

SMEF hires new executive director

[Emily Sawicki](#) 1 day ago [News](#)



Mikko Sperber. Courtesy photo

About four-and-a-half months after longtime Santa Monica Education Foundation Executive Director Linda Greenberg announced her imminent retirement from the nonprofit, the Ed Foundation recently announced it had selected her successor: veteran fundraising professional Mikko Sperber.

A Los Angeles native and Venice High School alumnus, Sperber comes to Santa Monica with years of nonprofit management experience including on the Westside, where he currently serves on the board of the Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum in Topanga.

Most recently, Sperber has served as the managing partner of a nonprofit management and fundraising advisory firm he founded called Fundamental Strategy.

A press release from the Ed Foundation detailed Sperber's extensive resume of work in the nonprofit sector: "Sperber is an active leader in the greater Los Angeles non-profit community. He has been heavily involved as a member of the Los Angeles County Equity in County Contracting Project Team for the past two years, working to streamline and improve

contracting policies and practices for the benefit of all nonprofits who do business with the county.”

In addition to serving on the board of directors of Theatricum Botanicum, Sperber is also on the board of Levitt Pavilion Los Angeles and the Claremont Courier, as well as on the advisory board of Angel City Sports.

“I’m excited to join a community of people who are aligned in their desire to ensure that all students in Santa Monica’s public schools receive a vibrant education rich with opportunities in and out of the classroom,” Sperber said in a statement provided by the Ed Foundation. “I know that requires our philanthropy to supplement the District’s funds so they can hire the staff and fund the programs that impact all students in Santa Monica’s public schools.”

Sperber’s prior experience also includes stints working with alumni leadership development for UCLA Anderson School of Management as well as fundraising for the MPTF (Motion Picture & Television Fund).

In the coming weeks, Sperber will be working closely with Greenberg to learn the ropes of the Ed Foundation before she departs on Sept. 9. The Ed Foundation’s press release stated Greenberg, who has helmed the nonprofit for 28 years, was expected to remain involved beyond her official retirement date, “providing her wealth of experience and community contacts as resources to Sperber as he assumes the Executive Director’s role.”

“One of the many great legacies of Linda’s leadership of this organization over nearly three decades will be her incredible relationships throughout our community,” Ed Foundation Board President John Baracy said in the press release. “We are so fortunate and grateful to have her expertise and her commitment to this organization continue even as she transitions toward a well-earned retirement.”

During Greenberg’s tenure, the Ed Foundation grew from raising less than \$100,000 per year to an annual operating budget of \$3.2 million.

Her contribution to the community will be recognized in a “celebration of Greenberg’s career and impact on Santa Monica’s public schools,” which Baracy said was still in the planning stages.

“We look forward to honoring Linda in the coming weeks with a lasting recognition of her incredible impact,” Baracy said.

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