

John M. Vitek to Retire From LERI, Sara Lawrence Named President

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For Immediate Release

Lasallian Educational & Research Initiatives (LERI) announced that John M. Vitek, the nonprofit's President and CEO, has decided to retire effective July of 2023 after a 25-year tenure. Sara Lawrence will succeed Vitek and has been named President of LERI by the Board of Directors, effective June 1, 2022. Lawrence will oversee and lead all the organization's entities, including Saint Mary's Press, Anselm Academic, Professor's Choice®, and Springtide Research Institute®.

Vitek has served in his current role since 2001. Prior to that, he served as Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the organization. Vitek has played a critical role in helping the organization adapt to significant changes in the publishing industry and to major shifts in the market. He has served as a champion for the needs of young people, pushing the organization toward constant innovation while building a fiscally well-managed organization in order to secure an enduring advancement of the organization's mission.

Lawrence has served as Vice President since 2019. Prior to that, she served for nine years within the organization as Marketing, Customer Care, and eLearning Director; Product Development Brand Manager; and Marketing Associate. Lawrence's past 12 years of exceptional leadership in guiding many of the organization's new operations have contributed significantly to the growth of the organization.

"I could not be more thrilled by the Board's appointment of Sara to lead the next generation of dedicated and innovative leaders within our organization in the service of young people. I look forward to working with Sara in this leadership transition over the next year, and I am eager to see how she takes this organization forward in the evolution of its mission," said Vitek.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors," noted Tim Swagger, Board Chair, "we are delighted that Sara has accepted the position of President and look forward to working with her in the years to come. She possesses the qualities needed for leading this organization into a vibrant and exciting future."

"I am honored to step into the role of President of this incredible organization. There has never been a more important time for us to live out our mission to do what's best for young people. I am grateful to be surrounded by incredible teams and look forward to continuing this crucial work well into the future," said Lawrence.

Lawrence will serve as the fourth President of LERI since 1943, succeeding Vitek (2001-2022), Br. Damian Steger, FSC (1974-2001), and Br. Alphonsus Pluth, FSC (1943-1974).

Lasallian Educational & Research Initiatives is a Minnesota-based nonprofit organization serving the needs of young people, with international reach, since 1943. LERI is an expression of the Lasallian mission of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, establishing works in the service of young people, especially works that are good and beneficial for young people to realize integral human and spiritual development. LERI exists to *follow the needs of young people* through deep listening at the intersections of their human and religious experiences, and to innovate effective responses for those who are dedicated to their flourishing.

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