



*** MEDIA RELEASE ***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 2019

CONTACT: Amy Choate-Nielsen
Utah PTA Director of Communications
amyn@utahpta.org



New leadership in Utah PTA takes office

Executive Committee brings decades of experience to state office

Utah PTA is pleased to welcome new leadership to guide the largest parent advocacy association in the state. Starting July 1, Utah PTA President Laney Benedict and other officers and members of the Board of Directors assumed their roles to help train, organize and inspire parent volunteer associations throughout the state. Benedict, who will lead Utah PTA for the next two years, and Utah PTA President-elect Stacey Mollinet, who will take Benedict's place at the end of her term, began their time in office by reaching out to local associations, attending region trainings, and working to update Utah PTA's systems and policies.

"Being president of Utah PTA is such an honor," Benedict said. "We are all volunteers, giving our time and energy to this cause of making every child's potential become a reality. Really, this work is all about the children, and I am privileged to work every day on their behalf."

Joining Benedict and Mollinet on the Executive Committee of Utah PTA are Advocacy Vice President LeAnn Wood, Regions Vice President Corey Fairholm, Treasurer Betty Shaw, Secretary Tonya Aston, Director of

Communications Amy Choate-Nielsen, Director of Leadership Julie Cluff and Director of Membership Melanie Hammer. Administrative Representative Dr. Martin Bates, superintendent of Granite School District, and Teacher Representative Laura Adams also participate on the Executive Committee and Utah PTA Board of Directors. The Executive Committee helps facilitate the organization of the Utah PTA Board of Directors, and conduct business between meetings of the Board of Directors. Volunteers on the Executive Committee bring decades of expertise and dedication to their offices. Please see below for information on these Executive Committee members. For more information please contact Director of Communications Amy Choate-Nielsen.

Laney Benedict, President: Laney grew up in Pleasant Grove, Utah, and she and her husband, Rick, chose to raise their children in the same town. Her children have attended the same elementary, junior high and high school that she did as a child. Laney was always involved at the school in some way or another. She has served as a volunteer for 23 years in PTA, as local and council president, region associate director, region director for Alpine School District, public relations vice president, director of communications and president-elect. She served as field day chair, carnival chair, room mom, red ribbon chair, legislative vice president, leadership vice president, hospitality and safety commissioner.

Stacey Mollinet, President-elect: Stacey first served on the PTSA board when she was in high school and has been in PTA since her oldest child was in kindergarten 22 years ago. She has served in many PTA positions at the local, council, region, and state levels. Stacey has a degree in Computer Engineering from the University of Utah. She and her husband, Mike, have 5 children with the youngest in junior high school. She loves to travel, ski, garden, and serve in the community. She loves PTA and the children she serves.

Corey Fairholm, Regions Vice President: Corey has served in PTA in many capacities for 19 years. She enjoys the many things she has learned by working with others, including how to resolve issues, validate others and help leaders serve the children in their schools. She firmly believes PTA not only helps children with many programs, but it also develops leaders in PTA parent volunteers. She enjoys working with region directors from across the state. Corey, her husband, and four children live in South Jordan.

LeAnn Wood, Advocacy Vice President: As a mother of five children, LeAnn began her PTA career as a kindergarten mom in 1998. She has served on PTA boards in various positions, including as secretary, treasurer, volunteer coordinator, president and region director. As education commissioner, LeAnn worked closely with legislators and served on committees at the Utah State Office of Education to be informed of legislative priorities and advocate for children on all levels of government.

Betty Shaw, Treasurer: Betty joined PTA when her oldest son started school in 1984, following the example of her own mother, who volunteered in PTA and taught her how to get engaged in her children's school. Betty has volunteered as a room parent coordinator, hospitality coordinator, treasurer, book fair chair, region director and student leadership commissioner, among other things. As a wife, parent of six children and grandmother to one, Betty dedicates her time because she believes children are the future and she wants them to know they are loved.

Tonya Aston, Secretary: Tonya has been privileged to work with fantastic administration, teachers, staff, parents and students at the local, council, region, and state levels of PTA for the last 16 years. In that time, she has filled many positions, including community involvement president, secretary, advocacy vice president, grad night chair, and — her favorite — reflections. Tonya has learned the value of PTA and what it can do for children. She looks forward to many more years of serving kids.

Amy Choate-Nielsen, Director of Communications: Amy has a background in print journalism and experience in public communications. After graduating from Brigham Young University with a B.A. in Print Journalism, she began her career as an award-winning reporter for the Deseret News, where she continues to write a bi-

weekly column. She also works in the Office of Public Communications in Canyons School District, where she enjoys recognizing teachers and students for their positive contributions to public education.

Julie Cluff, Director of Leadership: Julie started her PTA journey by helping with the annual auction fundraiser when her oldest child, now a senior in high school, was in kindergarten. The next year she was the emergency prep chairman. She has since served in many different capacities at the local, council, region and state level of PTA. Julie absolutely loves PTA and totally believes in its mission - Every Child, One Voice.

Melanie Hammer, Director of Membership: Melanie and her husband Jeff have been married for 30 years and live in Tooele. Melanie has been a member of PTA for 16 years, serving as a membership chair, leadership vice president, secretary, and treasurer on the local level. She has also served as a region director and region secretary. She is active in her community. She serves as a Tooele City Planning Commissioner, regularly attends city council meetings and school board meetings. She is passionate about PTA and loves serving as the director of membership.

Martin Bates, Administrator Representative: Dr. Martin W. Bates became the superintendent of Granite School District in September of 2010 after serving in various district capacities since 1997. He has held school administrative positions in the Granite, Provo and Salt Lake City School Districts. From the late 1980s through the mid 1990s, he worked as an instructional assistant and later as a teacher with children with disabilities.

Laura Adams, Teacher Representative: Laura joined the Utah PTA Board of Directors in 2018 as the teacher representative. As a full-time teacher, she enjoys working with students and helping build their weaknesses into strengths. As the elected representative of teachers throughout the state, Laura brings a valuable perspective to the Utah PTA Board of Directors.

###

About Utah PTA: Utah PTA is a non-profit grassroots child advocacy association made up of parents, teachers, and students with a membership of 90,000 people throughout Utah. Utah PTA is an affiliate of National PTA and is organized in Utah at local, council, and state levels.

www.utahpta.org