Berkshire Museum into a sustainable and relevant future for everyone in our community to enjoy.”

Incoming board members explained why they are eager to serve:

“I have been a glass maker and artist for nearly 50 years. I utilize traditional tools and ancient hand-blowing techniques to produce work usually involving scientific or astronomical themes. My work ‘lives’ at the intersection of art and science - which is part of why the Berkshire Museum’s interdisciplinary approach appeals to me. I am thrilled to join the effort to make this exceptional Museum even more relevant to 21st century audiences,” said Josh Simpson.

“The Berkshire Museum plays an important role by providing experiential STEM programs for K-12 learners. I am eager to help support the Museum’s leadership as it continues to innovate and expand its impact in STEM education. This is an exciting time for the Museum as it begins a new chapter,” said Jeffrey Thomas.

“I have many pleasant memories of visiting the Museum as a child, but the one that stands out the most is an elementary school trip and being taught to use chopsticks. That simple but universal experience of another culture is something I reflect on regularly and remember fondly. Those childhood visits are on my mind as I consider the importance of the Museum in our community. It is a vital resource and a valuable partner in the education of our youth. That’s the key to the future of our community,” said Chief Michael Wynn.

“I have always called the Museum ‘the heart of the Berkshires’ because it has a unique combination of varied experiences that spark the imagination, for learning and sheer pleasure. The Museum makes a distinctive contribution to the quality of life in the
Berkshires and beyond. There’s nothing else like it in New England,” said Catharine B. Deely.

“I profoundly believe in and proudy support the important direction the Museum is headed. The Museum’s events and educational programming offer outstanding opportunities for collaboration, creativity, and community-building—all in a dynamic and fun learning environment,” said Rachel Melendez Mabee.

The meeting included the election of the slate of officers: Elizabeth McGraw was re-elected president of the Board; Ethan Klepetar and Stacey Gillis Weber were re-elected as vice-presidents; Lydia S. Rosner was re-elected as secretary, and Stephen Bayne was elected treasurer.

Stephen Bayne, Wendy Gordon, and Suzanne Nash were re-elected for two-year terms. William Hines, Jr., Donna Krenicki, Elizabeth McGraw, Lydia Rosner, Jeffrey Noble, and Stacey Gillis Weber were re-elected for one-year terms. Trustees who continue to serve are Michael Addy, Douglas Crane, David Glodt, Caitlin Pemble, and Melissa Scarafoni.

About the new Trustees:

Catharine B. Deely is a marketing and communications professional, and a proponent of the creative economy and economic development. She has held executive positions at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the City of Los Angeles (Mayor’s Office), Citicorp, and for members of U.S. Congress. Some of the boards she has served on: Berkshire Creative, Berkshire Children and Families, Norman Rockwell Museum, and Los Angeles Arts Loan Fund.

Rachel Melendez Mabee is a communications professional with over 13 years of experience developing and executing end-to-end marketing plans for local to national organizations. An accomplished golfer, Mabee played collegiate golf for Penn State University before ultimately graduating from the University of Georgia. Mabee spent the
majority of her professional career in marketing and communications before finding her niche back in the world of golf. Currently, as PGA WORKS Program Manager for PGA REACH, the 501(c) arm of the PGA of America, Mabee is responsible for the oversight and overall execution of PGA REACH’s diversity and inclusion program, PGA WORKS. Mabee received her bachelor’s degree in public relations and journalism from the University of Georgia, recently completed the Berkshire Leadership Program, served on the Berkshire Museum Gala Committee for the past two years, and serves on the Advisory Board for Suit Yourself for Goodwill of the Berkshires.

Josh Simpson has been a leader in the Studio Glass Art movement for more than 45 years, consistently exhibiting his work nationally and internationally. PBS television has produced two documentaries about his work, which is in public and private collections throughout the world and was in both the Carter and Clinton White Houses. For the past 35 years, Simpson’s work has been featured in the “Arts in Embassy” program at U.S. embassies worldwide. Simpson has taught at Haystack Mountain School, Penland School of Crafts, The Studio at Coming Glass Museum, Snow Farm - the New England Craft Program, and Wanganui Polytechnic in New Zealand. He has lectured and demonstrated his art at universities and museums in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia. Simpson is the 2012 recipient of the WFCR National Public Radio Arts and Humanities Award; he is a co-founder and past president of the Craft Emergency Relief Fund and was instrumental in saving Snow Farm, the New England Craft Program dedicated to teaching art and craft to teenagers. Simpson currently serves on the board of the American Craft Council and the Greenfield/Northampton Cooperative Bank; he was President of the Glass Art Society and on the boards of the Sandwich Glass Museum and WGBY Public Television. He is a Corporator of the Springfield Art Museum and a Fellow of The Coming Museum of Glass.

Jeffrey Thomas is the founder and Executive Director of Lever, the North Adams-based startup incubator. He is a scientist, an educator, and an entrepreneur. His science career has focused on genetics and genomics research in academia, at biotechnology firms, and now as a consultant to genomics research funding organizations. A strident advocate for STEM education, Thomas has lectured at leading
institutions including the University of Michigan, Harvard, and MIT. In 2011, Thomas established Williams College’s Entrepreneurship program, which to date has supported more than 1,000 students and twenty student enterprises. He founded Lever in 2014. The non-profit business incubator has helped launch dozens of startups that have created more than 150 jobs. Lever has provided paid internships to 35 college students and through its new program, Berkshire Business Interns, placed 30 more students in paid internships at businesses throughout the county. Thomas holds a B.A. from Wabash College and Ph.D. and M.D. degrees from Indiana University.

Michael J. Wynn is the Commanding Officer of the Pittsfield Police Department. Chief Wynn graduated from Taconic High School, attended the U.S. Naval Academy, and graduated from Williams College with a degree in English Literature and American Studies. In 1993, Chief Wynn began his career in the City of Pittsfield as the first Director of the Westside Neighborhood Resource Center. He attended the Police Academy in 1995 and joined the Police Department in 1996. Chief Wynn has served as an U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Leadership Fellow and has served as an instructor at the Western Massachusetts Police Academy. Chief Wynn has led the Pittsfield Police Department since December 2007 and is President of the Berkshire County Law Enforcement Council. He also currently serves on the boards of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and the Norman Rockwell Museum.

About the Berkshire Museum
Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, visit [www.berkshiremuseum.org](http://www.berkshiremuseum.org) or call 413.443.7171.

The Berkshire Museum integrates science, history, and the arts in dynamic educational and engaging programs and exhibitions for visitors of all ages. *Josh Simpson: Galactic Landscapes* is open to the public through January 6, 2019; *Objects and Their Stories: Quartz* is on view through November 11, 2018. The Museum’s annual *Festival of Trees* will be on view November 17, 2018, to January 6, 2019. *Curiosity Incubator* is now on view.
Little Cinema is open year-round. Lab102, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

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