



## Freedom House Names Charmaine L. Arthur as the Organization's New CEO

Dorchester, MA – April 01, 2022

The Board of Directors is excited to announce that Charmaine L. Arthur has been promoted to Chief Executive Officer of Freedom House. Charmaine currently serves as Chief Programs Officer at Freedom House and succeeds Katrina Shaw who will be leaving the organization to pursue an exciting new leadership opportunity after ten years of dedicated service. "The Board unanimously supports the appointment of Charmaine. We have the utmost confidence in her experience and capability to lead the organization into its next chapter. We are deeply grateful for the transformational leadership Katrina Shaw brought to the organization and wish her much success," said Board Chair Andrew Sobers.

Charmaine's career at Freedom House began in 2009 when she served as Executive Director of the Multi-Cultural Dropout Coalition (MDOC). In her most recent appointment as Chief Programs Officer, Charmaine has overseen the delivery of all programming, playing a defining role in developing and executing the organization's programmatic strategy to address the crucial need for career readiness, mental wellness services, and youth employment opportunities. "Oftentimes in leadership, the culture of an organization is underestimated – but it is a key ingredient to the growth and success of any organization," reflected Katrina Shaw. "I'm thrilled that the Board has selected a leader who is deeply committed to the culture and continued success of Freedom House and its students."

Charmaine has dedicated her career to preparing young people to stay in school, graduate from school, prepare to go on to a post-secondary pathway, and develop the social-emotional life skills to achieve success. She brings more than 30 years of experience in the human service, youth development, and education fields. She began her career as an outreach worker and advocate for children, youths, and families. Over the past 13 years, she has worked closely with the public school system and policy advocates to draft legislation to support drop-out prevention and recovery, and implement system-level change that seeks to impact a generation of disconnected youth. Charmaine holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Lasell University and is also an alumna of Boston University's Institute for Non-Profit Management and Leadership at Questrom School of Business. She is a lifelong resident of Boston and grew up in Dorchester's Fields Corner/Geneva Avenue section.

Charmaine's appointment comes during a pivot period for Freedom House. In the last 12 months, Freedom House has responded to changing community needs, a public health crisis, and the turbulence of a national racial reckoning by building out a Pivot Plan. "We turned this idea of a Strategic Plan on its head," says Charmaine, "the world around us demanded that we tackle these challenges with a different approach." The organization has shifted to hybrid in-person/virtual programming, doubled the size of the student cohort for its Summer Learning Institute program, and expanded its high school partnership network. As CEO, Charmaine says she's "honored to lead Freedom House as we execute this new strategic vision and I look forward to deepening our role as an advocate for a youth development approach to education equity across our school systems."

### **About Freedom House**

Freedom House is building economic, racial and social equity in our communities through education and leadership development. For 72 years, Freedom House has been a leader in programs and services that champion educational equity and economic opportunities for Black and Brown youth throughout our communities. We see education as a pathway toward economic opportunities. We focus on college access and post-secondary success to increase college graduation rates and career readiness by providing comprehensive services focused on holistic youth development to our students. Freedom House was founded in 1949 by Muriel and Otto Snowden as a catalyst for promoting equality for lower-income Bostonians; with an initial goal of centralizing community activism in the fight for neighborhood improvement, good schools, and harmony among racial, ethnic, and religious groups primarily in the Roxbury/Dorchester area. For more information about Freedom House, visit <https://freedomhouse.com/>.

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