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*The Wallace Center for Arts and Reconciliation Welcomes Social Justice Advocate Ebony Howard as Executive Director*

**Harpersville, AL, December 9, 2024.** Following a five month national search, the board of the Wallace Center for Arts and Reconciliation (WCAR, The Wallace Center) is pleased to announce that social justice advocate, litigator, and nonprofit leader Ebony Howard (she/her) has been selected to lead as the organization’s new Executive Director. Howard begins her tenure on January 6, 2025. She will succeed Nell Gottlieb, a WCAR co-founder, who has served as Executive Director since the organization’s inception.



The executive search committee was co-chaired by Harpersville Mayor Theoangelo Perkins – who, alongside Gottlieb, co-founded the Center – and board member, Tom Hoynes. Committee members included WCAR board members, community advocates, peer organizational leaders, artists, and educators. Ayanna Grady-Hunt and Hannah Klemm of Anise Search were retained by the WCAR board to lead the search.

“We are so pleased to welcome Ebony Howard to the Wallace Center team,” says Hoynes. “She will provide energetic and thoughtful leadership as we continue our journey of healing and repair.”

Co-founded by Black and white descendants of the Wallace place – enslavers, enslaved, and sharecroppers – WCAR aims to reckon with the past through architectural reinterpretations, site-specific sculptures, and performance art that exhumes the lived experiences of the African Americans who were enslaved – and later lived and worked – on the Wallace plantation. Artists like Mellon Foundation recipient Wideman-Davis Dance, Tony Bingham, Salaam Green, and Elizabeth Webb have extended their gifts in service to this mission, convening community locally, regionally, and nationally in dialogue.

“Since 2018, The Wallace Center – through its descendants and partners – has endeavored to create a space for healing, repair and reconciliation,” says Mayor Perkins. “We are elated that Ebony Howard is joining us in this important work at this crucial moment.”

**Press Release re: Wallace Center Executive Director**

**THE WALLACE CENTER FOR ARTS AND RECONCILIATION**

Howard is a deeply respected social justice advocate and leader who brings an exceptional and well-rounded set of skills to Wallace at this pivotal time in the organization's history. She most recently served as Deputy Director for The Gault Center (formerly the National Juvenile Defender Center) in Washington, DC. At The Gault Center, Howard embarked on a rebrand to change the organization's name and develop a programmatic agenda that explicitly reflects a racial justice mission with a focus on amplifying the over-criminalization of Black and brown youth. Howard also oversaw resource development, fellowships and training programs, and personnel. Prior, Howard spent almost a decade in roles of increasing managerial and leadership responsibility at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) in Montgomery, AL. As SPLC Associate Legal Director, Howard set the strategic direction for its 5 state offices in the deep South. She is a proud HBCU alum, earning her undergraduate degree from Howard University. She earned a law degree from Georgetown Law School.

"I chose a career in social justice due to the inspiration I derive from the sacrifices, strength, and endurance of my ancestors. Joining the Wallace Center affords me the opportunity to not only continue the fight for liberation but to preserve the history that fueled that fight," Howard says. "I look forward to working closely with the descendants of the enslaved people who lived on the Wallace plantation and the greater Alabama community to uplift and heighten the Center's mission and work."