

## Forever Balboa Park Welcomes First CEO and President

*Elizabeth C. Babcock, PhD, Chosen to Lead Balboa Park's Primary Nonprofit Partner*

**SAN DIEGO (March 2, 2022)** – Forever Balboa Park, the City of San Diego's nonprofit partner in sustaining Balboa Park, announces Elizabeth C. Babcock, PhD, current Chief Public Engagement Officer and Roberts-Wilson Dean of Education at the California Academy of Sciences, as the new President and CEO of the organization. After months of reviewing candidates with the national search firm Potrero Group, Dr. Babcock was selected and approved by the Board of Trustees and will begin her new role in April 2022.

"Our search process generated regional, national, and international interest from exceptionally talented and diverse individuals," says Connie Matsui, Board of Trustees Co-Chair. "We are most gratified to have secured an inspiring and effective leader of Elizabeth's caliber as our next CEO."

During her 10+ years at the California Academy of Sciences, Dr. Babcock proved her ingenuity and ability to inspire curiosity and interest in visitors to the institution. She also directed teams in developing and delivering a variety of innovative educational programs within and beyond the museum's walls. With an impressive track record of dynamic leadership, Dr. Babcock is poised to lead Forever Balboa Park in unifying the community around a shared, inclusive vision to realize Balboa Park's full potential as one of the world's premier parks.

"I am incredibly honored to be joining Forever Balboa Park as its first President and CEO. Balboa Park is a place of unparalleled richness and opportunity," says Dr. Babcock. "Forever Balboa Park is uniquely positioned to serve as an advocate and steward of the park, while leading us all in imagining and realizing the true power of place. I look forward to collaborating with the diverse and impressive partners that make Balboa Park a special place to ensure that all who visit are welcomed, inspired, engaged, and enriched."

A new President and CEO comes at a pivotal time for the organization and Balboa Park. Dr. Babcock's expertise in strategic planning and engagement will be indispensable for a park undergoing transformative growth and major infrastructure investments. Forever

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Balboa Park is poised to play a leading role in this process, as the city's public-private park partner.

"Elizabeth brings a stellar performance record of community building to Balboa Park, which is sure to accelerate the growth of our newly merged organization," says Sarah Evans, Board of Trustees Co-Chair. "Her infectious enthusiasm and curiosity will help cultivate positive parkwide change and collaboration."

As Forever Balboa Park continues to pursue large park improvement projects in collaboration with the City of San Diego, particularly the \$26 million restoration of the Botanical Building and Gardens, Dr. Babcock's extensive fundraising experience will advance the organization's impact.

"Elizabeth's intelligence, versatility and partnering skills will strengthen and invigorate Forever Balboa Park's existing relationships and create opportunities for broader alliances with both the public and private sectors," says Doug Kerner, Chair-Elect.

Dr. Babcock's career accomplishments include:

- Directed a \$13 million budget at the California Academy of Sciences and grew offerings to 3.2 million annual in-person learning engagements and 20 million online views of education products and programs.
- Expanded and diversified program offerings in her last position by personally securing \$4+ million in grants each year.
- Cofounded and served as volunteer Chair of ChangeScale, the Bay Area's Environmental Education Collaborative, serving over 180 environmental education organizations and 35+ member organizations and universities.
- Honored as a White House Champion of Change in 2013 for her leadership in museum and library partnerships.
- Recognized as one of the Bay Area's 150 Most Influential Women (2011) by the *San Francisco Business Times*.

### **Forever Balboa Park**

Forever Balboa Park serves as the City of San Diego's nonprofit partner for Balboa Park, with focus on public spaces and horticulture, park improvement projects, parkwide volunteers, visitor services, and the Balboa Park Carousel. It brings valued resources to the park as a convener and organizer, raising funds and recruiting volunteers to realize and activate projects, programs, and services for the best interests of the park and the greater San Diego region.

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