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Senior Leadership Changes Help Position Omega as a Force for ‘Awakening the Best in the Human Spirit’

CEO Transition, New Board Chair, New Board Members, New Board Leadership Posts & JEDI Committee Set to Meet Swiftly Changing Global Landscape

RHINEBECK, NY– [Omega Institute for Holistic Studies](#), a leading nonprofit in New York’s Hudson Valley that has provided lifelong learning opportunities to more than 1M people since 1977, today announced a number of senior leadership appointments designed to address the needs and challenges of an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

- On January 1, 2023, Robert “Skip” Backus will retire after being CEO for 18 years, and working at Omega for 40 years. Backus will assume an initial role of CEO Emeritus, and later as Special Advisor.
- Carla Goldstein, Omega’s President, who has been in an Omega leadership role for 17 years, will become President and CEO of Omega.
- David Orlinsky, longtime Omega Board Member and Chair, has retired and Omega Board Member Manuela Roosevelt has become the new Board Chair.
- Artemio Guerra, JD and Tobias Esch, MD, Omega’s first international board member, have joined Omega’s Board of Directors.
- A newly formed [Justice Equality Diversity Inclusion](#) Committee, is being chaired by Neonu Jewell, and Omega’s Nominating Committee is being chaired by Jamia Wilson.

“Today’s announcement marks an important moment in Omega’s development, as we seek to position our organization for the future, and serve Omega’s growing global community. Each of the leaders named today are committed to Omega’s mission to provide hope and healing to individuals and society, and will bring new energy and skills that help us deliver our mission,” said [Robert “Skip” Backus](#), current Chief Executive Officer of Omega.

Omega is preparing comprehensive plans for seamless and transparent changes in leadership. The changes support work already under way to build the organization’s strength, that can deepen learning experiences and scale impact, as laid out in [Omega’s Strategic Plan](#). They also follow recent work by the [board of directors](#), such as the creation of Omega’s Justice Equality Diversity Inclusion Committee, led by board member Neonu Jewell, and long-time board member Jamia Wilson’s recent appointment to lead Omega’s Nominating Committee—resulting in today’s newly announced board additions.

“I’ve had the honor of serving Omega for 40 years, especially the past 18 as CEO, and I’m proud of all that we’ve accomplished. However, serving Omega in a new capacity will give me the opportunity to focus on my ‘bucket list’ of critical projects,” said Backus. “Along with the full support of the Omega board, I’m thrilled that Carla will be stepping up as President and CEO next year. Carla is uniquely qualified for this role, and has proven to be an invaluable asset to Omega and professional partner to me throughout my years as CEO.”

“Omega has consistently been at the forefront of driving social and cultural transformation which is at the heart of my life’s work and career.” said [Carla Goldstein](#), current President of Omega and cofounder of the [Omega Women’s Leadership Center](#). “I am grateful to Skip’s leadership, from whom I’ve learned a great deal, and am enthusiastic about the partnership we are embarking on to fully prepare me to serve Omega’s mission in a larger way,” said Goldstein.

Omega’s CEO transition will take place in phases, expected to span three years. In Phase I (2022), Backus will continue to serve as CEO working closely with Goldstein on major transition issues. In Phase II (2023) Goldstein will officially become President and CEO and Backus will serve as CEO Emeritus. During this phase Backus will lead the work of campus operations and facility renovations, while remaining fully available to Goldstein and Omega. In Phase III (2024), Backus will transition to the role of Special Advisor, continuing to hold responsibility for campus renovations, and furthering Omega’s environmental stewardship through the work of the [Omega Center for Sustainable Living](#), which Backus founded in 2009.

“It has been a joy to be part of Omega’s evolution over the last nine years, and I’m looking forward to making an even greater contribution in my new role as Chair of the Board. On behalf of the whole Board and Omega’s staff, I want to thank outgoing Chairman David Orlinsky for his two decades of board service to Omega, in a variety of critical roles, including helping to steward Omega through the pandemic. Gratitude also goes to Katherine Collins for serving the interim role during the selection process,” said new Board Chair [Manuela Roosevelt](#).

“I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve as a member of Omega’s board of directors. The conversations we’ve had to date, have filled me with a sense of commitment to the Omega Institute and our mission. I look forward to our work together,” said new Board Member Artemio Guerra.

“I am utterly excited about the invitation to join Omega’s board of directors. Being a researcher in the field, faculty, and longtime practitioner myself, I felt a ‘common spirit’ with the organization’s work and I’m eager to provide my skills to help further Omega’s goals and aspirations,” said new Board Member Tobias Esch.

For more information visit eOmega.org, and follow Omega on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies

Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation’s most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 250 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world. eOmega.org

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