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Minneapolis Parks Foundation Welcomes Nima Ahmadi, Martha Gabbert, Jasmine Russell, and Heidi Schmidt to its Board of Directors

Minneapolis, Minn. – The [Minneapolis Parks Foundation](#) today announced that its Board of Directors named four new members: **Nima Ahmadi**, [Cardiovascular Systems](#); **Martha Gabbert**, community leader; **Jasmine Russell**, [Monicat Data](#); and **Heidi Schmidt**, [NTH](#). The new directors started three-year terms at the Parks Foundation's February meeting.

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation is an independent donor-supported non-profit that helps envision and deliver transformative parks and public spaces by working closely with public partners and in collaboration with the community. As the primary philanthropic partner to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Parks Foundation is nearing completion of the [RiverFirst](#) Capital Campaign, which will bring \$18 million in private sector support for two transformative Mississippi Riverfront projects – [Water Works](#) and the [Great Northern Greenway River Link](#). The Parks Foundation also supports innovative Minneapolis parks projects throughout Minneapolis through equity funding, including [Little Free Libraries®](#) at all recreation centers, and champions world-class design through its [Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series](#). Since 2003, the Parks Foundation has raised more than \$20 million for transformative parks projects in Minneapolis.

"Nima, Martha, Jasmine, and Heidi are welcome additions to the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's already dynamic and dedicated Board of Directors," says Tom Evers, Executive Director. "They bring a blend of proven technical and professional expertise to strengthen our capacity to deliver an innovative, solution-based approach to Minneapolis Parks projects, and a compassionate commitment to humanity and the natural world that will help us transform lives by deepening connections between communities by enhancing our parks and public realm."

2019 Parks Foundation Board of Directors

Nima Ahmadi is Senior Director of Strategic Ventures and Platforms at Cardiovascular Systems, where he is responsible for new business model innovation and corporate development. **Martha Gabbert** recently retired from a 25-year career running a family owned business, Room and Board, where she was Managing Director of Room and Board Properties. **Jasmine Russell** is Foundation and CEO of Monicat Data, to which she brings a knowledge base of optimizing market strategy, guiding broad concepts into strategic action in order to broaden the creative community's perspective of data usage to elevate understandings of their craft and work. **Heidi Schmidt** is Director of Marketing for NTH, a real estate and project management firm, where she works with the team to develop and implement new ways to deliver exceptional client service.

Tom Paul, President-Medicare of Bright Health, will chair the Parks Foundation's 25-member Board of Directors, which also includes the following members: **Stuart Ackerberg**, CEO of Ackerberg Group; **Dan Avchen**, ED of Strategic Growth for HGA Architects; **Sara Barrow**, External Affairs & Minneapolis Community Relations Manager for Xcel Energy; **Barbara Bencini**, Senior VP (retired) of Boyd, Bencini, Gibbons & Associates; **Dorothy Bridges**, Senior VP (retired) of Federal

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Reserve Bank of Minneapolis; **Sarah Duniway**, Managing Partner of Gray Plant Mooty; **Dayna Frank**, EVP/Co-Owner of First Avenue; **Jacob Frey**, Mayor of the City of Minneapolis; **Joe Gibbons**, Senior VP-Wealth Management of Boyd, Gibbons & Associates, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith; **Jocelyn Hale**, Partner in MillerHale Associates; **Sarah Harris**, Managing Director of University of Minnesota Foundation, Real Estate Advisors; **Mark Heithoff**, Mark Heithoff Photography; **Pahoua Yang Offman**, Executive Director of the Citizens League; **Steve King**, Chairman of Landscape Structures; **Mary McCarthy**, community leader; **Paul Reyelts**, CFO (retired) of Valspar; **Peter Thrane**, Partner in Stinson Leonard Street; and **Frank Wilkinson**, community leader. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's Superintendent **Al Bangoura** and Commissioner-at-Large **Meg Forney** will also serve as ex officio Board Members in 2019.

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