

The Institute Announces Transition in Leadership

Leadership at the Institute for Community Research has transitioned from Founding Director, anthropologist Jean J. Schensul, Ph.D., to anthropologist, Margaret Weeks, Ph.D. as newly appointed Executive Director. Jean J. Schensul began her tenure at ICR in February, 1987 after a decade of research and development as a co-founder of the Hispanic Health Council also in Hartford. Under her direction the Institute grew from a relatively small locally-focused organization to an internationally recognized center for participatory research and community cultural development. The work of its talented and widely diverse staff has marked the Institute as model for bringing together communities, social science researchers and artists to bridge cultural, social, and economic gaps and address disparities. “To watch the growth and development of our organization as a community and to see the Institute’s unique philosophy, staff and approach recognized and appreciated in Connecticut and as far away as Canada, China, India, El Salvador, and Spain, has been the experience of a lifetime for which I will always be grateful”, says Schensul. The achievements of the Institute under her tenure are outlined in a document on the ICR website entitled, [The Institute for Community Research: The First 2 Decades](#). [Dr. Schensul](#) will continue at the ICR on a full time basis as Senior Scientist, working on new community grants and projects involving adolescents, older adults and public programming that interfaces art and research and supporting other staff in the work of the Institute.

[Dr. Weeks](#), incoming Executive Director, has been at the ICR for the past fifteen years. She has been central to the development of its AIDS research and intervention programs, and has managed many of the internal functions of the Institute for the past six years as Associate Director. The Board of Directors unanimously approved her appointment in September 2004, and she has taken office as of November 1st. In accepting her new role, Dr Weeks noted: “The Institute, which we have built in collaboration with community and institutional partners over the past 18 years is a strong organization with an important and timely mission. It is exciting to take up the baton, build on our strong foundation, and move us forward into the next stage of growth and development.”

An event honoring Drs. Schensul and Weeks will take place on December 8th, from 4:30 to 7:30 PM, at the Pond House Café, 1555 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, CT (located in Elizabeth Park). It will include a ceremony marking the transition in leadership, comments from founding and current board members, including Board President, Marnie Mueller, Ph.D., City of Hartford Mayor, Eddie Perez and performances by artists associated with the Institute for Community Research cultural programs. Please RVSP to Lisa Thomas, ICR, 860-278-2044, ext. 221 or to Maryland Grier, ext. 228.