

Longtime LVEDC Staffer Leaves to Join Academy of Natural Sciences

By Nicole Radzievich Mertz

Longtime LVEDC staff member Andrew Kleiner is leaving his position to join the administrative staff of the Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel University in Philadelphia.

Kleiner, a 10-year LVEDC employee, has served in several roles at the regional economic development organization most recently as director of regional partnerships, where he was the liaison to all 62 Lehigh Valley municipalities and other regional groups like the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

"Andrew started here at LVEDC soon after I arrived," said Don Cunningham, LVEDC president and CEO. "He's been an integral part of the organization's development and success. He will be missed very much but I'm thrilled for him and his career advancement."

Kleiner will serve as Director of Community Science for the world-renowned museum in Philadelphia, which is under the stewardship of Drexel.

Kleiner recently earned a master's degree in environmental science policy with a focus on Conservation Biology at Johns Hopkins University. He has a B.S. degree in environmental science from Muhlenberg College.

Kleiner joined LVEDC in February 2013 as the assistant director of the former Lehigh Valley Land Recycling Initiative, a regional program to expedite the recovery of brownfield sites that was managed by LVEDC.

"His dedication to brownfield redevelopment and building relationships that support economic development and create a stronger Lehigh Valley have been key," said Karianne Gelinas, Vice President of Regional Partnerships & Talent Strategies at LVEDC. "Over the past decade at LVEDC, Andrew has been a versatile, thoughtful player contributing to many of the initiatives and projects across departments in the organization. He will be missed."

More recently, Kleiner has been responsible for community outreach and the management of redevelopment priorities, which include the city and urban revitalization focus of LVEDC's strategic plan. Kleiner worked to remove impediments to redevelopment across the Lehigh Valley and assists partners in their redevelopment and revitalization efforts.

"Community outreach was a fascinating part of the job because I ended up in all corners of the Lehigh Valley, attending meetings of nearly all 62 municipalities, cookoffs, festivals and more," Kleiner said. "What I learned is that people really care about the Lehigh Valley. There are many disparate voices here crying out over a shared love of the Lehigh Valley."

Kleiner also led LVEDC's Entrepreneurship Council. Karianne Gelinas will be the new point of contact.



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