USU Names New Executive Director for Moab and Southwest Region

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Lianna Etchberger has been named as the executive director of USU-Moab and Southwest region.

As part of the move, Moab will also gain a strong visionary and rural education advocate, Rich Etchberger, USU’s Vice Provost, pictured with Lianna.

After a comprehensive national search, Utah State University announced USU Professor Lianna Etchberger as the executive director of USU-Moab and Southwest region.

“Dr. Etchberger will excel in her new role bringing innovative leadership skills and a wealth of regional campus experience to the Moab and the Southwest regions,” said Laurens H. Smith, USU’s interim provost. “She knows first-hand the value USU brings to a community, and she embraces the regional campus mission of access and outreach.”

A respected researcher and renowned national teaching expert, Lianna Etchberger has over 22 years of academic, professional and university service in the USU regional campus system. She comes to Moab after recently serving as a faculty member for the Department of Biology at USU-Utah Basin. Lianna Etchberger was promoted to full tenured professor in 2015 after starting in the Uintah Basin as an adjunct lecturer in 1995.

Having climbed the ranks, she will leverage her years of USU experience working with faculty, students, stewards of education and the local community. Her expertise is rooted in innovative approaches to teaching and is sought after for her wealth of instruction expertise with nearly 30 invited and accepted presentations. She has brought hands-on research opportunities to her students, involving them in global crowdsourcing efforts through the Small World Initiative. With a passion for education and youth, Lianna Etchberger served as a member of the founding board of directors for the Terra Academy and continues to serve as the chair for the governing board of directors.

Lianna Etchberger earned a bachelor’s in microbiology from the University of California in Los Angeles and a doctorate in molecular biology from The State University of New York in Stony Brook. Prior to USU, she worked as a post-doctoral research associate at the University of Arizona.

As part of the move, Moab will also gain a strong visionary and rural education advocate, Rich Etchberger, USU’s vice provost. Rich Etchberger’s roots in distance education as a wildlife science professor, proven track record of interagency collaboration and connections in the Moab community will be an asset.

“Having the Etchbergers as a USU resource in Moab will be a tremendous asset to the local community,” said Smith. “It’s an exciting time as we enter a new period of growth built upon the strong foundation by our previous administration’s leadership.”

Former USU-Moab and Southwest Region Dean and Executive Director Steve Hawks will closely collaborate with the Etchbergers to ensure community needs are seamlessly addressed in this important phase of growth for USU-Moab. Hawks intends to return to his passions, teaching and being involved more directly with students. He has also been charged with growing regional campus enrollments in the new Master of Public Health program coming to USU in fall 2017. He will continue to reside and teach in Moab.
Lianna Etchberger will officially begin her new role on July 1, with plans to move to the community as soon as arrangements can be made.

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