



BREAKTHROUGH CINCINNATI ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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CINCINNATI, O. – Breakthrough Cincinnati (BTC), the four-year, tuition-free academic enrichment program for highly motivated middle school students from underserved and/or underrepresented communities in the greater Cincinnati area, announced today that Julie Witten will join BTC as Executive Director on May 15.

Witten is currently Vice President, Quality Programs at Cincinnati-based 4C for Children, where she has served in positions of increasing responsibility since 2004.

Witten said “I am thrilled to join Breakthrough Cincinnati. I have always believed that organizations thrive when leadership is visionary, innovative, and transparent. In my work at 4C I have seen directly how important it is to provide quality early childhood education and care. To now have the opportunity to lead Breakthrough Cincinnati’s critical work to prepare middle school students for success in high school, college and beyond is exciting and humbling.”

“Julie’s skills and experience prepare her well to lead Breakthrough Cincinnati at this important time,” said Stephen Dessner, BTC Board Chair. “We have received record interest in our program this year, which includes our second year of expanding the academic summer program to a new site on the University of Cincinnati campus. As such, Julie will oversee a staff of nearly 60 this summer as Breakthrough Cincinnati delivers its signature summer academic enrichment experience at UC and at the established Cincinnati Country Day School site.”

BTC Board member and search committee chair Amy Hanson commented: “We were overwhelmed by the interest in this position. We received over 100 resumes, and had a strong set of final candidates. Julie impressed all of us with her energy, her leadership experience, and her passion for helping kids in the greater Cincinnati region.”

BTC’s current Executive Director, Ali Hawkins, announced her intention to pursue other interests earlier this year. In thanking Hawkins for her service over the past three years, Dessner said “Ali had made an indelible mark on BTC. Her tireless work has delivered the first major program expansion in BTC’s 25 year history, while securing increased resources and support for the organization. The entire Breakthrough Cincinnati community wishes Ali much success in her next chapter.”

Breakthrough Cincinnati (BTC) is a four-year, tuition-free, out-of-school time academic program. BTC’s dual mission is to: 1) provide rigorous, college-preparatory educational enrichment opportunities to highly motivated middle and high school students from underserved/underrepresented communities, and 2) inspire and train undergraduate college students to become the next generation of teachers and educational leaders. Bill Hopple, Jr. and Odessa Hooker established BTC as Summerbridge Cincinnati in 1992. BTC is a member of the national Breakthrough Collaborative, which was founded in San Francisco in 1978. Today, the Collaborative is composed of 40 affiliate sites located throughout the United States.

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