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**News Release**

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**Robert Bush Named President of the Arts & Science Council***Nationally-recognized arts leader will steward ASC and cultural sector through next era of evolution.*

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (March 17, 2014) -- The Arts & Science Council (ASC) Board of Directors has hired Robert E. Bush Jr. as president effective immediately. Bush, a nationally known and highly regarded leader in the arts, joined ASC in 2000. He has served as interim president since July 2013. Prior to serving as interim president, he was senior vice president, chief innovation officer.

“Robert demonstrates unmatched knowledge, passion and vision for Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s cultural community and ASC’s evolving role in it,” said Karl Newlin, ASC board chair and senior vice president and CFO of Piedmont Natural Gas. “At a time when the ASC contemplates its future with the forthcoming recommendations of the Cultural Life Task Force and other efforts, Robert is uniquely qualified to lead us through this next phase of our evolution. He brings intimate knowledge, depth and insight to successful fund raising, and he also keenly understands the challenges facing cultural organizations here in Charlotte and across the nation. Coupled with his successful track record at arts councils on the local, regional and national level, the board is confident that we have, in Robert, an experienced leader who will tackle the cultural sector’s challenges and opportunities to move us forward.”

Bush has more than 30 years of experience in arts administration and began working in Charlotte’s cultural sector in 1984 as the first director of development for the Mint Museum of Art. He also served as project coordinator for the museum’s “Ramesses the Great” exhibition. He was the architect of many critical efforts to grow and support Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s cultural sector, from the 25-year Cultural Facilities Master Plan (which completed its first phase in 2010 with the Levine Center for the Arts and Discovery Place renovations and new exhibit platform) to ASC’s current annual fund drive (notably up $1 million from this time last year). He also led the creation of ASC’s Cultural Leadership Training program that has graduated more than 300 passionate cultural advocates over the past nine years who now serve on local boards. He also led the development of Cultural Action Plans for the six suburban communities in Mecklenburg County.

On a national level, Bush served on the founding governing and national policy boards of Americans for the Arts, the nation’s leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education, which merged the former American Council for the Arts and the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies in the 1990s. As an independent consultant, he designed the arts education program for the Fulton County (Ga.) Arts Council and Fulton County Schools. He has also chaired the NAMES Project Foundation (the AIDS Memorial Quilt).

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“I am very pleased to see Robert Bush be selected to head the Arts & Science Council,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “He has many years of experience leading local arts advancement in communities and is a respected colleague, collaborator, and arts strategist throughout the country. I know he will do a great job advancing the arts for the people of Charlotte and the entire region."

Prior to joining ASC, Bush served as president and CEO of the United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County and Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne in Fort Wayne, Ind., as director of development with the Mint Museum of Art and executive director of the Catawba County Council for the Arts (now the United Arts Council of Catawba County). He is the author of two publications, “United Arts Funds: Meeting the Challenge of Increased Private Sector Support for the Arts” and “Workplace Giving Programs for the Arts”.

“Robert Bush has been a valued colleague for many years and is truly among our industry leaders, especially in his commitment to developing deep and lasting partnerships between the cultural community and the citizens they serve,” said Mary McCullough-Hudson, CEO of ArtsWave in Cincinnati, Ohio. “Charlotte is indeed fortunate to have his continued leadership and I am thrilled to congratulate Robert and our friends at ASC on his appointment as president.”

ASC’s search for a new leader began in mid-October, 2013. Linda Lockman-Brooks, immediate past chair of the ASC board and president of Lockman-Brooks Marketing Services, chaired a 12-member search committee comprised of business, civic and cultural leaders and engaged the search firm Cameron Carmichael to guide the process.

“It was very important for the committee to be engaged in a critical process that was deliberate, detailed and objective, which included listening to more than 75 stakeholders to help us craft the job description,” said Lockman-Brooks. “The opportunity drew interest from more than 200 highly qualified candidates from across the U.S. due to ASC’s brand and national reputation along with Charlotte being a well-regarded city. Throughout every stage in the process, Robert consistently rose to the top.”

Bush earned a B.S. and M.A. in Education Administration and Supervision with a concentration in Community Education from Appalachian State University and is a graduate of Managing the Arts, a professional management seminar of the School of Business, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has also served on the faculty of the Master of Arts in Arts Administration program at Goucher College in Baltimore, Md. He currently serves on the faculty of the Master of Public Administration program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

His accolades include the Governor’s Award for meritorious service to the People of North Carolina by former Governor James B. Hunt, Outstanding Tourism Professional by the Charlotte Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Legacy Award from the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, among others.

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*Founded in 1958, the Arts & Science Council (ASC) is the lead advocate, grant maker, fundraiser and planner for Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s cultural sector.*