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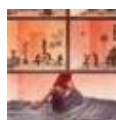
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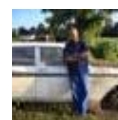
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Dawn Barrett to step down as president of MassArt

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT AUGUST 15, 2014



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MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF

Dawn Barrett (right) announced Friday that she is resigning, ending her three-and-a-half year run at the public school's helm.

Dawn Barrett, president of the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, announced Friday that she is resigning, ending her 3½-year run at the helm of the public school.

She will first take a leave of absence, which begins Friday, before officially stepping down at the end of this calendar year.



Officials at the Fenway school called her resignation a “personal decision” but did not provide further details.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to further Massachusetts College of Art and Design’s longstanding mission of providing the highest quality of accessible, professional education in the visual arts,” Barrett said in a statement.

“I am confident that MassArt will continue the advancements made in institutional efficacy and accessibility during my tenure, and will sustain the current momentum for outstanding achievement and recognition in visual arts education.”

Richard Marshall, chairman of the college’s board, said: “On behalf of the board of trustees, we support Dawn and her family during this time. We are grateful for her tenacious spirit and vision and thank her for her commitment to the college.”

MassArt’s executive vice president, Kurt T. Steinberg, was appointed acting president effective Friday.



College officials said MassArt’s six-year graduation rate reached a record 74 percent during Barrett’s

leadership.

She oversaw increased fund-raising that boosted student financial aid to unprecedented levels and contributed to redesigning the college's galleries, they said.

Barrett improved community relations, institutional partnerships, and awareness of the college, the school said.

MassArt, which was founded in 1873, bills itself as the nation's only publicly funded college of art and the first in the country to grant a degree. It enrolls nearly 1,800 undergraduates.

Before taking over the top role at MassArt, Barrett worked for a decade as dean of the architecture and design division at Rhode Island School of Design.

Steinberg, Barrett's successor, has held various leadership positions at MassArt over the past eight years.

"Kurt has already demonstrated great leadership," Marshall, the trustees chairman, said in a statement. "He is passionate about MassArt's mission, and with his extensive background in government and far-reaching community ties, this will be a smooth transition."

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com)

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