



SCIENCE PHILANTHROPY ALLIANCE

Advancing basic science—The foundation of our future

PRESS RELEASE

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Science Philanthropy Alliance names Valerie Conn as new president.

Palo Alto, California – February 4, 2020 – The Science Philanthropy Alliance has named Valerie Conn as new president.

As president, Valerie continues to bring her 30 years of experience working with philanthropists and scientists to build the community of private funders to basic science research. In her various roles at the Science Philanthropy Alliance (vice president, executive director, and now president), Valerie has been committed to growing the basic science philanthropy sector and built a team of senior scientific advisors, philanthropy advisors, and early career PhD scientists to provide expert advice to philanthropists on how to support fundamental scientific research, at the same time as growing a strong membership organization. Valerie is a recognized expert on science philanthropy and a frequent speaker to philanthropists, university science leaders, and fundraising professionals.

Prior to joining the Alliance, Valerie was vice president of strategy for the B612 Foundation where she worked with astronauts and scientists to protect Earth from asteroid impacts. Valerie spent a decade in development at the University of Chicago where she led teams in the Physical Sciences Division, as well as university strategic initiatives, including developing and implementing the strategy for resources, partners and marketing for the Giant Magellan Telescope and the Computation Institute. Valerie began her career at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1989, after which she led a campaign for medical research at Children’s Memorial Hospital (now Lurie Children’s) in Chicago.

Valerie serves on the Committee on Women in Science, Engineering and Medicine for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, is on the Strategic Advisory Council for India Alliance, and is a working group co-chair for the Healthy Brains Financing Initiative.

“Valerie Conn is ideally positioned to take up responsibilities as the president of the Science Philanthropy Alliance. She understands both science and philanthropy and brings a positive spirit to everything she does. I look forward with pleasure to working with her.” says Harvey V. Fineberg, M.D., Ph.D., board chair, and president of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

Valerie takes over the role from colleague and former Alliance President Marc Kastner who stepped down from his role at the end of 2019 and continues with the Alliance as a senior science advisor.

The mission of Science Philanthropy Alliance is to increase private support for basic scientific research by providing advice and learning opportunities for funders. By building a community of funders, the Alliance has emerged as the leading resource for basic science philanthropy.

For more information, contact Michael G. Bare at 650.338.1199.