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## **Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation Announces 2023-24 Board**

OAK PARK, IL (July 31, 2023) — The Oak Park-River Forest Community is pleased to announce that Kelly Turner and Douglas R. Dixon have been named the new board chair and vice-chair of its board of directors, and also welcomes Tawfiq Farraj and Mario Lucero to the board.

Turner is a senior counsel with the American Arbitration Association (AAA) in its Chicago regional office. As a member of the AAA's legal department, she handles litigation, subpoenas and contracts, and works with employees across the country and in Singapore. She was previously vice president in charge of the Chicago regional office, focusing on the association's commercial division. Before joining the AAA, Turner spent more than 19 years at Locke Lord LLP, a full-service international law firm. In addition to the Foundation board, she is a member of the board of directors of the Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society. She lives in Oak Park.

"I am very excited for the opportunity to lead the Foundation board at this key moment in time," Turner says. "I look forward to continuing the work started under my predecessors, Donna Myers and Bruce Wojack, to move the Foundation toward fulfilling its mission of racial equity and social justice. In the coming year, we will further this vision by working to operationalize the findings of the Community Voices report."

Dixon recently retired after more than 20 years as principal at Sales Performance Solutions in River Forest, a consultancy through which he helped leaders increase revenue by maximizing peoples' talent and augmenting organizational processes and technology. He is a long-time volunteer leader and supporter of the Foundation, instrumental in its strategic planning and the development of the Foundation's enhanced vision and mission for racial equity over the past three years, as well as a Community Leadership Program (now Leadership Lab) alumnus and a former Future Philanthropist Program mentor.

### **Please Welcome Our Newest Board Members!**

Tawfiq Farraj is a financial advisor with Merrill Lynch. Prior to joining the Foundation board, he served as a board member with the Muslim Writers Collective, an organization aimed at reclaiming control over the American Muslim narrative and providing a safe space for current and aspiring writers, and as president of the Chicago chapter of the Council for the Advancement of Muslim Professionals (CAMP).

Tawfiq holds an MBA from the Keller Graduate School of Management and a Bachelor's degree in political science and economics from the University of Illinois Chicago. He lives in Berwyn with his wife, Yasmin Ali, and two daughters.

"I am excited to serve on the board, and hope my contributions can create positive change for the community and the future my children will grow up in," he says.

Mario Lucero is an experienced diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) practitioner with a passion for supporting diverse communities and advocating for social justice across the spectrum. He serves as director of inclusion initiatives in the University of Illinois Chicago's Office of Diversity, which includes supporting the vice chancellor for DEI by working with academic units to navigate retention, support, and mentoring of underrepresented faculty hires. Additionally, Mario is responsible for campus initiatives that deepen and increase DEI efforts for students, faculty, and staff.

As a strategist with The Nova Collective and in partnership with the Foundation, Mario was part of the Community Voices needs assessment report. Previously an educator in adult education at Triton College, Mario was able to serve people from the communities where he grew up as part of the Community Voices team, which was a truly rewarding experience for him.

Mario earned a Master's degree in Latin American and Latino Studies in 2013 from UIC, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Media Arts & Design from the Art Institutes in 2008. He lives in Berwyn with his wife and two daughters and two sons.

The Foundation would also like to thank outgoing board chair Bruce Wojack for his service this past year. His leadership and support was crucial as we produced and released the Community Voices report.

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