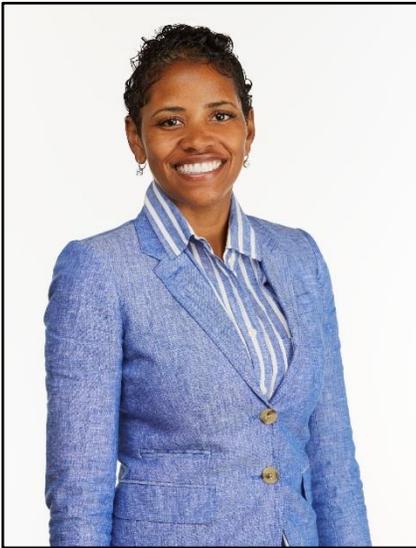




**Darrienne Christian Elected as New Chair of Board of Trustees  
at Newfields' 138<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Last Night**  
*New Trustees and Governors Significantly Increase Diversity at the Board Level*

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**, May 20, 2021—At last night's 138<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Newfields' trustees elected Darrienne Christian as the new chair of the Board of Trustees, and also elected a slate of new board members that significantly increases diversity at the institution's highest level.



Christian is the first Black woman to lead Newfields and among the first to lead a major art museum and culture institution in the United States. She has been the driving force behind Newfields' work to transform itself into an empathetic, multicultural and anti-racist institution. Christian, a technology business owner, community volunteer and philanthropist, along with her husband was the visionary and lead benefactor for the creation of DePauw University's [\*Justin and Darrienne Christian Center for Diversity and Inclusion\*](#), which opened in 2017.

Christian takes over for outgoing Board of Trustees Chair, Katie Betley. During Betley's tenure the Newfields team and Board has had many accomplishments, including the formation of Newfields' Board of Governors in 2018, the launch of several Newfields masterplan projects and fiscal sustainability that enabled Newfields to maintain full employment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition to naming Christian as Chair, the Board of Trustees also elected a slate of new members that increases the proportion of trustees with diverse backgrounds from 8 percent to nearly 25 percent. The new trustees have deep ties to communities across Indianapolis and many of them will contribute directly to Newfields' acquiring new works of art from underrepresented artists.

Meeting attendees received a report on Newfields' programming and activities over the last year during the pandemic and an update on the organization's progress in implementing the comprehensive Action Plan announced in March, reflecting its commitment to become a more accessible, inclusive, organization.

"I can see and feel the change beginning at Newfields. It's coming from our community, our employees, and from leaders bringing in new perspectives. This is a wonderful institution, and I want every person, regardless of who they are or where they live, to not just feel welcome here, but to see themselves reflected in what Newfields offers. We can do better and I will work every day to make this the community anchor Indianapolis deserves," said **incoming Board of Trustees Chair, Darrienne Christian**.

"I am so proud of what we've been able to achieve these past three years, how Newfields has weathered challenging times. We are reaching record numbers of visitors and our offerings have never been more dynamic, creative or engaging," said outgoing **Board of Trustees Chair, Katie Betley**. "I've watched Darrienne pour her heart and soul into making Newfields a truly diverse and inclusive institution. She has had my support with every step, and I look forward to championing and celebrating that work in every way I can."

"Darrienne has been a remarkable leader not only here at Newfields, but in our wider community. Her drive, her energy and her values make her the best fit for this role at Newfields. We are so thrilled to welcome her as our newest Chair," said **Newfields CFO and Interim President, Jerry Wise**. "On behalf of the entire Newfields family, I want to extend

our deepest thanks to Katie for her remarkable tenure and for her steadfast leadership over the past tumultuous year. She has the admiration and respect of people from every level of this organization.”

Other highlights from last night’s meeting include:

The appointment of new Board of Trustee Members:

- **Gary Butkus**, Senior Director of Medical Affairs at Eli Lilly and Company and immediate past president of the Newfields’ Board of Governors
- **Nora McKinney Hiatt**, co-chair of *Newfields: The Campaign* and an active Community Volunteer
- **Dr. Sean L. Huddleston**, chair of Newfields’ new Community Advisory Committee and President of Martin University
- **Samuel Levi Jones**, a photographer and multidisciplinary artist who debuted his solo show *Samuel Levi Jones: Left of Center* at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields in 2019
- **Stephanie Kim**, a telecommunications executive at Telamon Corporation and a former member of the Newfields’ Board of Governors
- **Alan Mills**, a Partner at the law firm Barnes & Thornburg and long-time supporter of the arts
- **Jason Noyan**, an executive at J.P. Morgan Private Bank who will serve as a Newfields Trustee and Vice Chair of the Newfields’ Board of Governors concurrently
- **Rosie Steinmetz, PhD**, an active member of Newfields currently serving on the Garden and Park Committee as well as the Donor Society Advisory Committee

The appointment of new Board of Governor members:

- **Dawn K. Batson, PhD**, a creative professional with over 20 years of experience in multi-cultural education and arts administration
- **Andrew T. Bridge, MD**, a practicing dermatologist and dermatopathologist, an Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at Marian University College of Medicine, and an avid art and wine enthusiast
- **Andre Franklin**, serves as Senior Manager leading the Business Systems and Analysis team for Covance Central Labs
- **Justin "JR" Kelly**, a Retail Industry Strategist at Salesforce
- **Robert Scheele**, an artist at heart whose Wealth Management team at Merrill Lynch works with institutional and individual clients across the country

In addition to fostering greater diversity on its Boards, Newfields has made significant progress on many of the other priorities identified in its March Action Plan to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) across the institution, including:

- **Free First Thursdays**—Newfields held the first two all-day Free First Thursdays in April and May, and with increased community promotion, saw attendance on those days of nearly 2,000 guests.
- **Listening Hours**—Newfields Board of Trustees and Board of Governors launched their first Listening Hours sessions on the grounds, timed to coincide with Free First Thursdays, where members of the community can directly raise questions, propose ideas, and build a personal connection with the institution’s leadership.
- **Community Advisory Committee**—Dr. Sean L. Huddleston, the new committee’s chair, shared an update on his work to form the committee, and sought feedback from, all Newfields staff on May 7. The committee’s first meeting is planned for June. Members will come from a diverse range of community organizations and businesses and also include artists and staff.
- **More Inclusive Programming**—Newfields expanded *Spring Blooms* programming with a weekend event for community partner organizations including Ivy Tech Community College, The MLK Center, The Villages of Indiana, and IU School of Medicine. The annual *Art in Bloom* exhibition was expanded to a weekend-long event featuring works by more floral designers from across the country and new experiential programming.
- **THE LUME: Indianapolis**— Every element of the *THE LUME*’s operation and programming will reflect Newfields’ commitment to its DEIA goals. Among many efforts underway, and in addition to the 10,000 complimentary tickets that will be distributed annually through community partners, Newfields is focused on the following initiatives:

- Exploring the creation of an employment program to fill nearly three-dozen permanent jobs at THE LUME in collaboration with new and existing partners.
  - Formalizing a procurement policy that prioritizes XBE businesses.
  - Planning the design of integrated arts and technology curricula, as well as other educational programming for students.
  - Expanding access to *THE LUME* by adding complimentary, year-round admission to the benefits of the Neighborhood Pass and the designation of complimentary preview days and community nights for partner organizations.
  - Defining the program and timeline for *THE LUME* Artist Award Competition. Launching in 2022, the award will recognize local digital artists from historically marginalized groups with a cash prize and a featurette dedicated to an exhibition of their work.
- **Guest Speaker Series**—Newfields has developed a guest speaker series to foster ongoing dialog about DEIA, featuring scholars and experts from the arts and culture industry. Open to leadership and staff alike, the first event in this series is currently planned for July.
  - **Anti-Racism Training**—50% of the Board of Trustees has completed extensive anti-racism training with the Racial Equity Institute (REI) and the remainder are enrolled in REI’s late May and June sessions.
  - **Customized DEIA Training**—Newfields’ expert partner, PINK Consulting, is completing an assessment of the museum’s DEIA training needs and expects to launch a customized training program for all staff, boards, leadership, docents and volunteers by late summer. Approximately 85% of staff have provided input to PINK’s assessment which has been shared with Newfields leadership.

To learn more, please visit [www.discovernewfields.org/together](http://www.discovernewfields.org/together). Newfields launched this page in March to share DEIA progress and to provide the community an opportunity to share their feedback directly with leadership.

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### **About Newfields**

Newfields offers dynamic experiences with art and nature for guests of all ages. The 152-acre cultural campus features art galleries, lush gardens, a historic mansion, performance spaces, a nature preserve and sculpture park. From inspiring exhibitions in the Indianapolis Museum of Art Galleries, to concerts in The Toby, to a stroll through The Garden with a glass of cheer, guests are invited to interact with art and nature in exciting new ways. Newfields is home to the Indianapolis Museum of Art, among the ten largest and oldest general art museums in the nation; the Lilly House, a National Historic Landmark; The Garden, featuring 40 acres of contemporary and historic gardens, a working greenhouse and an orchard; and The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park, one of the largest art and nature parks in the country. The Newfields campus extends outside of Indianapolis with Miller House and Garden in Columbus, IN.—one of the nation’s most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist architecture. For more information visit [DiscoverNewfields.org](http://DiscoverNewfields.org).

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