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Orange County Announces Departure of History Center Executive Director Pamela Schwartz

Orange County, FL – Pamela Schwartz, the executive director of the Orange County Regional History Center and the Historical Society of Central Florida, has resigned to accept a new position with a global exhibition design firm. Schwartz’s resignation takes effect April 26, 2024.

“Pamela is an innovator, who has led efforts to tell Central Florida’s stories in new and exciting ways,” says Venerria L. Thomas, director for the Community and Family Services Department, which oversees the Regional History Center’s operations. “We applaud her tireless efforts, and we wish her well as she enters into her next chapter.”

Located in downtown Orlando, the Orange County Regional History Center is Central Florida’s largest history museum. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a Smithsonian Affiliate, the museum covers more than 14,000 years of regional history. Founded in 1971, the Historical Society of Central Florida, a nonprofit organization, provides governance over the Regional History Center in partnership with the Orange County Board of County Commissioners.

Working within the museum industry since 2002, Schwartz joined the Orange County Regional History Center in 2016 as its chief curator and senior program manager. In her current role as director since January 2021, Schwartz oversees a museum staff of 35 employees and manages an operating budget of more than \$3.7 million.

Under Schwartz's leadership, the museum was reaccredited and has become a national leader in diversifying collections and engaging the local community with compelling special exhibitions. Recent award-winning exhibitions have included [Figurehead: Music & Mayhem in Orlando's Underground](#) and [Yesterday, This Was Home: The Ocoee Massacre of 1920](#).

Shortly after the Pulse Nightclub tragedy in 2016, Schwartz spearheaded the stakeholder-centered, urgent-response One Orlando Collection Initiative, which includes artifacts, photographs, archives, and oral histories. She is considered an international authority on contemporary collecting following community tragedy, both far past and recent.

Throughout Schwartz's tenure, the Regional History Center has been honored with numerous national awards and distinctions, including the coveted National Medal for Museum and Library Services in 2019. Additional recognitions have been bestowed from such organizations as the American Association for State and Local History, the Florida Historical Society, and the Southeastern Museums Conference.

"On behalf of the board of directors of the Historical Society, I want to thank Pam for putting our museum on the map during her five years as chief curator, and for stepping up as the executive director over the last three years. She came into the role at a pivotal time, and continued to elevate our modest cultural destination to what it is today," said Lenny Bendo, board president of the Historical Society of Central Florida. "We wish her all the best in her exciting new endeavor. Further, we have the utmost confidence in the current staff that she recruited and developed as we march forward with some exciting renovations and updates to the History Center."

Orange County Government plans to conduct a national search for an executive director to succeed Schwartz.

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About Orange County Government: *Orange County Government strives to serve its residents and guests with integrity, honesty, fairness and professionalism. Located in Central Florida, Orange County includes 13 municipalities and is home to world-famous theme parks, one of the nation's largest convention centers and a thriving life science research park. Seven elected members make up the Board of County Commissioners, including the Mayor, who is elected countywide. For more information, please visit www.OcFL.net or go to [Orange County Government's social media channels](#).*