



Cleveland Museum of Natural History President & CEO Sonia Winner Named a Crain's Cleveland Business Notable Leader in Sustainability and a 2026 YWCA Women of Achievement Honoree

CLEVELAND—December 18, 2025—The Cleveland Museum of Natural History is pleased to announce that its President & CEO Sonia Winner has been named one of *Crain's Cleveland Business*' Notable Leaders in Sustainability, recognizing her visionary leadership in advancing sustainable practices that strengthened the organization and region as a whole.

The Notable Leaders in Sustainability awards honor individuals whose leadership has helped make the Akron and Cleveland areas a hub for sustainable progress, reshaping how organizations operate, grow, and contribute to the well-being of their communities.

Winner's vision throughout the Museum's transformation made sustainability a priority—leading the Museum to earn accolades including LEED Platinum Certification (becoming the first U.S. museum to achieve this level), the Prix Versailles' 2025 World's Most Beautiful Museums List, and the Overall Winner of the Cleveland 2030 District Green Building Challenge, among others. Thanks to her leadership, the Museum not only reflects our mission, but also serves as an example of sustainability throughout our region. A full list of recent accolades highlighting the Museum's sustainability include:

- *First Museum in the United States to earn LEED v4 BD+C NC Platinum Certification*
- *Prix Versailles | 2025 World's Most Beautiful Museums List*
- *Metropolis | 2025 Planet Positive Award in the Cultural Category*
- *Cleveland 2030 | District Green Building Challenge Overall Winner*
- *2025 American Architecture Award from the Chicago Athenaeum*
- *American Society of Landscape Architects | Merit Award (Smith Environmental Courtyard)**
- *Architectural Precast Association | Awards for Excellence (GFRC Category)**
- *NAIOP | 2024 Architectural Project & Interior Design Project of the Year*
- *Ohio Museums Association | 2024 Institution of the Year*
- *IIDA | Engage and Innovate Awards (Ohio–Kentucky Chapter)**



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In addition, Winner has been chosen as a YWCA 2026 Women of Achievement honoree. This annual award is presented to a select group of Northeast Ohio women who have achieved extraordinary accomplishments in their careers and community service. The honorees represent organizations across Northeast Ohio that are committed to the betterment and progress of women and girls in our community.

Winner's leadership at the Museum has both helped to elevate women leaders and scientists within the organization and to encourage girls and women in the community to pursue STEM careers. During her tenure, endowed chairs have been created for two of its women scientists—the first endowed chairs in more than two decades—and these scientists frequently engage with the community, serving as an example to others.

Winner became the 10th director of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in July 2018. In this role, she partners with a nearly 40-member Board of Directors and nearly 140 staff members to advance the mission of the organization. Through the Museum's transformation project and the \$150 million *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign, Winner has spearheaded a complete reimagining of the Museum's campus and exhibits in a way that highlights the interconnectedness of all life on Earth. This pioneering reinvention serves as a new model for natural history museums globally.

Thanks to Winner's leadership, the Museum not only reflects its mission to connect people with science and nature but also serves as a regional and national example of sustainability, innovation, and environmental stewardship.

About the Cleveland Museum of Natural History

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History illuminates the world around us and inspires visitors to engage with the natural forces that shape their lives. Since its founding in 1920, the Museum has pioneered scientific research to advance knowledge across diverse fields of study and used its outstanding collections, which encompass millions of artifacts and specimens, to deepen the public's understanding of the dynamic connections between humans and nature. Through its Natural Areas Program, the Museum stewards more than 12,500 acres of protected ecosystems across northern Ohio. A community gathering place, educational center, and research institution, the Museum is a vital resource that serves Cleveland and the nation. For more information, visit [CMNH.org](https://cmnh.org).



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