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Memphis Botanic Garden Executive Director to Retire in 2024

Memphis, TN — The Memphis Botanic Garden (MBG) today announced Executive Director Michael Allen will retire from the Garden and full time work effective June 30, 2024. In his role as Executive Director, he has served the Garden with both tenacity and grace and will leave a lasting impact that will be enjoyed by many generations to come.

“As Board President of the Memphis Botanic Garden, I commend Executive Director Michael Allen for seven years of transformative leadership. His dedication and vision have elevated the Garden through successful campaigns, increased visitorship, and financial resilience,” said David Scully, MBG Board President. “Michael's legacy is one of innovation and growth, leaving the Garden stronger than ever. As he retires, we express deep gratitude and confidence in our future. We look forward to building upon his legacy and continuing our mission.”

“Michael's leadership and vision have enabled the Garden to reach new heights,” said Janet Misner, MBG Board President 2016-17. “He brought a whole new approach to team building among the staff, our donors, and community partners. He quietly and determinedly raised millions for the Garden and oversaw a dramatic upgrade to our entire campus. His desire to be challenged and stay busy has benefitted us all. He has been a joy to work with, and we are all the better for having him with us for seven years.”

Michael Allen came to MBG on January 1, 2017, after a 25-year career with International Paper and six years as CEO of Catholic Charities of West Tennessee. During his tenure at the Garden, Allen undertook two successful capital campaigns, *Nourish GreenPrint: 2020* and *Rooted at Park and Cherry*, which raised over \$12M to complete a dramatic modernization of the campus. Under Allen's leadership, the Garden also experienced a significant increase in visitors, the introduction of large-scale seasonal outdoor exhibitions, including the blockbuster *Alice's Adventures at the Garden*, and the expansion of earned revenue avenues over the past seven years. Moreover, Allen is leaving the Garden in a significantly stronger financial position than when he started including the tripling of its financial reserves.

"It has been a lightning fast seven plus years here at the Garden, and it has truly been the perfect 'final act' to my career. I have been fortunate to have been surrounded by a passionate, talented, dedicated, team of professionals in every aspect of Garden operations, and I've equally been blessed to work with a supportive and encouraging Board of Directors who gave me the leeway to take some chances and try new things. I will miss working with all of these folks," said Michael Allen. "I leave confident in the Garden's future, knowing that we have a well-formulated transition plan in place and prepared to do my part to help execute that plan."

Memphis Botanic Garden has engaged Kittleman & Associates to conduct a search for its new Executive Director. Kittleman is a national executive search firm that specializes in the recruitment of CEOs for tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, public charities and philanthropic organizations. For more information, visit www.kittlemansearch.com.

About Memphis Botanic Garden

The Memphis Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to being an exemplary center for horticulture and environmental enrichment. Serving over 40,000 school-aged children annually, and hosting 260,000 visitors each year, Memphis Botanic Garden strives to enhance lives by connecting people with nature, increasing awareness and appreciation of our environment.

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