

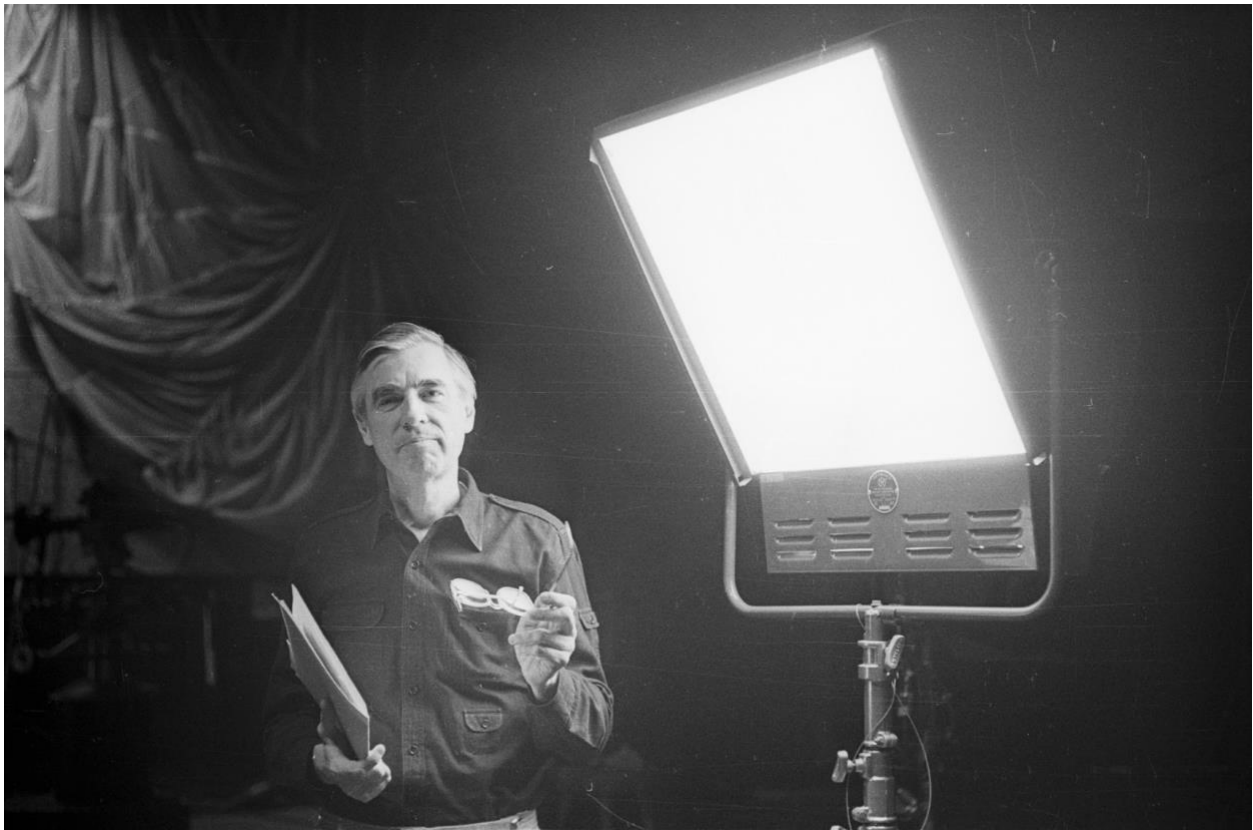
June 2021

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## Staying Connected

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### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

“Often when you think you’re at the **end of something**, you’re at the **beginning of something else**,” Fred Rogers

In 1982, I began working with Fred Rogers’ organization, Family Communications, Inc. as a child development consultant for an outreach project that included writing activity plans for teachers and family childcare providers to accompany the

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daily *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* television programs. What started as a three-month project ended up expanding to several years' worth of follow-up activities that were correlated to each program in the original MRN series. I continued to work with Family Communications, Inc. as a consultant on various projects over the years and was delighted to be included in early planning conversations about a Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College.

When the Fred Rogers Center opened in 2006, I was overjoyed to be a part of the celebration and honored to be one of the Senior Fellows at the Center. Working with Advisory Board Member Chip Donohue from the Erikson Institute, we developed the Fred Rogers Center (FRC) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) joint position statement on the use of technology in programs that serve young children, approved by both organizations in 2012.

In 2018, the FRC executive director position became vacant. What began as a one-year commitment as Executive Director of the Fred Rogers Center evolved into almost three years of collaborative work with the great staff here at the Center and with our colleagues at Saint Vincent College.

I will be stepping down from my role as Executive Director of the Center on June 30, 2021 but plan to continue at the Center as a PNC Grow Up Great Senior Fellow. I have found this opportunity to serve as the director of the Center to be a joyful reminder of the legacy that Fred and Joanne Rogers have given us. I look forward to staying connected to both Fred Rogers Center and Fred Rogers Productions, Inc.

I am delighted to announce that Dr. Dana Winters will be assuming the role of Executive Director of the Fred Rogers Center on July 1, 2021. Dana has been at the Center since 2015 and has been instrumental in moving forward the Fred Rogers legacy as a faculty member and as project director for many of our initiatives. Please join me in welcoming her in this new role. Congratulations, Dana!

The work of the Fred Rogers Center has expanded and thrived through the collaborative work of our team: Dr. Dana Winters, Dr. Annie White, Emily Uhrin, Kate Luchini, Emma Lee, and Melissa Butler. Our Fred Rogers Center staff have

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demonstrated a commitment to excellence and research-based practices in developing the programs here at the Center. I celebrate their work and the “many ways” they honor the legacy of Fred Rogers through the projects of the Center, in support of professional organizations, and in the services provided to those who care for our youngest citizens. I want to especially thank the Fred Rogers Center staff for their quick-thinking, positive responses, willingness to jump into action, and commitment to serving the families and children in our “neighborhoods” during the difficult times of the pandemic. The staff of the Fred Rogers Center quickly adjusted as the needs of our professional community changed. Thanks to the dedication of the Fred Rogers Center staff and support from our colleagues at Saint Vincent College, we’ve expanded our programs to include a Gretsche Family Music Fellowship, a community of educators from around the world who study Fred Rogers through our Educators’ Neighborhood, and continued to spread our Simple Interactions messages across the country and around the world.

Finally, I want to extend heartfelt thanks to Theresa Noel, Operations Coordinator, Fred Rogers Center for her undying support, advice, organization, forecasting knowledge, and commitment to the Center. Theresa... you always made my work easier... being ever-ready with the dates, times, necessary materials for each meeting, for the advice and the sense of history that helped us make good decisions, and the friendly and thoughtful interventions that kept things running smoothly. You have been a dear friend and colleague, Theresa. Thank you!

And THANK YOU... to all of our partners, friends and colleagues who help us keep the legacy of Fred Rogers alive and who share his knowledge and insights about human development and commitment to kindness, caring, listening, learning and wondering. We miss you both, Fred and Joanne!

With much gratitude,

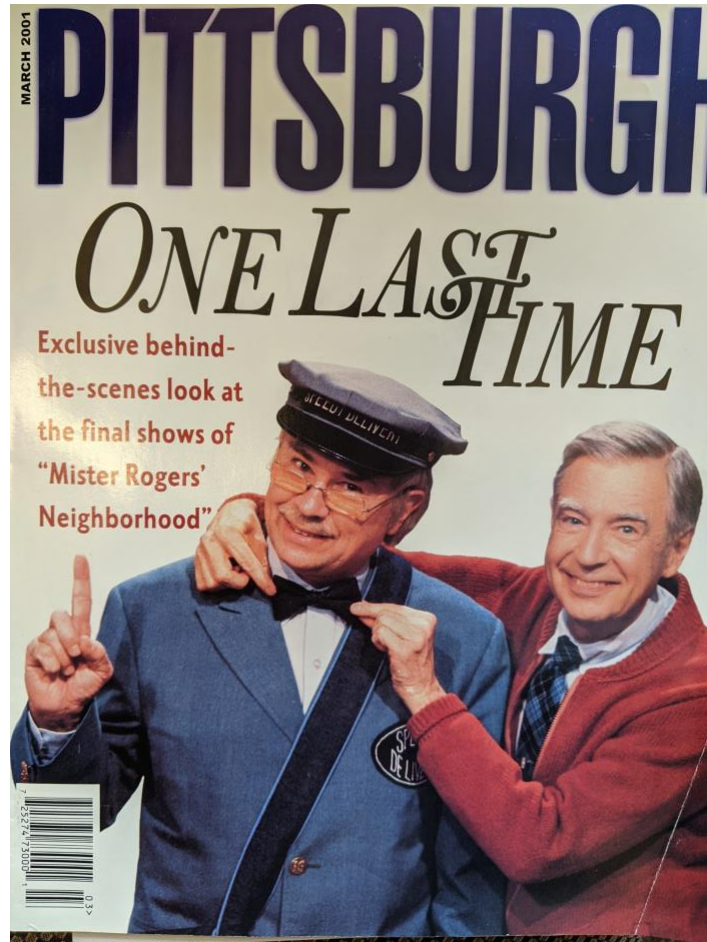
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roberta L. Schomburg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roberta L. Schomburg, Ph.D., Executive Director, Fred Rogers Center

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## IN THE ARCHIVE



When Fred Rogers ceased production of the *Neighborhood* in 2000, newspapers and magazines were anxious to cover Mister Rogers' "retirement." Fred explained to reporters that he was not retiring, but starting new kinds of work. A local magazine, *Pittsburgh*, was on the set as Fred filmed his final episode. Christopher Fletcher wrote that Fred and his company were going to continue creating resources for families and would also be concentrating on online endeavors. Fletcher saw that their work was not ending. "If anything, it's just beginning."

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## FROM THE CENTER



You are invited to the inaugural Fred Rogers Center Educators' Symposium where we will gather (online) to learn from the life and work of Fred Rogers and find ways to apply our learning into practice with children, families, and educators.

This two-day learning experience, anchored in archival and community resources of the Fred Rogers Center, will be full of collaboration, stories, inspiration, and joy. This will include:

- Sessions on topics connecting Fred Rogers and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to a variety of learning contexts, including a session from Fred Rogers Center archivist, Emily Uhrin and the Simple Interactions team
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- Panel of educators sharing how Fred Rogers and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* impacts practice with children, families, and educators
- Opening keynote given by Hedda Sharapan, child development expert and former Associate Producer of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*
- Closing keynote given by Gregg Behr and Ryan Rydzewski authors of "When You Wonder, You're Learning: Mister Rogers' Enduring Lessons for Raising Creative, Curious, Caring Kids"

Open to all educators (formal and informal), educational leaders, care providers, and others who work in the service of children, families, and educators. The cost is \$143 to attend both days and \$75 to attend one day. With your conference registration fee, you will receive access to session recordings and a certificate of attendance. Registration closes on July 19.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

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## WORDS OF WISDOM

"Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else. I've felt that many times. My hope for all of us is that 'the miles we go before we sleep' will be filled with all the feelings that come from deep caring - delight, sadness, joy, wisdom - and that in all the endings of our life, we will be able to see the new beginnings." - Fred Rogers

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**Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning &  
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Saint Vincent College

300 Fraser Purchase Road  
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650-2690