



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ryan Easterly Succeeds Darren Walker As Co-chair of the Presidents' Council

Chicago, IL (July 19, 2023) - The Disability & Philanthropy Forum announced that Ryan Easterly, executive director of the WITH Foundation assumed the role of co-chair of Presidents' Council of the Disability & Philanthropy Forum. Ryan succeeds Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation, as the co-chair.

"I am delighted that Ryan Easterly is succeeding me as co-chair of the President's Council. It has always been my intention for the council to be led by presidents with lived experience of disability, and Ryan embodies that vision wholeheartedly," Darren Walker said. "From the beginning, Ryan played an instrumental role in shaping our priorities and approach to this work with unwavering dedication. I look forward to his leadership and eagerly anticipate our continued collaboration to move the philanthropic sector forward on a journey that embraces disability inclusion, rights, and justice."

Ryan joins Richard Besser, MD, President and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in co-chairing the Council. The Presidents' Council of the Disability & Philanthropy Forum is a peer community of foundation presidents that recognize that disability inclusion is essential to solving society's most critical human rights, social justice, and health equity challenges. Together, the presidents seek to address the inequity and injustice experienced by more than 61 million disabled Americans (25% of US adults) and one billion disabled people worldwide by disrupting ableism in philanthropy and supporting disabled-led organizations. The Council created the Disability & Philanthropy Forum and the Disability Inclusion Fund at Borealis Philanthropy.

"I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with Council members to advance disability inclusion, rights, and justice. I also greatly appreciate both Darren and Rich's continued partnership in this work. As someone with disabilities, in the 14 years I have worked in grantmaking, I have witnessed some change within disability funding but the philanthropic sector still has much further to go to improve in being intentional in addressing and including the experiences of people with disabilities (whether apparent and/or non-apparent) and supporting the work being led by people with disabilities. As the new co-chair, I invite funders who haven't been as intentional in this work to join the Forum and to each and every Council member and Disability Inclusion pledge signatory thank you for your continued commitment."

Ryan provided leadership in helping the Disability & Philanthropy Forum develop its strategic plan, which included input from philanthropic partners and the disability community to chart the Forum's path forward. He will also co-chair the Forum's governance and advisory committees. Currently, the

Presidents' Council of the Disability & Philanthropy Forum comprises the senior leadership of 17 foundations. The Forum's Disability Inclusion Pledge has more than 70 signatories.

About Disability & Philanthropy Forum

The Disability & Philanthropy Forum mobilizes philanthropy to dismantle ableism by increasing funding for disability inclusion, rights, and justice; amplifying the leadership of disabled people in the philanthropic sector; and educating philanthropy to build a culture of inclusion.

Media Contact: Olivia Williams, olivia@disabilityphilanthropy.org.

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