



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PARKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

AURP Announces Executive Team Realignment

Following unanimous board approval, Vickie Palmer, current Director of Operations, is named AURP CEO and Brian Darmody becomes Chief Strategy Officer

April 5, 2022, Tucson, AZ – AURP, the leading nonprofit representing research parks, innovation districts and regional technology clusters, today announced a realignment of its executive team to optimize AURP’s continued success and global development strategies.

Vickie Palmer, current Director of Operations, has been appointed AURP CEO. Palmer assumes this executive leadership role following her 15 years of experience significantly expanding AURP’s membership and sponsorship community, plus overseeing AURP’s roster of events and programs. During her time with AURP, Palmer has led the organization’s membership, event management and overall operations while working closely with the organization’s CEO, Board of Directors and membership community.

Brian Darmody, current CEO, has been named AURP’s Chief Strategy Officer with specific focus on serving as AURP ambassador while growing AURP’s membership and sponsorship programs to expand the AURP network among research parks, innovation districts and tech hubs, including government-industry-university partnerships.

In addition, Diana Horn, current Executive Administrator, will become AURP’s Membership and Meetings Manager, enhancing her work on member services plus overall meetings and events management. Horn is a seasoned executive administrator with previous experience in the aviation and construction industries. Horn earned her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

“On behalf of AURP’s Board of Directors and our membership community, I extend our sincere congratulations to Vickie, Brian and Diana for their new leadership roles with AURP,” said Leah Burton, Director, Centennial Campus Partnership Office, North Carolina State University.

“We’re beyond excited for Vickie as she steps into her new role as CEO. As we all know, Vickie has long been a strong and resilient force in building our AURP communities of innovation. With enormous gratitude for Brian’s high-impact energy and leadership, we know this team is poised to further grow AURP and the communities of innovation we represent.”

Recipient of the 2021 AURP Vision Award, Palmer brings to AURP a proven record of success in association management primarily with The Kellen Company, a global association management company. She has over 25 years of leadership experience with such associations as the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Elder Life Care Planners (formerly known as the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers) and the National Guardianship Association. Prior to her jump into the nonprofit sector, Palmer held executive convention management positions at the Hilton El Conquistador Resort in Tucson, AZ (formerly ITT Sheraton). Palmer is a graduate of Northern Arizona University's W.A. Franke College of Business.

"I am delighted for this next chapter with AURP and grateful to Brian and Diana, our Board of Directors and membership for their support these recent years," said Vickie Palmer, incoming AURP CEO. "With our leadership team in place, I'm confident we are primed for greater service to our communities with the goal to accelerate innovation, economic development and job creation – leveraging the power of research parks, innovation districts and tech hubs."

Previously, Darmody was with the University of Maryland, serving in the legal office, government affairs office, corporate relations and economic development and Office of the President. He served in staff roles in the US House of Representatives and the Maryland General Assembly, as well as with the US Health Care Financing Administration. Darmody is a graduate of the University of Maryland and the University of Baltimore Law School.

"With increased interest in technology competitiveness, there has never been more opportunities at the federal, state and local levels to build communities of innovation around universities, hospitals and other community partners," said Darmody. "I look forward to using my experience to expand AURP's footprint across the US and around the globe."

About AURP:

AURP, a nonprofit international organization with offices in the Washington, DC area at the University of Maryland Discovery District and in Tucson, AZ at the University of Arizona Tech Park, focuses on creating communities of innovation and education for research parks both operating and planned, plus innovation districts, incubators, accelerators and the businesses that support the research park industry. AURP and its global membership promote research, institute-industry relations and innovation districts to foster innovation and to facilitate the transfer of technology from such institutions to the private sector. Learn more: www.aurp.net

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