



Peggy Zone Fisher to Retire as Diversity Center President & CEO, Effective August 31, 2024

CLEVELAND – February 1, 2024 – The Board of Directors of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio announced today that Peggy Zone Fisher plans to step down as President & CEO of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio, effective August 31, 2024. She has served in the position since 2006.

“On behalf of our Board of Directors, Diversity Center employees, our community partners and our funders, I want to thank Peggy for her outstanding dedication and service for nearly two decades,” said Tracie Longpre, Board Chair of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio and Vice President – Supply Chain at Applied Industrial Technologies. “Under Peggy’s leadership, The Diversity Center has become a leading organization in Ohio focused on promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, and combating bias, bigotry, racism and hatred. Her knowledge, reputation and long-standing relationships in our community, both local and nationally, have helped us achieve our stellar reputation.”

Cip Beredo, past Diversity Center Board Chair and Partner at Squire Patton Boggs, noted, “Peggy leaves a remarkable legacy. Her 18 years of service have been marked by many successes and achievements that have put us in a solid position with strong programs and partnerships. A true champion of diversity, equity and inclusion, Peggy shines as a beacon of resilience and compassion.”

“My years at The Diversity Center have been the most fulfilling of my career and the honor of a lifetime,” said Zone Fisher. “I will be forever grateful to our talented staff, dedicated Board of Directors, generous supporters and steadfast community partners. The work we have done together is important, and I believe it will have a lasting, positive impact on our community.”

Board Chair Longpre continued, “I am grateful that Peggy is giving us the time and personal commitment to help make a smooth and successful transition.” Longpre noted that the Board is launching a [national] search for Zone Fisher’s successor immediately and has retained the firm of Ratliff & Taylor to help lead the Board’s executive search process.

During her tenure, Zone Fisher led the Center’s fundraising efforts through The Diversity Center’s two signature annual events, the Humanitarian Award Celebration

Dinner and the Walk, Rock, Roll & Run, and other major gifts and grants – all of which combined to raise more than \$16 million for programs and services since 2006.

Under her leadership, The Diversity Center:

- Became established as a new independent nonprofit organization based in Northeast Ohio, instead of being a local chapter of the National Conference of Community and Justice (NCCJ).
- Expanded its reach to 11 Northeast Ohio counties, serving over 7,000 students, educators and professionals each year.
- Established *SHIFT* Consulting, the professional services division of The Diversity Center, which focuses on providing diversity, equity and inclusion training to businesses, schools and nonprofit organizations.
- Expanded the acclaimed LeadDIVERSITY young professional program nationally by licensing the program to nonprofit organizations in other cities.
- Remained active and impactful during the COVID-19 crisis, which was an exceedingly challenging time for community-based nonprofit and volunteer organizations.

Among Zone Fisher's many honors are *Crain's Cleveland Business* Notable Executive in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; the Richard W. Pogue Award for Excellence in Community Leadership and Engagement from the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Foundation; the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award; the Distinguished Leadership Award from the American Jewish Committee; and the Progressive Woman Award from *Smart Business Magazine*. She was a delegate to the first-ever White House Conference on AIDS and was honored by the AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland for her more than a decade of leadership on AIDS issues. She serves as Vice Chair of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority Board of Directors.

Peggy Zone Fisher is a graduate of The Ohio State University. A Cleveland native, she is the daughter of Michael and Mary Zone (both deceased), who served on Cleveland's City Council for a total of 21 years, and brother of Matthew Zone, who served for 20 years on Cleveland City Council. She is married to Lee Fisher, Dean of the Cleveland State University College of Law, and former Ohio Attorney General and Lt. Governor. They have two children, Jessica and Jason (wife Katelyn), and two grandchildren, Violet and Dylan.

About The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio

Founded in 1927 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio works to eliminate bias, bigotry and racism. The Diversity Center promotes understanding and respect on matters of race, age, religion, sex, ethnicity, culture, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status through its award-winning programs and services in 11 Northeast Ohio counties.

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