



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2024

CONTACT

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON APPOINTS CLINÉE HEDSPETH AS COMMISSIONER OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

With background in arts administration, public policy and community engagement, Hedspeth brings wealth of experience and fresh perspective to supporting and expanding arts and culture in Chicago

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson announced the appointment of Clinée Hedspeth as Commissioner of the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). With a background in arts administration, public policy and community engagement, Hedspeth brings a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective to supporting and expanding arts and culture in Chicago.

“Clinée’s exceptional track record in both the arts and policy-making uniquely qualifies her to lead DCASE,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “Her visionary leadership and commitment to community engagement will ensure that Chicago remains at the forefront of cultural innovation and inclusivity.”

Hedspeth’s career spans over a decade in the arts and public service, most recently as Associate Specialist of 20th Century and Contemporary Art at international auction house Phillips Auctioneers, identifying and evaluating works of art for auction, private sales and selling exhibitions. She also served as Legislative Director under Mayor Johnson during his time as Cook County Commissioner, and as Director of Curatorial Services at the DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center, where she supervised curatorial, exhibition, collection and archival departments.

“I am honored to step into the role of Commissioner for DCASE, where I plan to leverage my experience to enrich Chicago’s already flourishing cultural landscape,” said **Clinée Hedspeth**. “Together with the DCASE staff and arts community, we will expand access to the arts, celebrate our city’s diverse heritage, and create new opportunities for cultural expression in every community.”



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



“A strong arts and cultural ecosystem are critical to the City’s economic vitality,” said **Kenya Merritt, Deputy Mayor of Business, Economic and Neighborhood Development**. “I am excited to have Clinée leading and helping foster partnerships with cultural institutions, artists and local organizations to grow Chicago’s arts and cultural landscape, and reinforce our city’s dominance on the global stage.”

Hedspeth’s appointment is a testament to the City of Chicago’s commitment to promoting and growing its cultural vitality. Under her leadership, DCASE will continue to develop and implement programs that support the arts, nurture cultural understanding and boost economic growth in the city.

“The Cultural Advisory Council looks forward to continuing to drive a strong and robust cultural landscape with DCASE’s new leadership that executes on Mayor Johnson’s vision for a strong and inclusive arts ecosystem,” said **Blake-Anthony Johnson, Co-chair, Cultural Advisory Council**.

Hedspeth holds a bachelor of arts in Philosophy and African-American Studies from Dominican University, and serves as president of the boards of the Hyde Park Historical Society and Edgar Miller Legacy, chairwoman of the Literature and Arts Committee of the University Club of Chicago, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

The mayor’s selection is now subject to City Council approval.

###