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***for immediate release***

**THE EXPLORATION PLACE ANNOUNCES THE RETIREMENT OF CEO TRACY CALOGHEROS AFTER 30 REMARKABLE YEARS**

**PRINCE GEORGE, BRITISH COLUMBIA** – The Exploration Place is bidding farewell to its long-serving CEO, Tracy Calogheros, who is retiring after an extraordinary 30-year tenure at the Museum, with 20 of those years at the helm. Under her leadership, The Exploration Place has flourished, transforming from its early days as the Fraser-Fort George Museum into an award-winning beacon of cultural exploration, education, and community engagement.

Tracy's journey with the Exploration Place began in 1994. With a fine arts background, her initial role as the Museum's Marketing and Graphics Coordinator marked the start of a remarkable career that has seen the institution undergo many changes and evolutions.

Her leadership and dedication have been instrumental in guiding the Museum through significant expansions, groundbreaking and meaningful work with Indigenous communities, and numerous accolades that underscore the institution's commitment to excellence and reconciliation. Though not one of the largest institutions in the country, The Exploration Place has served as a nationwide example of how a regional museum can think, engage, and work together with the First Nation on whose territory it is located.

Tracy emphasizes the importance of the museum's commitment to reconciliation, a principle that has been integral to the museum's operations long before it became a national conversation. "The Fraser-Fort George Museum was a very different place in 1994 than it is today," Tracy reflects. "But even then, the Museum had a seat for the Lheidli T’enneh on its board, and it was that visionary approach to reconciliation before anyone had even heard the word that has shaped this award-winning, community-centred approach to museum work."

Tracy has served on multiple boards and dedicated her time to countless organizations, including the Canadian Museums Association, where she is a Fellow and currently sits as President. She has also served as President of the Canadian Association of Science Centres board and has been a strong champion for science literacy. “No kid wakes up at 18 and decides they want to be an engineer or an epidemiologist unless they have grown up excited about scientific endeavour.” This has been an important part of the Museum’s mandate since it became The Exploration Place in 2001—to make science accessible, non-intimidating, and most of all, fun, planting a seed in the minds of future scientists.

Even when involved with associations and committees unrelated to the science centre or museum community, Tracy has used her positions in these organizations to constantly advocate for science centres and museums. She has brought the message of advocacy for the sector across the nation, working with people from all levels of government and from within the industry to advance the goals of science centres and museums.

Reflecting on her retirement, Calogheros expressed profound gratitude toward the collaborative efforts that have propelled the museum's success. “This organization and this community have given me opportunities I would never have dreamt of in 1994 when I first interviewed for an unemployment insurance program position. Flash forward 30 years, and I am humbled to have played my part in this museum's development."

As of June 30th, Tracy will embark on a new chapter, chasing the seasons on Iowna Island at Francois Lake with her husband, John. While her leadership will be greatly missed, her years of dedication will continue to inspire The Exploration Place team and the broader community the Museum serves.

"Under Tracy's leadership, The Exploration Place has evolved into a leading museum and science centre," says The Exploration Place Board of Trustees President Helena Trudel. "On behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere thanks to Tracy for her devoted service to the organization and the museum sector spanning the last three decades. The Board is commencing the search for a new CEO."

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