



For Immediate Release
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Rebecca Rice to Step Back at Metro Blooms; Laura Scholl to Serve as President and Executive Director

Minneapolis, MN — The Metro Blooms Board of Directors today announced that Rebecca Rice, the Metro Blooms President and Executive Director, has decided to step back to direct the organization’s Blue Thumb program effective May 9, 2022. Laura Scholl, the current Associate Director and Director of Fund Development, will assume the role of President and Executive Director.

Rice has served as the inaugural Executive Director of Metro Blooms since December 2007. She took on the role of President with the founding of Metro Blooms Design + Build in March 2021.

“It is an exciting time at Metro Blooms as our organization continues to grow,” Rice said. “In recent years, our Blue Thumb program has joined in partnership with the Board of Water and Soil Resources’ Lawns to Legumes program with the lofty goal of supporting a movement across Minnesota to protect pollinator populations. The rusty patched bumble bee and many pollinator populations are at risk unless we change the way we manage our landscapes. I am grateful to the Board and staff of Metro Blooms for giving me the opportunity to focus my time on helping to build this effort across our state.”

During Rice’s tenure as Executive Director, she played a critical role in leading Metro Blooms through significant growth and outreach as the organization has transitioned from a focus on community gardening to creating resilient landscapes, clean watersheds, and embracing the values of equity and inclusion to solve environmental challenges. In the process, she has served as a champion for establishing new partnerships that contribute significantly to our culture of resilient landscapes. In 2015 Rice and the Board facilitated Metro Blooms’ management of the Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water® program. In 2019 the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources selected Blue Thumb to manage the individual application process for their statewide Lawns to Legumes program. After many years of searching, in 2020 Rice advanced the organization’s purchase of a home for Metro Blooms in the Standish-Ericsson neighborhood of South Minneapolis. In 2021 Rice navigated the founding of Metro Blooms Design + Build, a for-profit wholly owned by the Metro Blooms non-profit, to focus on design, installation and maintenance services.

Under Rice’s leadership, the organization successfully pivoted to meet the restrictions and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, including expanded reach of our education programs and the restart of the Sustainable Landcare Training Program. During her tenure, Metro Blooms has received multiple awards for citizen engagement, environmental initiatives, environmental excellence, and work with neighborhoods throughout the Metro area. Rice’s legacy includes a team-based work culture, a commitment to community engagement and cultivating partnership-based work.

“Becky’s commitment to the mission of Metro Blooms, her championing of the expertise of Metro Blooms staff and their work, her vision for developing programs and relationships responsive to the needs of the environment and the communities within which we work, have been exemplary, as well as her command of complexity, devotion to our mission, and her belief and demonstrated ability to implement a community and partnership-based work model,” said Carol Kuechler, Chair of the Metro Blooms Board of Directors. “Becky has been a mentor to many, and her influence has made an indelible impact on professionals at the organization and on our mission work. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I want to express our deep gratitude to her for all she’s done for the growth and development of Metro Blooms and the advancement of our work to support social and environmental justice in service to our mission.”

Prior to being named President and Executive Director, Scholl served in a variety of leadership and program roles at Metro Blooms, most recently as Associate Director and Director of Fund Development.

“I look forward to continue working closely with Laura as we build on our work and implement our new strategic plan,” Kuechler said.

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