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**Columbus Botanical Garden Selects National Garden Expert for Top Post**

*Long-serving Duke Gardens Curator Stefan Bloodworth Named CBG Executive Director*

**Columbus, Ga., July 13, 2018** – To fulfill its strategic vision and realize its Ten-Year Master Plan, Columbus Botanical Garden’s Board of Directors proudly announces the selection of Stefan Bloodworth as its new Executive Director. Citing his depth and breadth of knowledge, Bloodworth was selected after an extensive national search. The Board-appointed search committee worked tirelessly since January to find a leader who could shepherd the Garden to realize its full potential. Bloodworth will assume the post October 1.

A North Carolina native and graduate of NC State University with a Bachelor of Arts in English and graduate studies in Forest Ecology, Mr. Bloodworth has enjoyed a stellar career working in landscape design but most notably produced award-winning impact as the senior curator at one of the nation’s top ten public gardens, Sara P. Duke Gardens at Duke University.

Jenny Adams, Chair of the CBG Executive Director Search Committee and current Board Member, commented on the process which culminated in his selection, “The search committee, comprised of current and former board members, undertook a nationwide search to find the Garden’s next executive director. We hoped to find someone with both a passion for horticulture as well as an understanding of the value that a botanical garden can bring to a community. We received many applications and resumes, but Stefan’s depth and breadth of experience shone above other applicants.” She continued, “Furthermore, Stefan’s desire to achieve goals through collaboration impressed both the committee and the full board of directors. We are confident that Stefan will forge new relationships to build the Garden’s visibility and impact within our community.”

Forging relationships is one of many things Bloodworth does exceptionally well according to his colleagues at Duke Gardens.

Duke Gardens Executive Director, Bill LeFevre said, “Stefan Bloodworth arrived at Sarah P. Duke Gardens at Duke University in 2002 as the third curator of the Blomquist Garden of Native Plants, and his tenure has been the longest and most productive in the Blomquist Garden’s 50-year history. Stefan created major additions to the Blomquist including the Steve Church Endangered Species Garden and the Piedmont Prairie, recently awarded North Carolina’s prestigious Golden Leaf Award. Most recently he forged a conservation partnership with the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance and the Atlanta Botanical Garden to conserve germplasm of the critically endangered *Torreya taxifolia*, or Florida nutmeg.”

LeFevre, also national president of American Public Gardens Association, added, “It has been a pleasure to witness the growth of the Blomquist Garden and its role in native plant conservation under Stefan’s leadership. On behalf of the board and staff of Duke Gardens, I thank him for a job well done and wish him well in his exciting new leadership role at the Columbus Botanical Garden.”

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## Columbus Botanical Garden

### *PRESS RELEASE*

Commenting on his selection for this top post, Stefan Bloodworth said, “The opportunity to be the executive director of the Columbus Botanical Garden is truly a dream come true. It is a chance to bring all the skills I’ve honed over two decades of landscape design and garden management to a place blessed by great folks with an undeniable passion for building a truly special botanical garden. Together we’re going to do great things!”

CBG Board Chairman Debbie Lane echoed other’s enthusiastic sentiments, “The community will be just as excited as we are at The Garden when they have a chance to meet and interact with Stefan. He has accomplished tremendous success over his career, and he is bringing all that experience, knowledge and creativity to The Columbus Botanical Garden. His passion is contagious, and his knowledge about how to bring our Master Plan to reality is invigorating. The Master Plan for The Garden is designed to meet a variety of needs for our community and for all ages.”

Lane continued, “Every day, the Garden is becoming an even more beautiful venue perfect for family gatherings, weddings, Sunday afternoon strolls, entertainment, education and community events. I can’t wait for Stefan and his family to arrive in Columbus, as he will be an asset not only to The Garden, but to the leadership of the community. We are very fortunate that Stefan will be leading us into a promising and exciting future.”

#### **About Columbus Botanical Garden**

Nestled in North Columbus amid shopping and eateries, Columbus Botanical Garden operates as a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to develop gardens, protect woodland, and provide educational programs that stimulate the imagination and deepen our understanding and appreciation of nature. This preserved jewel of pine and hardwood forest is a remnant reminder of the native Central Georgia landscape that is becoming more scarce as the region continues to develop. Since its founding in 1999 with a gift of acreage and buildings from the children and families of Lillie Belle Kimbrough Adams and later approved by the Columbus City Council, Columbus Botanical Garden (CBG) has been the steward of a 23-acre rolling property located about 6 miles northeast of downtown Columbus. With its recent expansion to 36 acres, CBG now encompasses four developed acres, with exciting plans for tremendous development over the next three years as a result of its current \$10 million *Growing Towards Greatness* Campaign.

For more information on how you can participate in programming, volunteer or donate, please visit [www.columbusbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.columbusbotanicalgarden.org), follow us on Instagram @Columbus\_Botanical\_Garden, like us on FaceBook at [www.facebook.com/columbusbotanicalgarden](http://www.facebook.com/columbusbotanicalgarden), contact our offices at 706.327.8400, email us at [contactus@columbusbotanicalgarden.org](mailto:contactus@columbusbotanicalgarden.org) or visit our offices at 3603 Weems Road, Columbus, Ga. 31909.

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