



Indy Arts Council announces new President & CEO

Judith B. Thomas to lead the 38-year-old organization, with a focus on uniting the Indianapolis arts and culture sector

Indianapolis (March 14, 2025) – [Indy Arts Council](#), central Indiana’s leading arts advocacy and services agency, announced today that Judith B. Thomas will serve as its next President and CEO, starting mid-April 2025. Following her tenure as Deputy Mayor of Neighborhood Engagement at the City of Indianapolis, Thomas brings decades of community engagement, stakeholder management, and collaborative leadership to the role.

“The opportunity to lead an organization so deeply embedded in the cultural and creative fabric of Indianapolis aligns perfectly with my passion, vision, and lifelong commitment to empowering communities through the arts,” said Thomas. “The arts tell the story of a people—a city, a state, a community. It is crucial that all voices and creatives are heard, seen, and celebrated.”

Over the past 30 years, Thomas has built an extraordinary career in Indianapolis, contributing to some of the city’s most influential conventions and events, including the Indiana Black Expo, National FFA, and now as LOC Co-Chair for the 2026 NCAA Men’s tournament. She served as President of the Madam Walker Legacy Center during its pivotal renovations and rebranding, and most recently as Deputy Mayor of Indianapolis, where she navigated the complexities of leading through a global pandemic, a racial reckoning, and a period of profound social and governmental transformation.

“Along with the Indy Arts Council Board of Directors, I am thrilled to welcome Judith B. Thomas as our next President and CEO,” said Brenda Horn, Indy Arts Council Board Chair. “As a skilled fundraiser, compelling ambassador, and exceptional relationship builder, she is extremely well positioned to lead our organization in this next chapter.”

This announcement follows an extensive national search guided by valuable input from Indy Arts Council staff, community members, and other key stakeholders. The search committee, led by Brenda Horn, Indy Arts Council Board Chair, conducted the search in partnership with DSG | Koya, the nation’s premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership.

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