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Colorado College Appoints Dr. Manya Whitaker as 15th President

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo — June 25, 2025 — The Board of Trustees of Colorado College, a nationally recognized liberal arts institution known for its distinctive Block Plan, academic excellence, deep-rooted commitment to access, and distinct location at the intersection of the Rocky Mountains and Southwest, has appointed Dr. Manya Whitaker as the College's 15th president.

Initially appointed to a two-year interim presidency on July 1, 2024, Whitaker earned the confidence of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners through her transparent leadership, keen understanding of Colorado College's mission, and steady guidance. During her initial year as Interim President, she advanced several critical institutional priorities, including securing the new Research Colleges and Universities distinction from Carnegie, surpassing fundraising goals, and overseeing a pivotal year in College history.

"Dr. Manya Whitaker has demonstrated exceptional leadership during a pivotal time in the College's history," said Jeff Keller, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "From day one in the Interim President role, she brought vision and pragmatism to it. We recently celebrated the College's 150th year, and the board has every confidence that President Whitaker is the right person to lead Colorado College into its next chapter." Incoming Board of Trustees Chair Kyle Samuel added, "Manya Whitaker has consistently impressed and inspired us with her vision, leadership, and deep commitment to the mission of Colorado College. She brings a steady hand and a bold perspective – exactly what's needed in this transformative era for higher education."

An accomplished academic and developmental educational psychologist with expertise in adolescent identity formation and motivation, Dr. Whitaker previously served as Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff to former CC President L. Song Richardson. In that role, she assisted in managing sensitive and confidential issues, oversaw various cross-divisional and executive initiatives as well as the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College, and provided critical direction and leadership to optimize strategic priorities such as the college's antiracism commitment.

Dr. Whitaker is also a Professor of Education at Colorado College. Before moving into administration, she taught classes on social and political issues in education. She has authored four books and more than 20 book chapters and articles focused on her research, including "Public School Equity: Educational Leadership for Justice," "Schooling Multicultural Teachers: A Guide for Program Assessment and Professional Development," "Learning from the Inside-Out: Child Development and School Choice," and "Counternarratives from Women of Color Academics: Bravery, Vulnerability, and Resistance" (co-editor).

During her 14 years at Colorado College, her roles have also included Interim Director of the Butler Center, Director of the Crown Faculty Center, and Director of Graduate Studies and Chair of Education.

Dr. Whitaker received her doctorate in developmental psychology from Vanderbilt University and her B.A. in educational psychology from Dartmouth College.

In accepting the appointment, President Whitaker said, "It has been a profound honor to serve this extraordinary community as Interim President over the past year and as a faculty member in the years prior. I am inspired daily by our students' passion, our faculty's wisdom, our staff's dedication, and the entire campus community's commitment to the College's values. I look forward to working together to build on our strengths and shape an even brighter future for Colorado College."

Additional information about President Whitaker can be found on the College's website at www.coloradocollege.edu/15thpresident.

About Colorado College

Colorado College is a nationally prominent, four-year liberal arts college founded in Colorado Springs in 1874. In 1970, the college created the Block Plan, in which its approximately 2,200 undergraduate students take one class at a time in intensive 3.5-week segments. A Master of Arts in teaching degree is also offered. The college's vision is to ignite students' passion and potential to create a more just world. For more information, visit www.coloradocollege.edu.