Diane Disney named executive director of state Council on Arts

PROVIDENCE — Diane M. Disney, a local management consultant, has been named executive director of the state Council on the Arts, the agency that pumps nearly $1 million annually into area cultural activities.

Miss Disney, who sits on the boards of about a dozen civic organizations, has served as the agency's acting director since Robin G. Barry resigned in October. She will be paid $24,310.

Miss Disney is president of Disney Lightfoot Lee, a four-year-old, Providence-based consulting firm. Reached yesterday, she said she would remain as head of that business as well.

As director of the arts council, s/he is responsible for overseeing the agency's various educational and community programs as well as its grant-giving activities.

The search for a director had narrowed to three candidates. Miss Disney, however, was widely considered the front runner because she was the only Rhode Islander among the finalists and is highly regarded for her management abilities.

Arts Council chairman Daniel Lecht announced the appointment yesterday.

Miss Disney, reached at the council's Westminster Mall officers, pledged to support the state's individual artists and fledgling art groups facing management problems. She said she will work closely with allied agencies "to heighten the awareness of the arts in places where people really are, such as community centers."

A Providence resident, Miss Disney is the author of articles on management principles. She is chairman of the National Coordinating Council of the Samaritans and of the advisory councils of several other groups. She holds graduate degrees from the University of Rhode Island and Duke University.