FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2019
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Organization: Memphis Medical District Collaborative

MMDC Hires First Director of Real Estate; Receives $450,000 Grant from Kresge Foundation

The Memphis Medical District Collaborative (MMDC) today announced the hire of Ben Schulman as the organization’s first director of real estate. Schulman has worked across urban planning, policy, real estate and architecture sectors.

At MMDC, Schulman will manage and advance a portfolio of projects in the Memphis Medical District and connect area developers to the necessary financing incentives and organizational tools to bring projects to fruition.

Schulman comes to Memphis from Small Change, an equity crowdfunding platform, where he served as a principal. Before joining Small Change, Schulman served as the director of communications for the Congress for the New Urbanism and the American Institute of Architects Chicago. His writing on urban planning, policy and architecture has been published widely, in outlets such as Architect Magazine and The Atlantic’s CityLab. He has lectured at institutions including Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy.

“Memphis has always been a city on the vanguard,” Schulman says. “The work at MMDC continues that tradition by developing and implementing innovations that weave together the economic, social and built fabric of the city. It’s exciting to join the organization at a time when momentum is building in Memphis, and to help further catalyze development in the District.”

“MMDC is focused on strengthening the communities between the anchor institutions, creating the spaces and places that connect the neighborhoods,” says Tommy Pacello, president of MMDC. “Bringing Ben on board allows us to advance the development of real estate projects that will make the Medical District a stronger and more vibrant community.”

A recent $450,000 grant from The Kresge Foundation will deepen MMDC’s capacity to engage community developers and supports the newly created director of real estate position. Kresge’s support comes at a time when activities in the District are accelerating.

In addition to the continued growth and expansion of core Medical District institutions, such as St. Jude Children’s Research Center’s $1.5 billion campus construction plan and the opening earlier this year of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare’s Shorb Tower, MMDC has, to date in 2019:

- provided pre-development grant support to 12 real estate projects;
- partnered on the development of a 64-housing unit, scattered site, infill project between St. Jude and LeBonheur campuses;
- continues to build financial and technical tools to support thoughtful mixed-use and mixed-income infill development

“The Memphis Medical District is undergoing an inspiring revitalization due in part to the careful stewardship of the Memphis Medical District Collaborative,” said Chantel M. Rush, senior program officer with the Kresge Foundation’s American Cities Program. “As the Collaborative takes on additional inclusive development projects, we’re optimistic these efforts can be structured to benefit longtime Memphians, especially communities of color. Our shared goal is to ensure more Memphians can experience the prosperity and increased opportunity taking hold throughout the city.”
The Memphis Medical District Collaborative is a community development organization working with partners to strengthen the communities in the Memphis Medical District so that they are more livable, vibrant, and safe. Learn more at mdcollaborative.org

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