



## **Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council Announces New Executive Director**

*Regional workforce coalition selects Andrea Ferstan to lead cross-sector efforts to meet the labor needs of metro area employers*

Contact: Founder & CEO Tawanna Black 612-351-8212/ [tblack@centerforeconomicinclusion.org](mailto:tblack@centerforeconomicinclusion.org)  
Doug Stone 651-336-9907/ [stone7586@gmail.com](mailto:stone7586@gmail.com)

**Saint Paul, Minn.** – Commissioner Rhonda Sivarajah, Chair of the Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council (GMWC), announced today that Andrea Ferstan has been selected as the first Executive Director for the Council and will begin on February 11, 2019.

The GMWC is a regional collaboration of public, private and civic organizations partnering to develop and lead the workforce development strategy for the seven-county metropolitan area in order to ensure all working age residents have opportunities to attain supporting careers while meeting the needs of employers who fuel the economy.

Following a competitive search, Ms. Ferstan, who has served as the Vice President for Talent and Workforce at the TwinWest Chamber, was selected for her over 20-year history of groundbreaking results leading regional partnerships across the cradle to career continuum with nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, including the Greater Twin Cities United Way.

“Andrea’s demonstrated success in driving cross-sector partnerships and systems improvements will be of great benefit as we strive to provide working age residents of the region opportunities to pursue career pathways that help advance greater economic self-sufficiency while meeting the needs of employers to succeed and grow,” Commissioner Sivarajah said.

Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter, who serves as Co-Chair for the Council said, “Andrea is an exciting spark for GMWC’s work to prepare Twin Cities residents for tomorrow’s careers today, and to eliminate the area’s persistent employment disparities. Her passion, knowledge, experience and leadership— with diverse people, organizations and sectors— will motivate effective partnering and alignment, ensuring our best opportunity for success.”

The Council became an integrated partner of the Center for Economic Inclusion in late 2018, providing an opportunity to scale place-based workforce development efforts of the Center, and

elevating the importance of racial equity in employers' talent attraction, retention and development strategies.

Tawanna Black, CEO of the Center for Economic Development said, "The Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council is leading the way toward ensuring that employers across our region have the tools and resources necessary to employ the vast and diverse talent base that will enable them to grow our economy. Andrea is a proven, principled leader who knows the value that communities of color can bring to our economy and has demonstrated the skills to deliver multi-sector strategies to address our employment and wage disparities. I'm thrilled to have the Council and Andrea joining our team."

"I look forward to working with the Greater Metro Workforce Board to help ensure inclusive growth and prosperity for our residents and our region," Ms. Ferstan said.

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The **Center for Economic Inclusion** is a cross-sector organization committed to strengthening the Minneapolis-St. Paul region's civic infrastructure and collective capacity to disrupt systems and inclusive market forces to catalyst shared prosperity and advance an inclusive economy. Learn more at [www.CenterforEconomicInclusion.org](http://www.CenterforEconomicInclusion.org)