

METRO

Leadership shifts at three area nonprofits

Margolies retiring from Jewish foundation

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Alan Margolies is retiring Dec. 31 as executive director of the The Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida, a fundraising organization that supports the local and global Jewish community.

Margolies departs with 31 years of service. He led the Jewish Federation of

Jacksonville from 1990 through its 2018 merger with the Jewish Community Foundation of Northeast Florida. He then took the reins of the new organization that serves about 17,000 people in Duval, Clay, Nassau and St. Johns counties.

"We cannot let this moment pass without acknowledging the immeasurable impact that Alan has had on our Northeast Florida Jewish community as well as our Jewish community in Israel



Margolies



Feist

and around the world," board president Jennifer Plotkin said. "We are grateful for his leadership and for the strong connections and foundation he has created during his tenure."

His successor will be Mariam Shpeen Feist, former executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas. She has spent 25 years in Jewish community service, according to the local federation.

Feist will begin work Nov. 1.

Margolies was on vacation and unavailable for comment. But after informing the board of his retirement late last year, he wrote about his tenure in the organization's December 2020 monthly newsletter.

"What a great run," he wrote. "The experience to partner with the best volunteers, staff and colleagues in our Jewish community has been, and continues to be, such a blessing!"

He intended to make his last 12 months as executive director, he wrote,

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"even more nurturing for all we touch through our federation and foundation."

The Arc will have new leader

In other nonprofit leader news, Jim Whittaker will retire Dec. 31 after 21 years as president and CEO of The Arc Jacksonville and a total of 46 years working with people who have intellectual and developmental differences.

He intends to keep helping its clients as a volunteer. He also plans to be a consultant for nonprofits that serve the so-called IDD population.

"I felt it was time for me to spend more time with my family and grandkids and enjoy travel to new areas," he said. "I am leaving with mixed emotions but feel The Arc Jacksonville is well-positioned to meet any challenges in the future."

During Whittaker's tenure, he and the organization have been busy "creating new and innovative programs and services," he said.

Of particular note, he said, was The Arc Jacksonville Village, a \$22 million, 32-acre private rental community for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults. The Village combines affordable, independent living with an

on-site support staff and 24-hour security and help from family and community volunteers.



Whittaker

Whittaker also cited The Arc's On-Campus Transition program, a partnership with the University of North Florida that gives special-needs students the college experience. They audit UNF classes, join college clubs, participate in internships and enjoy college life.

Other accomplishments included the establishment of quality group homes, vocational and employment programs and mental health services, he said.

Whittaker started working with people who have intellectual and developmental differences as a teenager. After college he began his professional career leading The Arc Putnam in 1975. He has served as president and CEO of The Arc Jacksonville since 2000 while simultaneously leading the Putnam program through 2018.

The Arc Jacksonville's board will work with a search firm to find Whittaker's successor, which board chairman John Cooksey said might be a tall order.

"I have seen firsthand how Jim's ability to effectively bring ideas and opportunities to reality enabled The Arc Jacksonville to become an exceptional organization," Cooksey said. "His understanding and commitment to innovation, inclusion, service quality and financial accountability have been

cornerstones in the development and management of programs and services."

Greenscape appoints interim chief

Board member Lisa Grubba has been named interim executive director of Greenscape of Jacksonville, an urban forestry advocacy organization. She succeeds Anna Dooley who retiring after nearly 25 years of service.

Grubba is a Florida Master Naturalist and journalist who has covered Northeast Florida environmental issues for a decade. But she began her career in finance, first at Barnett Bank.

"I am thrilled to help lead an organization with such deep roots in our community, especially now," Grubba said. "As appreciation for the role of trees has grown from beautification and property value enhancement to include stormwater management, heat reduction and wildlife habitat preservation, Greenscape is poised to lend its decades of experience to Jacksonville as it addresses resiliency issues."

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Dooley



Grubba