



## Red Butte Garden selects Derrek Hanson as executive director

December 14, 2021—Derrek Hanson will become the fifth executive director of Red Butte Garden at the University of Utah, effective December 16, 2021. Hanson has been the garden’s interim executive director for the past seven months, following the resignation of Jimmy Turner earlier this year.

“Derrek has more than 20 years of experience at Red Butte Garden, giving him a keen understanding of what the garden means to the university and the community. He has proven to be an effective leader and administrator while leading the organization in various capacities over the years,” said Laura Snow, University of Utah chief of staff.

Throughout the pandemic, Hanson navigated the re-start of operations while ensuring compliance with state-regulated COVID-19 protocols. Under his leadership, the garden was the first cultural institution at the U to resume at full-capacity. As a result, he helped limit staff turnover while returning the garden to financial stability, a feat that restored and maintained employee morale.

“Red Butte Garden provides a variety of services to our community—from botanical and conservation research, to family programming and summer camps, to its world-class concert series. And Derrek has the experience to expand the garden’s reach,” said Tory Magleby, chair of the Red Butte Garden advisory board. “We are excited that he will be leading the next phases of growth over the coming years.”

Hanson served in various capacities at the garden over the last two decades, including visitor services manager, director of events and visitor services, and deputy director. He is most well-known in the community for his role in building the award-winning outdoor concert series. Under his guidance, the series has become a highly anticipated program that showcases an average of 30 award-winning artists and performances each summer, providing more than 50% of the garden’s operating revenue.

Hanson graduated from the University of Utah in 1999 with a BA in mass communication and earned an MPA in 2007. He received his Master Gardener certification from Utah State University.

“I am honored to have been selected to be the next executive director at Red Butte Garden,” said Hanson. “I am fortunate to be working with an extremely dedicated group of staff and volunteers. The garden is near and dear to my heart and has a bright future ahead.”

###

#### About Red Butte Garden

Red Butte Garden is one of the largest botanical gardens in the Intermountain West and together with the University of Utah, is a state arboretum. The Garden has welcomed guests since 1985, and includes 21 acres of developed gardens and five miles of hiking trails winding through an extensive natural area. The Garden is renowned for its numerous plant collections, display gardens, world-class Outdoor Concert Series, and award-winning horticulture-based educational programs. For more information, visit [www.redbuttegarden.org](http://www.redbuttegarden.org).

#### Media contact

Jayne Anderson

Red Butte Garden

801-581-4938

[jayne.anderson@redbutte.utah.edu](mailto:jayne.anderson@redbutte.utah.edu)