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Donaghy Appointed as ACSF Faculty Director

Kieran Donaghy, a professor in Cornell’s Department of City and Regional Planning, will join the Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future as faculty director of economic development on July 1. He will replace Wendy Wolford, Polson Professor of Development Sociology, at the end of her four-year term. The Atkinson Center’s three faculty directors lead ACSF’s tightly linked programs in energy, environment, and economic development.

Donaghy’s recent research examines how globalization affects regional economies and their ecosystems and how New York communities can work together to rebuild failing infrastructure to support economic development and sustainable lifestyles. Donaghy led Cornell’s 2015 study analyzing the University’s impact on New York State’s economy. He has served as a consultant to the World Bank, the European Commission, and other international, federal, and state agencies. Donaghy has been involved in the Atkinson Center from the early days. He was a founding member of the Faculty Advisory Board in 2008. He and Cornell colleagues have recently completed a study funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to forecast future air quality outcomes in the face of globalization and climate change. The $590,000 EPA grant’s multidisciplinary collaboration was launched with ACSF funding.

Donaghy will work closely with Edwin “Todd” Cowen, ACSF’s faculty director of energy, and Alex Travis, faculty director of environment. “As the incoming faculty director of economic development, I’m looking forward to undertaking initiatives that build on ACSF’s past accomplishments,” Donaghy said. “Some important focuses include addressing the needs of communities in transition from economies based on extraction and use of fossil fuels and raising awareness of the financial aspects of promoting sustainable lifestyles.”

“Kieran’s experience with multidisciplinary research groups in collaboration with regional organizations brings a wonderful new dimension to the Atkinson Center leadership team,” said ACSF director David Lodge. “The impact of his work to simultaneously improve livelihoods and environmental sustainability is something we hope to replicate. We all look forward to working with Kieran.”

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