



**THE DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF  
NEW DIRECTORS FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMS**

**Maurine Knighton Selected to Lead DDCF'S Performing Arts Program and  
Sacha Spector Selected to Lead the Environment Program**



Maurine Knighton



Sacha Spector

**NEW YORK, NY, February 19, 2016** — The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) today announced the appointments, following nationwide searches, of Maurine Knighton as the new program director of the foundation's Performing Arts Program and Sacha Spector as the new program director of the Environment Program.

"It is an extraordinary pleasure to bring two individuals of such talent, experience and commitment to leadership positions at the foundation. Maurine and Sacha, each passionately rooted in the work of their fields, will be of great service and initiative to the arts and the environment," said Ed Henry, president of DDCF. "Their experience and intellectual curiosity will help advance all our program areas as we work to help solve problems and create opportunities for people across society."

**Maurine Knighton**, currently senior vice president at the Nathan Cummings Foundation, brings a wealth of experience and perspective from her work with artists, arts organizations and communities in prior roles. Her previous positions include executive producer and president of 651 Arts; senior vice president at the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone; program manager at the Nonprofit Finance Fund, where she established and managed the Community Alliances program of the Cultural Facilities Fund; and managing director of the Penumbra Theatre Company in St. Paul, MN. Knighton has also served as board member of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters and Grantmakers in the Arts, and panelist and advisor to the National Endowment for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, Arts Presenters Ensemble Theater Program and others. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS.

Knighton began work at the Nathan Cummings Foundation as program director of arts and culture in 2010 and was involved in all areas of the foundation's grant making, strategic planning and administration, rising most recently to the position of senior vice president. At the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, she formulated and implemented approaches to using arts and culture resources to stimulate local economic vitality. As executive producer of 651 Arts, Knighton developed and curated

mainstage, residency, educational and humanities programs while overseeing all administrative and operational activities.

"I am delighted to join the staff of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation," said Knighton. "The foundation's commitment to the art forms of theater, jazz and contemporary dance, as well as to the artists who advance those forms, is truly impressive. I look forward to helping build on DDCF's important achievements."

**Sacha Spector, Ph.D.**, brings to the Environment Program a long track record of conservation experience that is grounded firmly in rigorous, first-hand scientific research. Currently director of conservation science at Scenic Hudson, Spector has led the group's efforts on climate change, land conservation planning and natural resource stewardship. He has created pioneering sea level rise and climate change adaptation initiatives in close cooperation with communities and state agencies while prioritizing land acquisitions and ecological restoration projects focused on the region's most biologically important sites. Previously, Spector managed the invertebrate conservation program at the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History and, prior to that, worked as a field trainer and researcher at Conservation International in Washington, D.C.

Spector has maintained positions as an adjunct associate professor at Columbia University's Department of Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology since 2001 and as a research associate or visiting scientist at the American Museum of Natural History since 2008. He has earned recognition for his conservation expertise through grants and awards from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, NASA, National Science Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoological Society of London. Spector has also authored more than 30 research papers, books and articles. He earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in ecology from the University of Connecticut and his Bachelor of Science degree in environmental biology, with an additional concentration in environmental studies, from Yale University.

"I'm deeply honored to join the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and for the opportunity to lead the Environment Program," said Spector. "With its unique focus on climate change, biodiversity, sustainable food systems and diversifying the conservation field, DDCF has a critical role in supporting solutions for some of the most challenging and relevant issues in the environment today. I look forward to working with the conservation community, grantees and new partners to create and implement strategies that have tangible benefits on the ground."

## **ABOUT THE DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is a private foundation with a mission to improve the quality of people's lives through grants in the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being. The Arts Program of DDCF focuses its support on contemporary dance, jazz and theatre artists, and the organizations that nurture, present and produce them. The Environment Program of DDCF enables communities to protect and manage wildlife habitat and create efficient built environments.

The foundation was established and endowed through the will of philanthropist Doris Duke. Since making its first grants in 1997, the foundation has distributed more than \$1.4 billion in funding. In addition to its grant programs, the foundation operates Duke Farms, a 2,700-acre center for environmental stewardship, and Shangri La, a center for the study of Islamic arts and culture, and funds Rough Point, Doris Duke's former residence in Newport, RI through the Newport Restoration Foundation. For more information, please visit [www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org).

### **Contact:**

Kristin Roth-Schrefer  
Communications Director  
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation  
212.974.7003  
[kschrefer@ddcf.org](mailto:kschrefer@ddcf.org)

Nina Chung  
Communications Associate  
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation  
212.974.7006  
[nchung@ddcf.org](mailto:nchung@ddcf.org)