



## CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

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### **Suzy Gardner Joins Catalina Island Conservancy** ***New Chief Development Officer Will Combine Passion and Profession***

AVALON – Bringing extensive experience in business and nonprofit organizations, Suzy Gardner joined the Catalina Island Conservancy today as its new chief development officer. She will oversee the nonprofit organization’s fundraising, communications, marketing and membership programs as well as its events and other development functions.

“Her visionary leadership and demonstrated development success make Suzy a great addition to our leadership team,” said Tony Budrovich, Conservancy president and CEO. “She is a skilled professional who can help ensure the Conservancy continues to thrive, draws new visitors to the Island and attracts even more support for its mission.”

Gardner said her new position at the Conservancy will enable her to combine her passion for nature and nature-based recreation with her professional skills in development. Having grown up on the lakes around New Orleans, LA, she said she is looking forward to spending more time exploring the Island and supporting its mission of being a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation.

“I’m incredibly excited to use my professional skills to support the great work being done by the Conservancy team,” Gardner said. “Protecting and restoring Catalina’s unique wildlands and wildlife is vital. So is educating today’s youth about the Island because they are the future for Catalina and for all the special places needing protection around the world.”

Gardner has more than 15 years of development experience and holds degrees in accounting and psychology, as well as a master’s degree in nonprofit management. She has a great love of the outdoors, hiking, the ocean, hills, plants and animals of Catalina, all of which make her ideally suited for the Conservancy’s development support role.

Gardner moved from Boulder, CO, to California in January to serve as director of development and communications for Project Hope Alliance, helping to advance support for the mission of ending intergenerational homelessness in Orange County. In Boulder, she had served as director of development and communications at Emergency Family Assistance Association,

leading her team in significantly increasing individual, business and foundation giving, as well as raising capital funding for new transitional housing units.

She previously served as development director at Boulder Valley Women's Health Center, where she advanced fundraising revenue, produced a new annual fundraising event and developed and implemented major gifts and gift planning programs.

Gardner also served as a development and major gifts officer at Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions at Regis University in Denver and as a development assistant at Mental Health Partners in Boulder. In addition, she assisted in the launch of a new Colorado nonprofit, Collegiate Crossings, where she completed a term as board president.

Prior to her nonprofit leadership, she had worked in the for-profit world, as a certified purchasing manager first for Pellerin Milnor Corporation in Louisiana and then for Plexus Corporation in Wisconsin, where she led a procurement team that purchased electronic components for the technology group.

### **About the Conservancy**

Formed in 1972, the Catalina Island Conservancy is one of California's oldest land trusts. Its mission is to be a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation. Through its ongoing efforts, the Conservancy protects the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding approximately 42,000 acres of land and more than 60 miles of rugged shoreline. It provides an airport and 50 miles of biking and nearly 150 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system. The Conservancy conducts educational outreach through two nature centers, its Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden and guided experiences in the Island's rugged interior. Twenty miles from the mainland, the Island is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological sites. It also contains numerous rare and endangered animals and plants. The Island is home to 60 species – and counting – that are found only on Catalina. For additional information, please visit [www.catalinaconservancy.org](http://www.catalinaconservancy.org).