



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Huntsville Botanical Garden Announces New CEO

Nationwide search brings Sue Wagner to Huntsville

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (September 3, 2019) - The board of directors of Huntsville Botanical Garden is pleased to announce that Sue Wagner has been named Chief Executive Officer. Wagner's selection follows the retirement of Paula Steigerwald who announced her intentions in February after serving as president and CEO for the past 17 years. Wagner's appointment comes as the result of a six-month nationwide search conducted by a community stakeholder search committee with the assistance of Kittleman and Associates, a national executive recruiting firm specializing in non-profit organizations. Wagner will begin her role as CEO October 1, 2019.

"After an exhaustive, nationwide search and reviewing a strong pool of candidates, the search committee is excited to have selected a world class executive who can build on the Huntsville Botanical Garden's strong success and take it to even greater heights in the future," said Search Committee Chairman Gary Bolton. "Paula Steigerwald has been a tremendous gift to our community and we are thrilled to find someone with Sue's creativity, experience and passion to shepherd the Garden into a new era."

"I am excited to join the team at the Huntsville Botanical Garden," said Wagner. "I am honored to steward this magnificent garden along with the community of supporters to build upon a firm foundation for future success. I look forward to working with the staff, board and volunteers to achieve great things moving forward."

Wagner comes to the garden from The Morton Arboretum, a 1,700-acre botanical garden 25 miles west of Chicago in Lisle, Illinois, where she served as vice president for education and information for the past decade. She brings extensive experience in leading public engagement initiatives that inspired people to connect with trees and nature, and supported organizational growth and sustainability. Prior to joining the Morton Arboretum, Wagner served as vice president for exhibits and programs for the Adler Planetarium in Chicago where she renovated

school and teacher programs and led the master plan for exhibition and planetarium dome show production. She began her career as an educator, teaching K-8 science, math and language arts with an emphasis on problem-based learning. During that time, she was awarded the National Science Foundation's Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching.

"Paula did a wonderful job of making the Garden an attraction that not only Huntsville, but the entire state can be proud of," said Garden Board Chair Penny Billings. "We thank the search committee on its tireless efforts and congratulate them on finding the perfect person to carry the torch forward – Sue Wagner. "

### **About the Huntsville Botanical Garden**

The Huntsville Botanical Garden, located at 4747 Bob Wallace Avenue in Huntsville, AL, is open year-round and features the nation's largest open-air butterfly house, stunning venues for events, a picture-perfect aquatic garden, spectacular nature trails, numerous specialty gardens – including an interactive children's garden – and a variety of plant collections. This beautiful 112-acre Garden is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization run by 70 full-time equivalent employees and over 3,300 active volunteers. With five distinct festivals each year – Beaks and Barks, Huntsville Blooms, Butterfly House and Nature Center, FestiFall, and Galaxy of Lights – you'll soon see why we say, "There's always something growing on at Huntsville Botanical Garden!" For more information and a schedule of events, visit [www.hsvbg.org](http://www.hsvbg.org).