

Ann Norton's president resigns

PB Day Academy official Cynthia Kanai to take reins starting in September.

By **JAN SJOSTROM**

Daily News Arts Editor

Roger Ward has resigned as president and chief executive officer of the Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens after less than 18 months on the job. He will be succeeded on Sept. 17 by Cynthia Kanai.

Ward, the Norton Museum's former deputy director, was hired to elevate the sculpture gardens' profile and operations.

In a statement he said he was resigning for personal reasons.

"It has been my privilege to provide leadership for the Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens at this pivotal moment in its history," he said. "Much progress has been made in a very short time."

Situated on 2.5 acres on Flagler Drive in West Palm Beach, the non-profit sculpture gardens is an art and environmental education center that features a rare palm and cycad garden as well as Ann Norton's monumental sculptures, studio and home.

Kanai, who lives in Atlantis, has worked for 28 years for the Palm Beach Day Academy — its lower campus borders the sculpture gardens' north side. For the past three years she served as development director. Before that she was lead fifth-grade teacher for 25 years.

"I have tremendous respect for Cynthia's commitment and vision," Ann Norton board chairwoman Frances Fisher said in a statement. "She is a strong collaborator, relationship builder, and award-winning and beloved instructor."

Fisher, of Palm Beach, is a former Day Academy board member.

"As a member of the community

who loves these gardens, the opportunity to honor Ann Norton's vision of how this venue can serve our community through cultural and educational enhancement is a privilege," Kanai said in a statement.

Kanai raised \$5.5 million for the school's Great Expectations campaign, which financed the \$7 million Mandel-Palagye Education Center. The 16,000-square-foot center on the school's lower campus houses classrooms, a media center, science and engineering lab, health clinic, green spaces, learning commons and an amphitheater-like space. A ribbon-cutting is scheduled for Sept. 14.

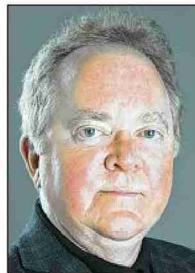
Kanai earned a master's degree in leadership from Palm Beach Atlantic University and a bachelor's degree in education from Cameron University in Oklahoma. She is a board member of the Palm Beach Fellowship of Christians & Jews, and a member of the Executive Women of the Palm Beaches and the Palm Beach Flagler Rotary Club. She was a member of Leadership Palm Beach County's class of 2014 and serves on the recruitment committee.

She was awarded the William T. Dwyer Excellence in Education Award in Palm Beach County in 2012 and the Adele Shook Merck Excellence in Education Teacher of the Year Award in 2010.

— *jsjstrom@pbdailynews.com*



Kanai



Ward

