

BAGI Executive Director Mark Murai Returning to the Private Sector

July 6, 2011

The Board of Directors of the Bay Area Glass Institute (BAGI) has announced that Mark Murai will be leaving his position as Executive Director to return to the technology sector. The organization appreciates the work he has done over the past two years as our leader and as a staff member since 2006. Under Mark's leadership, BAGI has grown its impact by expanding class offerings, adding programs for kids, bringing in thousands of new students of all ages, while continuing to be a resource for local artists to work and learn.

Mark said, "It is a bittersweet choice I have made but this decision will help take care of a situation very important in my personal life. I will be part of the interview team for the next Executive Director and will continue to help BAGI with events, studio repairs and as "an Artist" rent blow time on a regular basis. The next Executive Director will have a chance to work with some great people and an organization that is truly something very special in the South Bay." You can read more of [his note to the BAGI community here](#).

"Mark brought a great spirit of entrepreneurship to his role," said Steven Aldrich, BAGI Board Chair. "His energy and passion to expand our outreach has grown the organization in the past two years through challenging economic times. Mark has had a tremendous impact and opened a number of doors by building relationships in the local community."

BAGI's Board has started the search for a [new Executive Director](#) and multiple Board members are working to ensure a smooth transition when Mark leaves in mid-July. Tom Upchurch, Board member and BAGI's Executive Director before Mark, will serve as Interim Executive Director during the search.

The Bay Area Glass Institute (BAGI), a non-profit arts education center founded in 1996, is the only public access glass-working facility in the Santa Clara County that has fully functional glassblowing, fusing, cold-working and torch working studios. We educate the public about art glass by teaching a variety of glass-working classes, offering free public demonstrations, and bringing in guest artists to conduct free demonstrations and lectures. Every year, BAGI hosts the *Annual Great Glass Auction* and co-sponsors the *Great Glass Pumpkin Patch*®. BAGI's goal is to continue expanding its education and program offerings to artists and the general public. BAGI is located at 401 East Taylor Street, #115, in San Jose. For more information about BAGI, please visit www.bagi.org.