
PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For more information contact:

Kari Groth Swan
Executive Director
612-875-8281
kari@oronofoundation.org

ORONO FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION HIRES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Orono, MN (May 16, 2016) - The Orono Foundation for Education is excited to announce the hiring of Kari Groth Swan as its Executive Director.

Swan comes with a combination of recent fundraising success at Minnesota Philanthropy Partners and the Greater Twin Cities United Way. She also brings 20-plus years of financial and wealth management experience, working at Piper Jaffray and J.P. Morgan.

The Orono Foundation was started 15 years ago by a group of committed parents and area leaders who wanted the best educational environment possible for our community. Today the Foundation has raised more than \$6 million dollars for key initiatives like teacher development, K-5 literacy, world languages, technology and and nationally award-winning character programs.

“We believe now is the right time to bring on someone with Kari’s expertise. After 15 years of raising funds primarily through the Foundation’s Annual Fund, we are ready to seek out new avenues including Endowment, Planned Giving, and other targeted stewardship opportunities,” says Joellen Gonder-Spacek, Board Chair of the Foundation. “After reviewing best practices at other school foundations in the metro area, it was clear that most of them have full-time Executive Directors,” reports Gonder-Spacek.

To complement the Annual and Endowment Funds, the Foundation recently launched the Excellence Funds to allow donors to target specific contributions to Academics, Arts, Athletics, Buildings and Grounds, Leadership and Ethics, Teacher Training and Technology.

“Building upon its 15-year history, it is an exciting time to be part of the talented Foundation staff team and Board of Directors,” comments Swan. “I look forward to working with our Orono parents, donors, volunteers and community leaders to continue the tradition of exceptional education for today’s students and the next generation of Orono Alumni. My door is always open at the Foundation offices in Long Lake for coffee and conversation.”

Swan’s addition to the Foundation team will also allow other staff and volunteers to pursue other new initiatives. “Her leadership will allow me to focus more on our Orono Alumni Association, formed in

2014, and other community-targeted initiatives,” says Jeanne Morrison Cook, Orono ’83 and Director of Development for the Foundation. The Orono Alumni Association is primarily known for its Distinguished and Promising Alumni Awards and other Orono Homecoming week events.

“We are fortunate to be a public school system that has the Orono Foundation as a partner striving for continued K-12 excellence within the district,” says Dr. Karen Orcutt, Superintendent of Orono Schools. “We are also grateful to have support from our parents and community for our schools. It is through our combined effort and dedication that results in Orono ranking as a top public school system in the nation.”

It is a shared dream between the Orono Foundation for Education and the Orono School District to provide the academic skills, knowledge, and character to maximize the potential of every student and prepare them for the international stage.