



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 2018

CONTACT:

Jennifer Wilson
Director of Marketing and Communications
Office: 614-715-8150
Cell: 740-398-8371
jwilson@fpconservatory.org

**FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY CELEBRATES CLOSE OF
FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN, NAMES NEW VICE PRESIDENT OF
PHILANTHROPY**

Columbus, OH – On the evening of November 8, Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens celebrated the close of its Master Plan 2.0 Fundraising Campaign and said “thank you” in style with an Academy Awards themed event.

Through the community’s generous philanthropic support the Conservatory was able to expand its cultural and programmatic offerings for Columbus, Franklin County and visitors beyond central Ohio. In May, the Conservatory opened a world class Children’s Garden where over 11,000 children and their family members have already experienced the arts and educational programming offered in this new green space. An historic Ohio barn, The Wells Barn, was preserved and redesigned to accommodate community programming and events. The campaign also allowed the Conservatory to expand the visitor experience through nationally recognized exhibitions such as Chihuly and the James Turrell light display, Light Raiment II, which illuminates the John F. Wolfe Palm House every evening from dusk until dawn. These improvements elevated the Conservatory’s visitor offerings but it also strengthened the organization financially and allowed for more community outreach and education opportunities.

The Conservatory’s vision is, a world that celebrates nature as essential to the human experience, meaning nature is essential for everyone. In this spirit, the Conservatory offers an extensive access plan, which makes the Conservatory accessible to the community. One example of this access is community members living in Franklin County and the City of Columbus are granted free admission to the Conservatory on the first Sunday of every month during the operating hours of 10am to 5pm.

“The Conservatory has enjoyed incredible growth and success through Master Plan 2.0 and it would not have been possible without the generous support of our many donors,” said Bruce Harkey, President and CEO of Franklin Park Conservatory. “As we take a moment to celebrate how far we’ve come, we continue to look ahead and begin planning a new Master Plan for a bright future.”

In addition to the festivities, the Conservatory also welcomes its new Vice President of Philanthropy, Gail Mahaffey.

Ms. Mahaffey most recently served as Chief Development Officer at Sinai Health System in Chicago, Illinois and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Conservatory. Gail’s previous positions include, Vice President of Development for Navy Pier, Inc., Executive Director of Institutional Advancement for Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Manager of Corporate and



Foundation Relations for Museum of Science and Industry, and Director of Development for COSI-Toledo.

Born a Buckeye, Ms. Mahaffey has strong family ties to Ohio and Columbus specifically. She is happy to be closer to family and eager to build on the Conservatory's success.

###

Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens offers botanical collections, art and nature-based exhibitions, plant shows, and educational programs for all ages. Situated in an 88-acre urban park, the Conservatory features the historic 1895 John F. Wolfe Palm House and 83,000 square feet of glasshouses, classrooms, and meeting and event spaces. The Conservatory owns a signature collection of glass artwork by Dale Chihuly. Light Raiment II, a permanent installation by internationally recognized light artist James Turrell, illuminates the John F. Wolfe Palm House every evening from dusk until dawn.