



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JUNE 17, 2024: Bloedel Reserve Announces New Richard A. Brown President & CEO

Bloedel Reserve, a 140-acre public garden and forest reserve on Bainbridge Island, WA, announced the appointment of the new Richard A. Brown President & CEO. Evan Meyer will begin his tenure at Bloedel Reserve on October 1, 2024.

Mr. Meyer joins Bloedel Reserve from Theodore Payne Foundation in Los Angeles, where he served as Executive Director since early 2020. During his tenure there, he doubled the foundation's income and enhanced its visibility, while navigating the challenges of the pandemic. Prior to his role at Theodore Payne Foundation, Mr. Meyer held positions at the Native Plant Trust, The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, the Harvard University Herbaria, and the UCLA Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden, where he honed his expertise in plant conservation and botanical garden management.

Mr. Meyer's roots trace back to Western Massachusetts, where he developed a passion for horticulture on his family's 70-acre property. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a degree focused on biology, building materials, and wood technology. Over his past eleven years in California, he has gained extensive experience in horticulture and plant management, showcasing his deep knowledge of ecosystems worldwide.

At Theodore Payne Foundation, Mr. Meyer fostered strong relationships with indigenous organizations and individuals in the Los Angeles area. His dedication to native plant projects on tribal lands reflects his commitment to community and ecological stewardship and the development of deep relationships between plants and people. In his own words: "I believe that I am in the perfect place in my career to lead Bloedel Reserve. I have deep roots in the public garden, community engagement, and plant science fields, coupled with a proven track record of success in nonprofit leadership, financial management and growth, high-level communications, and implementation of strategic vision."

In preparation for Mr. Meyer's arrival, the Board of Trustees, led by Nate Thomas, along with interim President & CEO, Chuck Little, will work closely with staff to ensure a smooth transition of leadership. Said Thomas, "Bloedel Reserve is thrilled to welcome Evan Meyer as the new Richard A. Brown President and CEO. Evan stood out amongst all the candidates for his passion of horticulture, entrepreneurial approach, and experience with program development. He understands the potential for nature to be a healing experience and the need for our culture to reconnect with the natural environment. I am excited for the future of Bloedel Reserve as we welcome Evan to his new position."

Since the departure of former President & CEO, Ed Moydell in 2023, the Reserve has continued evolving into its role as a broadly serving community organization with the development of a forest management plan, a plant collections policy, and an interpretive master plan. These will provide a strong foundation for Mr. Meyer to lead Bloedel Reserve into the future.

The nationwide search was conducted with the assistance of Koya Partners, an executive recruiting firm that specializes in mission-driven search, and a selection committee comprised of Bloedel Reserve Board of Trustees members Nate Thomas, Deborah Schenk, Sandra McIver, Todd Adams, and former board member and Interim President & CEO, Chuck Little.

*End of Press Release*