



**Virginia Hepner To Step Down**  
**As President, CEO of The Woodruff Arts Center**  
**In May, 2017**

Woodruff Arts Center Governing Board  
Has Begun Search for Successor

**Atlanta, November 11, 2016** – Virginia Hepner, the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Woodruff Arts Center, has informed the Arts Center’s Board of Trustees that she will step down on May 31, 2017, at the end of the Arts Center’s current fiscal year. The Governing Board of the Arts Center has begun the search for a successor.

Ms. Hepner became President and CEO of the Woodruff Arts Center in July 2012 and has led the organization – home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the High Museum of Art – through a period of significant change and success.

“Virginia Hepner has done a tremendous job of leading the Arts Center over the last four-plus years,” said Doug Hertz, chairman of the Governing Board of the Woodruff Arts Center. “The Arts Center is in a much stronger position today as a result of her commitment to our art, her willingness to take on some of the difficult issues the Arts Center has been facing and her incredible energy. We look forward to working with Virginia through the rest of this fiscal year as we identify her successor.”

In collaboration with Board members, Ms. Hepner has had a major impact in reshaping the leadership and structure of the Arts Center. During her tenure, new leaders have been appointed for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the High Museum of Art as well as new heads of Advancement, Finance, Facilities, Marketing and Legal in the Arts Center’s administration team. She also worked closely with leadership to combine multiple development departments into one integrated organization.

Her tireless focus on building awareness for the arts and arts education and their importance to the community has translated into marked financial improvement for the Arts Center. Under her leadership, the Arts Center has seen significant gains in fundraising, both in annual fundraising and the completion of one of the largest fundraising campaigns in its history, the \$110 million Transformation Campaign. In addition, debt has been reduced by more than \$33 million, non-strategic assets have been sold and each of the Woodruff divisions has reported operating surpluses for the last two years, the first time that has happened in more than a decade.

“The opportunity to lead one of the world’s great arts institutions and to capitalize upon the Arts Center’s shared services model has been a wonderful experience for me,” Ms. Hepner said. “Our unique arts alliance model was designed so more resources could flow to produce excellent art and education programs. It has been very rewarding to help fulfill that vision to provide more access to the art, to strengthen our financial structure and to improve our patron experience over the last several years.

“When I assumed this role, I knew it required complete focus and dedication, and my personal plan was to commit no more than five years to the role. We have an exciting next chapter ahead and now it is the right time to begin the transition to new leadership. I am so grateful to so many people who have made it possible for us to accomplish a great deal for this wonderful institution. I look forward to working with the Arts Center’s Board and our terrifically talented leaders and artists here to complete another successful year.”

Prior to joining the Arts Center, Ms. Hepner worked for 25 years in corporate finance, retiring from Wachovia Bank as an executive vice president. She served in a variety of non-profit leadership roles, including Interim Director for Young Audiences, Atlanta Ballet, and Brand Atlanta.

Ms. Hepner is a Director of Oxford Industries, Inc., State Bank & Trust Company and State Bank Financial Corporation. She also serves on the boards of the Metro Atlanta Chamber, Midtown Alliance, the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, Penn Institute for Urban Research, The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta Endowment Board, the Service Advisory Board for Mayor Kasim Reed and the Scheller College of Business Advisory Board at Georgia Tech.

She is the recipient of the 2015 Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Award honoring exemplary for-profit corporate board service by a female director. Past honors include the City of Atlanta Phoenix Award, Lexus Leader of the Arts, YWCA Woman of Achievement, and the Outstanding Partner Award from The Home Depot. She holds a bachelor's degree in finance from The Wharton School and attended the J.L. Kellogg Graduate Business School of Management at Northwestern University.

### **About The Woodruff Arts Center**

The Woodruff Arts Center in Atlanta, Ga. is one of the largest arts centers in the world, home to the Tony Award-winning Alliance Theatre, the Grammy Award-winning Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) and the High Museum of Art, the leading art museum in the Southeast. One of the only arts venues in the United States to offer both visual and performing arts on a single campus, The Woodruff produces outstanding theater, music and exhibitions for nearly one million patrons each year. Through the combined efforts of the Alliance, the ASO and the High, The Woodruff also offers remarkable educational programming, with approximately 200,000 students taking part annually, making The Woodruff the largest arts educator in Georgia. [www.woodruffcenter.org](http://www.woodruffcenter.org)

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