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Images available upon request.

Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette Appointed as Newfields' President & Chief Executive Officer

Mission-driven leader and renowned changemaker will shepherd equitable transformation for Indianapolis' premier destination for nature and the arts



Indianapolis, IN, May 17, 2022—Newfields, Indianapolis' premier destination for dynamic arts, culture, and nature, announced its Board of Trustees has confirmed Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette as the institution's new [President & Chief Executive Officer](#). The new CEO's role will officially begin on August 1, 2022.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Burnette's remarkable career spans engineering, information technology, public service, and more than two decades in education. Her track record is one of moving organizations forward in big, bold and lasting ways.

Today she is a dynamic leader in the world of higher education as President of Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas. During her tenure as President of the historically Black college, Dr. Burnette achieved significant growth in the university's endowment, the launch of pioneering new academic programs, and innovative new partnerships with companies ranging from Apple, Indeed, Texas Parks & Wildlife, and Merck. She was named the 2021 Austinite of the Year by the city's

Chamber of Commerce for her commitment to education and her work as co-chair for the Mayor's Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities. Her other active board memberships include Leadership Austin, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, and the Austin Community Foundation.

A leader with significant experience in community engagement, Dr. Burnette is well-positioned to lead and deepen the transformation already underway at Newfields.

"I've seen the nurturing and transformative power of cherished institutions like Newfields. I am thrilled to become part of a team driven to meet Newfields' mission of enriching lives purposefully and intentionally through exceptional experiences with art and nature," said incoming President & CEO Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette. "I believe strongly in service, and I am excited to lead Newfields at this unique moment to make it a place every person in Indianapolis and beyond is excited to visit, and every team member is proud to work."

"Our Search Committee looked at leaders across the entire country, and Dr. Burnette was a clear standout amongst an impressive slate. Her extensive professional achievements reflect her ability to deliver on her passion to innovate and advance the arts, education and green spaces. She is lauded by her staff, peers and the communities she served for being a humble leader with an immense amount of respect and empathy for everyone she encounters. Her legacy has been to elevate the beloved institutions she's led into stronger more inclusive organizations that others seek to emulate.

We are absolutely delighted to bring her leadership to Newfields," said the Chair of Newfields' Board of Trustees, Darrienne Christian.

"On behalf of the Board, I also want to extend our deepest appreciation to our Interim CEO Jerry Wise, who has been a dedicated steward of Newfields throughout this transition. Jerry and the entire senior team have our gratitude," added Christian.

Dr. Burnette's selection is the culmination of a national search that considered more than 230 talented applicants. The hiring process was shaped by input from every staffing level and every department at Newfields.

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 home, performance spaces, a nature preserve and sculpture park. From inspiring exhibitions in the IMA Galleries, to concerts in The Toby, to a stroll through The Garden with a glass of something cold, 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 ten 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, Ind.—one of the nation's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist architecture. For more information, visit DiscoverNewfields.org.

Media Contacts:

Mattie Wethington
Director of Communication
317-923-1331 ext. 265
mwethington@discovernewfields.org

Natalya Herndon
Public Relations Coordinator
317-923-1331 ext. 155
nherndon@discovernewfields.org