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Fitz Center Leader

University of Dayton

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The University of Dayton Fitz Center for Leadership in Community has a new executive director, Hunter Phillips Goodman, who brings a passion for civic engagement that will help strengthen partnerships between the campus and the Dayton community.

Goodman holds a doctorate in leadership from the University of Central Arkansas, where she most...
recently served as executive director of development. She begins at the University of Dayton as the Fitz Center approaches its 14th anniversary and prepares to set a vision for how it can grow and continue to be a strong resource to support the region.

“It’s clear that Dr. Goodman embraces the vision of the Fitz Center as a catalyst for community building and leadership development, and that she possesses the skills, experiences and collaborative style needed,” said Jason Pierce, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. “She brings significant experience in civic engagement and community-engaged learning and scholarship, as well as notable administrative experience in various nonprofit and higher education settings. Our faculty, staff and community partners will find a very capable and creative person in Dr. Goodman.”

Goodman said she will initially focus on meeting people on and off campus to get their input and perspective on the Fitz Center, which engages students in volunteer and community-based learning programs in local schools, urban neighborhoods and on the rivers. She will serve as the keynote speaker for the CityLinks conference April 15. The conference brings together Dayton and Montgomery County citizens for workshops on revitalizing neighborhoods and nurturing leadership.

Goodman said her experience as a student volunteer in a crisis center and a homeless shelter has helped influence and guide her career. She volunteered as a Bonner Scholar, a scholarship program nationwide that calls on undergraduates to serve in their communities. It was through that network of contacts she learned about the Fitz Center opening.

“As soon as my husband, Mark, and I visited, we knew there was a connection here and it was a special place,” she said. “The way the University approaches partnerships, it’s very genuine. It’s grounded in the Marianist mission and in the well-being of the people of Dayton. It’s not the university over here and the community over there. It’s truly ‘how do we work together hand-in-hand to make Dayton a better place and develop engaged citizen scholars?’”

Goodman also brings past experience as executive coach for the Conway Interfaith Clinic and executive director of the Arkansas Coalition for Excellence, a statewide association of charitable nonprofits.

She recently was selected for the inaugural U.S. Presidential Leadership Scholars Program. She is a member of the editorial board for The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership and a reviewer for The Journal of Public Scholarship in Higher Education.

Goodman holds a master’s degree in student personnel from the University of Southern Mississippi and an English degree from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee.

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