

# Wisconsin Catholic Conference: Announces new leadership and staff

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The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) announced today that Executive Director Kim Vercauteren will be departing the agency effective September 1, 2022. Associate Director Barbara Sella will succeed her, joined by two new Associate Directors.

The WCC was founded by the state's Catholic bishops in 1969 for the purpose of coordinating various interdiocesan activities and collectively representing the five Roman Catholic dioceses of Wisconsin on a statewide level. A primary responsibility given to the Conference is to develop and advance public policy positions that reflect the teachings and values of the Catholic Church.

Attorney Vercauteren, who is leaving her position to care for family, is the WCC's third director, having succeeded John Huebscher in 2016. During her tenure she served two years as Secretary of the National Association of State Catholic Conference Directors (NASCCD) and was a consultant to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Catholic Education from 2017 through 2021. Vercauteren previously served as Associate Director for Education and Health Care at the WCC from 2007 to 2015.

Barbara Sella has been an Associate Director at the WCC since 2002, where she has worked on education, pro-life, and social concerns issues. She holds a doctorate in Medieval Studies from the University of Toronto. As WCC Executive Director, Sella will also assume the role of Chair of the Board of Directors of the Church Unemployment Pay Program, Inc.

Tia Westhoff earned her Master of Public Affairs degree from the University of

Wisconsin

La Follette School of Public Affairs in 2021, while working at the Thompson Center on Public

Leadership. With experience in nonprofits serving mothers in need and individuals with

disabilities, she has been named Associate Director for Human Life and Social Concerns.

David Earleywine is a 2022 graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School and has

interned at the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the Madison City Attorney's office.

With a strong interest in religious liberty and a background in Catholic youth formation, Earleywine has been named Associate Director for Education and Religious Liberty.

The announcements were made following a meeting of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference

Board of Directors. Archbishop Jerome ListECKI, Archbishop of Milwaukee and President of the WCC Board, said, "The bishops are deeply grateful for Kim's service to the Church. Her legal acumen has been of immense value, especially during the Covid pandemic, as well as during several crucial transitions."

"The bishops welcome Sella, Westhoff, and Earleywine to their new positions at the WCC and are confident that their academic training and Catholic formation will serve the Church well in the coming years. All three understand the importance of transcending partisanship and working for the common good of all."

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