



**AUGUST WILSON AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER
WELCOMES AMANDA BRANDES AS VICE PRESIDENT OF
INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT, SHEILA RAWLINGS AS SENIOR
DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT AND KIMBERLY
JACOBS AS EXHIBITIONS MANAGER AND ASSISTANT CURATOR**

June 28, 2023 (Pittsburgh, PA) – The August Wilson African American Cultural Center (AWAACC) proudly announces the appointment of three esteemed professionals who will play instrumental roles in advancing the institution's mission. Amanda Brandes joins as the Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Sheila Rawlings steps into the role of Senior Director of Institutional Advancement and Kimberly Jacobs assumes the positions of Exhibitions Manager and Assistant Curator. These accomplished individuals bring a wealth of experience and a shared commitment to African American arts and culture, further solidifying AWAACC's position as a leading cultural institution.

Amanda Brandes and Sheila Rawlings round out the senior leadership staff of AWAACC, joining recent hire Orlando Watson, Senior Director of Programming, who joined the team in the winter. This dynamic team, with their collective expertise, dedication, and passion for African American arts and culture, will lead AWAACC into a new era of artistic excellence and community impact, ensuring the legacy of August Wilson continues to thrive.

Amanda Brandes brings a wealth of experience in arts and nonprofit leadership to her role as Vice President of Institutional Advancement. With over two decades of expertise, Amanda has provided invaluable support to artists and nonprofit organizations, successfully navigating business and logistical challenges. Her notable accomplishments include expanding education and community engagement programs at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, where she served as Senior Director, Foundation and Corporate Partnerships. Amanda's expertise in fundraising and partnerships will be instrumental in advancing AWAACC's institutional goals.

Sheila Edwell Rawlings assumes the role of Senior Director of Institutional Advancement, bringing her passion for the arts and proven success as a fundraiser. Sheila's diverse background in healthcare, research, and the law provides a unique perspective and skill set to drive AWAACC's fundraising efforts. With nearly two decades of experience in cultivating major and corporate gifts, Sheila is adept at developing strategies to exceed fundraising goals and steward donor relationships. Her commitment to providing educational opportunities for all students, regardless of family income, is demonstrated by her significant accomplishments in raising scholarship funds.

Kimberly Diana Jacobs joins AWAACC as Exhibitions Manager and Assistant Curator, bringing over ten years of expertise in arts administration, curation, and public programming. Her strong academic background in art history, museum studies, and contemporary art by African descent artists will enhance AWAACC's exhibitions and engage audiences with compelling artistic narratives. Kimberly's extensive experience in leading museums and curating exhibitions will contribute to the center's mission of celebrating African American culture through impactful visual arts experiences.

For more information, please visit awaacc.org.



ABOUT AUGUST WILSON AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

The August Wilson African American Cultural Center is a non-profit cultural center located in Pittsburgh's cultural district that generates artistic, educational, and community initiatives that advance the legacy of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson. One of the largest cultural centers in the country focused exclusively on the African American experience and the celebration of Black culture and the African diaspora, the non-profit organization welcomes more than 119,000 visitors locally and nationally. Through year-round programming across multiple genres, such as the annual Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival, Black Bottom Film Festival, AWCommunity Days, TRUTHSayers speaker series, and rotating art exhibits in its galleries, the Center provides a platform for established and emerging artists of color whose work reflects the universal issues of identity that Wilson tackled, and which still resonate today.

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