



Press Release

National Genealogical Society to Acquire Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh

RICHMOND, VA, 31 MAY 2023—The [National Genealogical Society](#) (NGS) and the partners of the [Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh](#) (GRIP), LLC, a Pennsylvania limited liability company, today announced an agreement for NGS to acquire GRIP's assets and take over management of the institute as of 1 October 2023.

GRIP, LLC, co-owned by Elissa Scalise Powell, CG, and Deborah Lichtner Deal, is a leading provider of in-depth genealogical education. The co-directors have decided to step back after managing the institute for twelve years. "We are so proud of Elissa and Debbie's work to build GRIP into a top genealogical education provider," said President Kathryn M. Doyle. "We are pleased they chose NGS to steward GRIP into the future."

Powell and Deal founded GRIP in 2011. The institute has hosted almost 5000 students in more than 170 courses since the first institute was held at LaRoche College (now University) in 2012. Powell and Deal will remain involved, serving as ambassadors and on the GRIP steering committee, but will give up day-to-day operations.

GRIP will continue providing in-depth genealogy education in-person and virtually under NGS's stewardship. GRIP will be positioned in NGS's education department and report to NGS Education Director Angela McGhie, CG, FUGA. NGS members will receive discounts on GRIP registrations.

"GRIP has always provided a friendly atmosphere where students and faculty alike feel supported in their educational goals," said Powell. "With NGS' education mission, this tradition will continue and is a natural fit. Debbie and I look forward to our continued involvement with NGS and will finally be able to be students in the wonderful GRIP courses." According to Deal, "NGS is an excellent organization that prides itself in providing quality education. We are confident they will continue our mission and support students and faculty in education."

“Genealogy institutes are important to those ready for in-depth study of genealogy topics,” said McGhie, who has taught at GRIP and other genealogy institutes for years. “This acquisition will help NGS serve the educational needs of many in the genealogical community.”

“The institute setting is an amazing way to advance a learner’s knowledge and skills,” said Matt Menashes, CAE, executive director of NGS. “By bringing family historians together, GRIP significantly advances student learning through collaboration and shared problem-solving. It will be great to collaborate with the coordinators and instructors to build on the great learning experience at GRIP.”

“We look forward to working with Debbie and Elissa over the coming years to ensure GRIP remains a vital part of the genealogy education world,” said Doyle. “As a GRIP attendee myself, I am so happy that NGS can support additional learning opportunities through the institute model.”

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Founded in 1903, the [National Genealogical Society](#) inspires, connects, and leads the family history community by fostering collaboration and best practices in advocacy, education, preservation, and research. We enable people, cultures, and organizations to discover the past and create a lasting legacy. The Falls Church, Virginia, based nonprofit is the premier national society for everyone, from the beginner to the most advanced family historian.

Elissa Scalise Powell, CG, and Deborah Lichtner Deal began GRIP’s formation in 2011, and the first institute was held in July 2012. Elissa is an experienced institute educator, and Debbie ran a week-long genealogical workshop week at the Ohio Genealogical Society Library. GRIP is typically held in person at LaRoche University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but expanded online during the pandemic. The 2023 institute is 18-23 June (virtual) and 9-14 July (LaRoche University).