



Connect Community Announces Leadership Transition: Founding Director Anne Whitlock Retires; Dr. Alyssa Trometter Named New President and CEO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOUSTON, TX – June 2, 2025

Connect Community, the nonprofit organization revitalizing Houston’s Gulfton and Sharpstown neighborhoods through a nationally recognized, place-based model, today announced the retirement of its Founding Director, Anne Whitlock, and the appointment of Dr. Alyssa Trometter as its new President and Chief Executive Officer.

This transition marks a major milestone for Connect Community, whose work to align mixed-income housing, cradle-to-career education, health, and economic mobility has become a blueprint for equitable neighborhood transformation in Houston and beyond.

“Anne’s vision and dedication have grown Connect Community from a bold idea into a thriving catalyst for change,” said Armando Orduña, Ed.D., outgoing Board Chair. “Her legacy is foundational to our progress, and it will continue to guide us in the years ahead.”

Whitlock founded Connect Community more than a decade ago with a vision shaped by and for the Gulfton community. Together with neighbors, partners, and the early support of Purpose Built Communities, Connect Community turned that vision into action. The initiative has led to several landmark achievements: the launch of *Connect Highstar*, the first new mixed-income housing development in the Gulfton/Sharpstown area in over four decades; the establishment of *Fabric Forge*, Houston’s first hub dedicated to textile manufacturing, education, and entrepreneurship; and the introduction of groundbreaking



educational programs, including the provision of free, in-school translators for local neighborhood schools.

To build upon this strong foundation, Connect Community's board has named Dr. Alyssa Trometter as its next President and CEO. Trometter brings more than fifteen years of experience advancing mission-aligned initiatives through systems change, inclusive entrepreneurship, and global partnerships. Her career includes nearly ten years at the Clinton Foundation, where she supported early-stage entrepreneurs and led educational and social impact collaborations worldwide. With a background in transnational history and deep experience working with Indigenous and migrant communities, Trometter brings a global perspective and a strong belief in the power of place-based, community-driven change.

"Alyssa's leadership style reflects the values that have come to define Connect Community: authentic engagement, bold vision, and a commitment to measurable, resident-driven impact," said Samuel Dike, incoming Board Chair. "She is the right type of leader to carry our work forward."

Whitlock and Trometter have worked closely together over the last month to ensure a smooth, values-aligned transition rooted in community and shared purpose.

"This is not an ending—it's a continuation," said Dr. Alyssa Trometter. "Having lived in Houston for the past five years, I'm honored that this is my first leadership role in the city. I'm excited to follow in Anne's footsteps and stand alongside this extraordinary team and community as we build on what's been accomplished and continue shaping a future where every family—right here in one of the most diverse and dynamic cities in the world—feels truly supported and inspired to thrive."

Carol R. Naughton, CEO of Purpose Built Communities—the national network of which Connect Community is a proud member—added, "Anne Whitlock has been a visionary partner and a powerful advocate for resident-led transformation. Through her leadership, Connect Community became a national model for equitable neighborhood revitalization. We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Alyssa Trometter and look forward to supporting her as she builds on this incredible legacy with the same deep-rooted commitment to people, place, and possibility."



Media Contact:

Kimi Buser-Clancy

Director of Marketing & Communications

kimi@myconnectcommunity.org

562-500-9833

www.myconnectcommunity.org

About Connect Community

Founded in 2016, **Connect Community** is a non-profit organization working to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty in Houston's Gulfton/Sharpstown neighborhood. A member of the **Purpose Built Communities** network, Connect partners with residents and local organizations to advance initiatives in **education, health, economic development, and housing**. Its mission is to ensure every child and adult in Gulfton/Sharpstown leads a healthy, prosperous life in a safe and vibrant neighborhood where residents choose to live, learn, work, worship, and play.
