

CHARLES RIVER



conservancy

Spring 2018

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Dear Friend of the Charles River Conservancy,

Spring is always a time of renewal and change, and so we feel it is an especially auspicious time to update you on the exciting leadership changes happening at the Charles River Conservancy. Over the past several months, Renata has been preparing the organization for her retirement and transition to the Advisory Board, while a committee of the Board of Directors looked for the new executive.

After a thorough search, we are excited to announce that Laura Jasinski will become the new Executive Director on June 1st. Laura joins us with a wealth of expertise and ideas for public space from her ten years of experience with The Trustees of Reservations and The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy.

Because of people like you who have supported the work of the Charles River Conservancy for 18 years, Laura is taking over a strong and vibrant organization and will continue the Conservancy's mission of making the parklands more active, attractive and accessible for all. She will implement the plans for a Swim Park in North Point Park, grow the already strong Conservancy Volunteers program, and continue crucial advocacy for including more parklands and bike and pedestrian connections as part of MassDOT's I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project.

In this historic moment of leadership transition, we need your help more than ever. The organization is strong, with talented staff, a committed Board of Directors, and helpful advisors, but we need your financial support. We invite you to celebrate our many past accomplishments and invest in the future of the Conservancy on June 2nd at the *Ribbon of Blue, Ribbon of Green* gala.

Thank you for being part of the supportive and dynamic Charles River Conservancy community. Your help makes all the difference. Together we can realize the potential of this amazing resource that Charles Eliot called "our democratic common ground."

Best wishes for a wonderful spring.

Renata von Tscharnier

Renata von Tscharnier
Founder

Laura Jasinski

Laura Jasinski
Executive Director

P.S. You can donate with the enclosed envelope or go to our secure donation page on our website, www.thecharles.org

Renata's Retirement in the News!

Cambridge Chronicle Established 1846 **STAB**

Renata von Tscharner, a 'true visionary,' to retire from Charles River Conservancy

By Amy Saltzman, March 16, 2018

She's been called one of the most remarkable women in Boston -- and a pain in the ass -- but if there's one thing Renata von Tscharner is known for: she gets things done.

As the founder of the Charles River Conservancy -- a position she plans to retire from in June -- von Tscharner has made it her mission to beautify the Charles River parklands, from Boston Harbor to the Watertown Dam.

She's done just that and then some over the last 18 years since the start of her nonprofit in 2000. And in the process she has raised more than \$14 million; wrangled over 28,000 volunteers; built a \$5 million skatepark; made swimming in the Charles River attainable; helped start Revels RiverSing, the annual autumnal equinox celebration; and filmed over 100 CCTV shows, to name a few of her accomplishments. . . .

"She is one of the more remarkable people I know -- very creative, very caring, a big heart, but also very determined to succeed with great knowledge about city planning and public space," said Cambridge Councilor Dennis Carlone, a city planner who has worked with von Tscharner for decades. "I consider her, truly, one of the few very special people in Cambridge and Greater Boston. Even though I've known her over 30 years, I'm always impressed by her success, again largely through determination and being a very outgoing, friendly person, but bright as all can be." . . .

"Renata is a visionary and a determined advocate. That combination resulted in improvements to the banks of the Charles, a yearly swim in the Charles, and the incredible skatepark on land that would otherwise have been junk," said Alice Wolf, a former mayor of Cambridge and state representative who worked on legislation with von Tscharner to work toward making the river swimmable. . . .

When asked what she hopes to do in retirement, von Tscharner said she plans to remain an advocate for the parklands and the river. "I'm not going to Florida to play golf. I care about the river and the organization, so I want to make sure we have a good transition," she said.

For the full article, visit: <http://cambridge.wickedlocal.com/news/20180316/renata-von-tscharner-true-visionary-to-retire-from-charles-river-conservancy>

The Boston Globe

Q&A with Charles River Conservancy President Renata von Tscharner

By Margeaux Sippell, March 29, 2018

. . . **Q:** What were some of your proudest moments leading the Charles River Conservancy?

A: The opening of the skate park [in East Cambridge] in fall 2016 was extraordinary because land that was contaminated, that was not used by anybody, suddenly was a place where athletes could gather and practice their sport. It created a space that helped people do something healthy and active in the city. Another thing I'm very proud of — 14 years ago, together with [the performance group] Revels, we started something called River-Sing. It's a celebration of the autumnal equinox, where thousands of people gather in late September at the Weeks Bridge to sing songs, and then a boat comes down the river . . . it's an absolutely magical celebration [that] brings out the beauty of the river. . . .

Q: What do you see as the future of the Charles?

A: I think that the Charles already is an enormous asset, but it could be so much more than it is today. This is a very densely settled city, so to have this publicly owned land in the middle is an extraordinary chance. The potential of the river is not fully used yet, so that's what the conservancy will be working on — to make the river and parkland on both sides more accessible and attractive, to have places where people can sit in restaurants along the river. There are many improvements, and we've only just started. . . .

For the full article, visit: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/03/29/with-renata-von-tscharner/1vXcGcZgon3IF5i-jHvx4SN/story.html>

The Charles River Conservancy is welcoming

Laura Jasinski

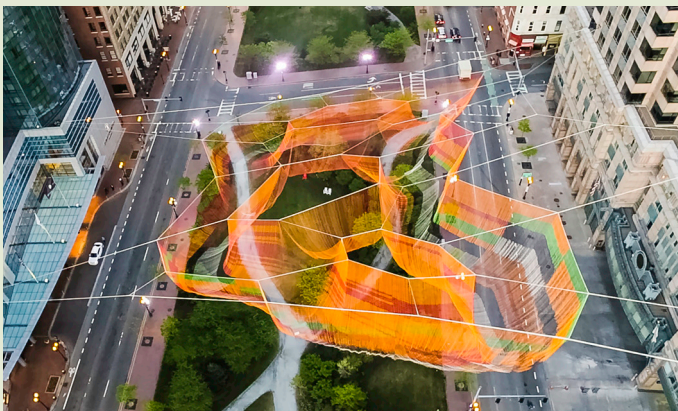
as its new Executive Director!



Photo by Hao Liang

Laura Jasinski is an urban planner with ten years of experience in development and activation of urban open space. Most recently she served as the Associate Director of the Boston Waterfront Initiative for The Trustees of Reservations, an effort to build world-class, resilient open space on the Boston Harbor. Previously, she served as the Director of Programs and Planning for the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy where she managed significant capital improvements and installations, including the design and construction of the Greenway Carousel at the Tiffany & Co. Grove, the installation of the Dewey Square Demonstration Gardens, and the monumental aerial sculpture by Janet Echelman, *As If It Were Already Here*. In addition, Ms. Jasinski's team of six facilitated over 400 free public programs per year and was responsible for earned income initiatives on the Greenway, generating over \$700k annually to support park operations.

Ms. Jasinski holds a BA in Architectural Studies and an MA in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University. Her graduate work focused on universal design and best practices in creating inclusive public spaces. A former co-captain of the Tufts women's basketball team and long-time athlete, she has trained for several half marathons and the 2016 Boston marathon along the Charles River. She looks forward to the day when she and her fellow swimmers from the Cambridge Masters program can practice at the Swim Park.



Ms. Jasinski managed the immensely complicated logistics of Janet Echelman's temporary sculpture, *As If It Were Already Here*, including community engagement. Photo by Joven Tanasijevic, courtesy of The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy.



Designed to be uniquely Boston, The Greenway Carousel features 14 one-of-a-kind characters inspired by the imagination and drawings of Boston Public School Children. Ms. Jasinski managed design and construction. Photo by Jane Messenger, courtesy of Reed Hilderbrand.

Join Us!

Sponsor or Purchase Tickets to our Gala

Join us in honoring Renata's retirement and looking toward the future of the Charles River Conservancy at the *Ribbon of Blue, Ribbon of Green* gala on June 2, 2018! The evening of cocktails, dinner and program will be filled with friends, family, and park supporters and enlivened by participatory singing and dancing led by Revels.



When: Saturday, June 2, 2018

Where: Annenberg Hall at Harvard University

Presenting: The Urban River Champion Award to The Honorable Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris, in recognition of her innovative work launching urban swimming in the Bassin de la Villette

Introducing: Laura Jasinski, Incoming Executive Director of the Charles River Conservancy

Master of Ceremonies: Michelle Wu, Boston City Councilor

For more information about purchasing tickets or a sponsorship, or about the event itself including a list of current event sponsors and committee members, please visit www.thecharles.org/gala

Become a Conservancy Volunteer



The Conservancy Volunteers program is ready for another busy season. 2018 marks our largest annual Charles River Earth Day Cleanup, with close to 700 volunteers registered! To date, the CRC's Conservancy volunteers have contributed over 96,000 hours of service to our public parklands. Volunteers assist with regular park maintenance and also special projects like non-native invasive plant removal and daffodil planting.

If you would like to learn more about volunteering or would like to schedule an event for your group or business please email Sasha at svallieres@thecharles.org

Charles River Conservancy

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www.thecharles.org