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Michelle Van Norden named new manager of development and donor engagement at AFE

April 16, 2024

American Floral Endowment welcomed Michelle Van Norden to the AFE staff as the new manager of development and donor engagement.

The AFE provided programs, resources and support for the floriculture industry for more than 60 years; this has been made possible only with the support of generous donors. This position will continue to enhance connections to its donors, and further develop relationships with its stakeholders. As the Manager of Development and Donor Relations, Van Norden will be promoting many ways to give, such as [named funds](#), [legacy gifts](#), [recurring donations](#) and [designated donations](#).

As the Endowment's community of donors grows, AFE will be able to further expand our core programs — [scholarships](#), [internships](#), [educational grants](#) and [innovative scientific research](#) and better serve the floral community.

Van Norden is a seasoned fundraising professional from the vibrant communities of Louisiana. Currently residing on the West Side of Baton Rouge, she brings over a decade of experience in crafting and executing impactful fundraising strategies, consistently surpassing annual targets and securing grants and major gifts. Her passion lies in connecting donors with causes they care about, and she has a proven track record of fostering meaningful relationships that lead to transformative initiatives.

In addition, Van Norden brings experience securing impactful government grant funding that could provide new opportunities for AFE's programs to expand.

"With a passion for fundraising and eager to dive into the world of floriculture, I am excited to join the AFE team," said Van Norden. "Just as every petal contributes to the beauty of a flower, every donation fuels the growth of impactful initiatives. I look forward to nurturing relationships, cultivating support, and witnessing the profound impact we can make together."

Van Norden's background extends beyond fundraising. With a bachelor's degree in health and human performance and a minor in exercise physiology, she has cultivated a diverse skill set, including managing teams, operating franchises and building donor relationships. Throughout her career, she has consistently achieved remarkable results, demonstrating her adaptability and relentless drive for excellence.

Beyond her work, Van Norden finds joy in the simple pleasures of life, cherishing moments spent with her husband and their daughter, and appreciating the quiet moments and the beauty of everyday experiences.

"We are delighted to have Michelle join the AFE team," said AFE Executive Director Debi Chedester.

"Her fundraising expertise, combined with her enthusiasm to learn more about the floral industry, will be instrumental in advancing our mission. We are confident that Van Norden will play a key role in cultivating new donor relationships and securing the resources needed to continue supporting the

future of floriculture.”

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