



MANATEE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NAMES VERONICA THAMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bradenton, Florida – June 29, 2023 – Manatee Community Foundation’s board of directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Veronica Thames as executive director. In her new role, Thames will lead the organization in creating and executing transformative initiatives built to have a positive and lasting impact in Manatee County and beyond.

Thames comes to Manatee Community Foundation after serving as the senior vice president and chief operating officer of Gulf Coast Community Foundation, where she helped translate the Foundation’s vision and goals into action. Since 2018, Thames played a key role in the expansion of operations, including the opening of the Sarasota Philanthropy Center.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to be a driver of positive impact in my own backyard and around so many of my community friends,” said Thames. “Manatee is experiencing unprecedented growth, which exacerbates its needs. I hope to open doors to collaboration that must exist between philanthropists, government officials, community and nonprofit partners, and county residents, so we can create a better tomorrow, today.”

As a woman who emigrated from Argentina in her college years, Thames saw her share of suffering and unaddressed human needs. It was then that she decided her professional life’s mission would be to help heal and create opportunities for all, as a way to return the favor for the blessings she was afforded in pursuit of the American dream.

“Veronica’s entrepreneurial, fresh, and strategic perspective will propel our organization forward,” said Board Chair Robert “Buzz” Turner. “Her commitment and passion have been influenced by her experience and we look forward to her contributions as a trusted ambassador, all for the benefit of the community we are proud to serve.”

Prior to Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Thames served as vice president of human resources at Blake Medical Center Healthcare Corporation of America. She was responsible for key operations and personnel management for the 1,300-employee organization. Her accomplishments included creating the top-ranked childcare facility in Manatee County and developing the largest community health and wellness program within the HCA hospital system nationwide.

Thames has extensive board and governance experience, currently serving on the board for the Bradenton Area Economic Development Corporation and Saint Stephen's Episcopal School Parents Association. She is also the chair of the board at HCA Florida Sarasota Doctors Hospital and was a longtime member and former chair of the Sarasota Manatee Healthcare Collaborative. Thames is a 2019 graduate of Leadership Manatee and was instrumental in securing the coveted Best Nonprofit to Work For nation-wide award for her organization several times. She enjoys spending time with her family, as well as home remodeling, kayaking, and big gatherings. Thames has lived and worked across the United States, from Boca Raton, Florida, to Los Angeles, before planting her roots in Manatee County.

About Manatee Community Foundation

For 25 years, Manatee Community Foundation has partnered with individuals and businesses to help them make the greatest impact through their charitable giving in Manatee County and beyond. Collaborating with nonprofits and diverse community members, the organization supports gains that improve the quality of life in special places and for people and animals. MCF is the trusted steward of charitable legacies and the dependable guide for current giving through donor advised funds. The nonprofit organization has awarded more than \$50 million in grants and scholarships since 1998. For more information, visit <https://manateecf.org/>.