



WATERSHED
center for the ceramic arts

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Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts Welcomes New Executive Director Liz Seaton

Edgecomb, ME – The Board of Trustees of Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts is pleased to announce its new Executive Director, Liz Seaton (pronoun flexible). A long-time civil rights leader and lifelong potter, Seaton moves from Washington, DC to Edgecomb, Maine to join the Watershed team starting on January 17, 2023. Liz takes the helm from Watershed’s outgoing Executive Director, Fran Rudoff, who steps down after ten years in the position.

“We are thrilled to bring Liz to Watershed,” says Bernie Toale, the organization’s Board President. “Their non-profit acumen and proven leadership will serve Watershed and the clay community well. Importantly, the Board and staff voted unanimously to select Liz as Watershed’s next Executive Director. Their passion for the arts combined with their executive talents; commitment to diversity equity and inclusion (DEI); and artist residency experience is exactly what Watershed needs for its promising future. We warmly welcome Liz to Maine and to the Watershed community.”

“What first drew me to Watershed was an interest in their incredible artist-centered residency programming in ceramics,” shares Seaton. “When the Board posted the Executive Director job, I immediately knew I wanted to be a part of this extraordinary organization. With foresight and vision, the Board, stakeholders, and staff strategically used the pandemic time to build wonderful new facilities that set the stage for a new chapter for the organization. Watershed’s prospects are bright, and that bodes well for artists working in clay and for the future of ceramic arts.”

Seaton brings a long history of translating vision into strategy and fruition. They come to Watershed directly from the National LGBTQ Task Force where they served as Policy Director, working for racial justice and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer liberation. On December 13th, 2022, Seaton joined elected officials and the broad civil rights coalition at the White House to celebrate President Biden signing into law the Respect for Marriage Act to protect the marriages of interracial and same-sex couples. Prior to the Task Force, Liz successfully advocated through their District of Columbia Department on Disability Services job for passage of a new law to protect people with disabilities. Seaton's career highlights include working for the Human Rights Campaign as Legal Director/General Counsel and the National Center for Lesbian Rights as Director of Projects and Managing Attorney. Seaton's legal career started at Whitman-Walker Clinic Legal Services, where they represented people living with HIV/AIDS, advocated for policy changes, and launched the Clinic's amicus advocacy program with briefs to federal circuit courts and the U.S. Supreme Court. They have made a career of envisioning a more just future for vulnerable people, strategizing on how to translate that vision into policy, and successfully bringing that policy into reality.

Seaton personally holds an equally passionate interest in the arts and has been a potter for over 40 years. Their creative practice spans several disciplines, which has led to their participation in artist residencies at Alaska's Alderworks (non-fiction writing, Dyea/Skagway, 2021) and Chulitna Lodge (painting, Lake Clark, 2016), along with Minnesota's Grand Marais Art Colony's (GMAC) mentored artist program. Seaton has exhibited their work in six states, most recently in GMAC's October 2022 Muse exhibit. Interested in one day running an artist residency program, in 2017 Seaton volunteered at the Artist Communities Alliance's Emerging Residencies annual conference. Seaton once served on the Maryland State Arts Council's (MSAC) panel to select county community arts programs for funding. More recently, MSAC awarded Seaton a National Endowment for the Arts-funded Creativity grant for painting. Earlier, the Montgomery County Arts Council awarded Seaton an individual artist grant and the Takoma Park Community Center provided Seaton with their first solo gallery space.

Seaton says, "This Executive Director job is a dream come true. It empowers me to bring my non-profit leadership experience, my commitment to DEI, and my love of ceramics together. I look forward to partnering with the Board, stakeholders, and staff to launch the exciting new Watershed. I invite everyone to support this amazing place."

Seaton is married to Dr. Patricia Evans, who dabbles in pastels. The two have one daughter, Ryan, a college senior and sculptor studying Studio Art.

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