

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR KITCHENER-WATERLOO OKTOBERFEST



May 30, 2023 – KITCHENER, ON – Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is pleased to welcome Tracy Van Kalsbeek as its new Executive Director.

Van Kalsbeek replaces retiring Alfred Lowrick. “We are thrilled to have Tracy as our new Executive Director!” shares Allan Cayenne, Board President of K-W Oktoberfest Inc. “She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience that we know will allow her to move Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest forward. Her love for, and connection with our great community is a great fit and ties well to the values of the festival. I am personally looking forward to working with Tracy to bring the festival to new heights.”

Van Kalsbeek joins the organization after five years at the helm of the Uptown Waterloo Business Improvement Area (BIA). She has had a strong tie to community building since the beginning of her career assisting people with disabilities. Her interest in making the community a better place to live, work, and play impelled her to take a position at the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation in 2007. As Manager of Marketing & Communications, Tracy helped to tell the story of the Community Foundation and was the project manager of Waterloo Region’s Vital Signs, Vital Ideas, Engage!K-W and Random Act of Kindness Day.

Setting the goal of becoming an Executive Director for a non-profit organization, Tracy decided to make the move to the private sector in 2011 and learn how large, global companies handled community investment and corporate social responsibility. She joined the Branding & Communications team at Manulife where she provided public relations for the company across the country and managed many of Manulife’s largest sponsorships.

Becoming the Executive Director of the Stratford Perth Community Foundation in January of 2015 was a key achievement in Tracy’s career and for a few years, she worked hard to grow the Foundation in the mixed urban and rural communities of Perth County.

Moving her career back to Waterloo Region in 2018, Tracy joined the Uptown Waterloo BIA team. She helped guide the membership organization through tumultuous times of streetscape and ION construction, pandemic planning and economic recovery with a focus on beautification, placemaking, marketing and advocacy.

“I’m beyond excited to begin my new role at Oktoberfest,” adds Van Kalsbeek. “I’ve been an active volunteer for almost 20 years so it feels like I’ve been training my whole career to get here. Oktoberfest is such an important asset for our community and I have so many ideas on how we can take the festival to the next level.”

Van Kalsbeek will begin her new position with the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest in early July.

Media Contacts:

Tracy Van Kalsbeek, Incoming Executive Director
K-W Oktoberfest Inc.
vankalsbeek@rogers.com or 519-616-0793

Allan Cayenne, President, Board of Directors
K-W Oktoberfest Inc.
allan@kwhouselife.com or 519-589-5873