

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **Sustainable Nantucket Hires New Executive Director**

The Board of Trustees of Sustainable Nantucket is pleased to announce the appointment of Michelle Whelan as Executive Director, effective January 1, 2008. "We interviewed many talented people for this position, all passionate about preserving what's so special about Nantucket, and we learned something from meeting each of them," said Wendy Hudson, Bookworks' owner and Sustainable Nantucket Board Chair. "But Michelle's experience in community outreach, project management, event planning and fundraising along with her excitement and enthusiasm about taking on a very challenging job moved her to the top of the list."



Michelle came to the attention of the Board when she approached the non-profit last summer about forming a new organization, Nantucket Green, as a sub-committee of Sustainable Nantucket focused on environmental issues on the island. After considering her proposal, the Board agreed to expand the mission of Sustainable Nantucket to include actionable environmental initiatives. A new film series, co-sponsored with the Atheneum, entitled "Sense of Place II: A Film Series about Sustainability, Community & the Environment" is just the first in a series of environmentally-focused initiatives to be announced in 2008.

The Board is enthusiastic about working with Michelle to coordinate and grow the diverse programs that have defined Sustainable Nantucket's special role on Nantucket including current initiatives to promote local agriculture through a farmers' and artisans' market and agricultural commission; expand the "Buy Local" campaign begun this year; help build the Nantucket Marine Collaborative; and launch a youth council on sustainability. "The character, economic and environmental health of the island depends

entirely on the ability for its year-round residents to thrive here," said Dave Provost, Head of Nantucket New School and Co-Chair of the Sustainable Nantucket Search Committee. "We feel that Michelle with her young family understands first hand the issues surrounding these challenges and will add significantly to our ability to help address them."

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Michelle has lived on Nantucket since 1994, leaving for three years in 1999 for New York City, where she worked doing event planning and project management in the publishing industry. Returning to Nantucket in 2002, she worked in fundraising for nonprofits, both on and off the island, before taking on the position of Development Coordinator at Nantucket Cottage Hospital in early 2005. Michelle says "I am passionately committed to furthering the health and sustainability of the Nantucket community and to helping Nantucket to forge a strong identity as a leader and an inspiration to other communities in the protection, preservation, and renewal of its environment and unique community character." Michelle resides on Nantucket with her husband, Mitch Blake and 18-month-old daughter, Rowan.

*Sustainable Nantucket, founded in 1999, is a nonprofit, membership organization whose board consists of multi-generational islanders, members of the business and finance community and a mixture of seasonal and year-round residents. Its mission is to sustain Nantucket's economic vitality while preserving and restoring community character. To promote its mission the organization has played important roles in the areas of affordable housing for island residents, the preservation of the shellfishery, a balanced approach to transportation planning, the promotion of year round community and cultural gathering places in the core district, and most recently promotion of local agricultural endeavors and environmental initiatives.*