



## **The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio Appoints Mark Swaim-Fox President & CEO, Effective September 1, 2024**

CLEVELAND – June 26, 2024 – The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio (DCNEO) today announced the appointment of Mark Swaim-Fox as the new President & CEO of The Diversity Center, effective September 1, 2024. The announcement was made jointly by DCNEO Board Chair Tracie Longpre and current President & CEO Peggy Zone Fisher, who is retiring this summer after serving in this position since 2006.

Swaim-Fox is joining The Diversity Center after 18 years as Executive Director of the Cleveland chapter of Facing History & Ourselves. Facing History & Ourselves is a national nonprofit organization that uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate.

“Mark Swaim-Fox is an accomplished and committed leader of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, and we are thrilled he has accepted the opportunity to become President & CEO of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio,” said Tracie Longpre, DCNEO Board Chair and Vice President – Supply Chain at Applied Industrial Technologies. “His enthusiasm for this work is palpable. Mark’s energy and drive to influence policy and practice, along with his experience in team development, strategic planning and building collaborative relationships, will be key assets in his new role.”

Peggy Zone Fisher said, “It has been the honor of a lifetime to serve in this position for 18 years, and I am delighted that Mark has been chosen as our new leader. Mark and I have worked together on several projects, and I have seen over the years his passion and commitment to the Diversity Center’s mission. I am confident that Mark, with the support of the DCNEO team, the Board, our partners and the community as a whole, will continue to move The Diversity Center forward and further its lasting, positive impact on our community.”

In February 2024, The Diversity Center announced Zone Fisher’s plans to retire effective, August 31, 2024, and the Board initiated a nationwide search, with support from Ratliff & Taylor, for her successor. Swaim-Fox and Zone Fisher will work together to ensure a smooth leadership transition.

Swaim-Fox has been the Cleveland Executive Director of Facing History & Ourselves since 2006. In his current position, he has been responsible for strategic planning, programming strategy, external relationship-building, fundraising and team development. He joined the organization as a Program Associate in 2001 and was later promoted to Program Director. Before that, he was Dean of Students for Hathaway Brown School. He also has experience as a faculty leader, history teacher and special education teacher. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Miami (Ohio) University and received his post-bachelor secondary education teacher certification from Ohio Wesleyan University.

In addition to his current full-time position with Facing History & Ourselves, Swaim-Fox is the Chairperson of the Ohio Holocaust and Genocide Memorial and Education Commission, which consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor.

Swaim-Fox said, “The Diversity Center has a distinguished legacy of service and impact, and I am committed to continuing to build on that. I am a purpose-driven professional who appreciates the importance of building strong partnerships and bringing diverse stakeholders together. Peggy Zone Fisher is a legend for her empathy and ability to connect with a wide variety of people, and I am honored to have the opportunity to follow her as the organization’s new servant leader.”

Diversity Center Board member and Search Committee member Robyn Minter Smyers, a Partner and Executive Committee member at Thompson Hine, said, “We conducted a national search to find the best person to lead The Diversity Center. Mark has all the credentials and experience we were hoping to find, as well as strong local relationships and a long-term commitment to the Cleveland area. Mark views his work as a calling, not just a job, which is the mindset that Peggy brought to this role and that the Diversity Center continues to need to fulfill its mission.”

“I have known Mark for more than 15 years, and I have found him to be an empathetic servant leader who has dedicated much of his career to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives,” said Thomas W. Adler, who served as a Diversity Center Board Director for about 15 years, was on the Search Committee and is currently a Life Director. “Mark is exactly the right person to continue to build the relationships and awareness that will take The Diversity Center to the next level of impact for our community.”

In recent years, The Diversity Center has:

- 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.
- Continued to sponsor its two signature annual fundraising and stakeholder engagement events: the Humanitarian Award Celebration Dinner and the Walk, Rock, Roll & Run diversity celebration.

### **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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**Media contact:**

Lauren Davis  
Dix & Eaton  
[ldavis@dix-eaton.com](mailto:ldavis@dix-eaton.com)  
440-667-7602