

Mechanics Hall

Where Community and Culture Meet

Mechanics Hall Executive Director Announces Retirement Plans

Kathleen Gagne has been Executive Director of Mechanics Hall since 2018.

WORCESTER, MA February 6, 2025 – After 30 years working to support Mechanics Hall, Executive Director Kathleen Gagne plans to retire in June 2025. Gagne has been at the helm of the historic and renowned venue since 2018, overseeing a period of growth and artistic excellence.

During her tenure as Executive Director, Gagne expanded youth programming and established Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers. She led the initiative to commission portraits of 19th century Black Americans for installation in the Great Hall gallery. She successfully saw the Hall through the uncertainty caused by an 18-month shutdown, the unexpected result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, Gagne also oversaw major capital projects including, most recently, the installation of state-of-the-art lighting and sound upgrades. Her leadership has ensured Mechanics Hall's continued role as a cultural icon of Worcester—bringing world-class performances to a wide range of audiences, fostering a love of the arts, and serving the rich diversity of cultures and communities in the region.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as Executive Director of Mechanics Hall, and a true blessing to have enjoyed so many years working on behalf of this landmark space,” said Gagne. “I am proud to have led efforts to preserve and evolve the rich legacy of Worcester’s historic and world-renowned performance hall, and to have worked with so many passionate, dedicated people over the years. The staff, board, and community have been wonderfully supportive, and I have every confidence that Mechanics Hall will continue to enrich the lives of all who experience it.”

Peter Thomas, President of the Mechanics Hall Board of Trustees said that “Mechanics Hall's been fortunate to have the leadership of Kathleen Gagne for the last 30 years. Kathy has positioned the Hall for continued success for years to come. We wish her well in her retirement and thank her for her service to the Hall and the greater Worcester community.”

A search committee has been formed to identify Gagne’s successor. Development Guild DDI, a consulting firm that provides executive search, fundraising counsel, and strategic services to nonprofit organizations, has been selected to partner with Mechanics Hall to help recruit the new Executive Director. Details regarding the search process will be announced in the coming weeks.

Prospective candidates can connect with Development Guild and the search here:

Mechanics Hall Executive Director Search

Plain text of link: <https://www.developmentguild.com/current-searches/executive-director-mechanics-hall/>

About Mechanics Hall

Steeped in the rich history of 19th century Worcester, Mechanics Hall is internationally regarded as one of the world’s great concert halls. Regionally, it is a meeting place beloved for the central New England location, its architecture, and the legacy of prominent figures engaged. The world’s most renowned orchestras and performers – including the London Philharmonic, Yo-Yo Ma, Ella Fitzgerald, and Linda Ronstadt – have taken the Hall’s stage. Among the many luminaries who have spoken at Mechanics Hall are Charles Dickens, Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, and Mark Twain. In addition to serving as a premiere venue and recording site, Mechanics Hall offers inspiring cultural experiences for diverse audiences through a variety of creative initiatives, including



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free concerts, community events, a youth chorus, and collaborative programs with local colleges and nonprofit organizations.

Mechanics Hall is a nonprofit organization owned and operated by the Worcester County Mechanics Association, est. 1842. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Learn more at MechanicsHall.org.

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