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The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Appoints Andrea L. Taylor President and CEO



August 14, 2015. The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Andrea L. Taylor as President and CEO effective September 8, 2015. Most recently, Taylor served as Director of Citizenship and Public Affairs, North America for the Microsoft Corporation, where she managed employee engagement and giving and strategic partnerships in the U.S. and Canada with donors, government entities and community-based organizations. Additionally, she was also instrumental in the creation and implementation of the Elevate America and Elevate America Veterans technology training programs as well as YouthSpark, an initiative providing education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for 300 million youth worldwide.

Prior to her tenure at Microsoft, she created and led global and national grant programs for the Ford Foundation and the Benton Foundation. She is also a former trustee of the Cleveland Foundation, the Council on Foundations, the Donors Forum of Ohio, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, the Ms. Foundation for Women and Philanthropy Northwest.

“Andrea is a gifted leader with a long and distinguished career around purpose and impact,” said Doug Jones, Co-chair of The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Search Committee. “She is an extraordinary leader at an extraordinary inflection point for the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.” Current BCRI Board Chair Lajuana Bradford added, “We are fortunate to have found a leader of her caliber for the Institute to build on and advance the work and accomplishments of Dr. Lawrence J. Pijaux, Jr., and Interim President and CEO Priscilla Hancock Cooper, and the deeply committed staff of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.”

A Massachusetts native, Taylor completed post-graduate work in International Affairs at New York University and holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Journalism from Boston University, where she’s a trustee. She also serves on the board of The HistoryMakers, the nation’s largest African American Video Oral History Collection.

“The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute is among the world's most iconic and important civil and human rights organizations,” said Taylor. “I’m both excited and humbled by the opportunity to lead the next phase as we approach the 25th anniversary. Inclusive outreach worldwide is vital and in 2015 and beyond, I’m eager to harness and leverage technology to engage broader audiences.” She continued, “Every generation in society grapples with civil and human rights as a critical community priority. I deeply believe that the lessons of struggle, reconciliation and progress in Birmingham can serve as a guide for the future, inspiring people to strive for and achieve peaceful and productive solutions to their differences.’

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding and appreciation for the significance of civil rights developments in Birmingham with an increasing emphasis on the international struggle for universal human rights. BCRI is a “living institution” that views the lessons of the past as crucial to understanding our heritage and defining our future. Since opening its doors in 1992, BCRI has been visited by more than 2 million people from all 50 states and around the world. Visitors include adults, school children and students, families, researchers, and scholars.

Each year, BCRI reaches more than 140,000 individuals through teacher education (including curriculum development and teacher training), group tours, outreach programs (school and community), award-winning after-school and public programs, exhibitions and extensive archival collections. BCRI encourages visitors to examine basic issues of morality, law, justice and responsible citizenship. It also teaches that silence and indifference to the suffering of others can only perpetuate social problems and divisions.

(For more information about the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and its programs, please call [205-328-9696](tel:205-328-9696) or visit the BCRI website at www.bcri.org)

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