



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Scherman Foundation Welcomes Three New Board Members

(May 1, 2023) NEW YORK, NY — The Scherman Foundation announced today that it has elected three new members to its Board of Directors: Alexis Anderson-Reed, Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, and Rasu Jilani.



Pictured (left to right): Alexis Anderson-Reed, Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, Rasu Jilani

Alexis Anderson-Reed is a long-time activist and the Chief Executive Officer of State Voices, the country’s largest nonpartisan civic engagement infrastructure organization. Her dedication to racial and gender equity, as well as her expertise and stalwart leadership in civic engagement efforts, will be instrumental to the Foundation’s deepening commitment to racial justice, especially within its Democracy program.

“I am thrilled to join the Scherman Foundation board at this critical moment in the pursuit of equity and justice for all,” said Anderson-Reed. “At this important time in our country’s history, ensuring a truly accessible and accountable democracy will take all of us—practitioners, leaders, and funders—committed to the long-term vision and strategies that will secure our liberation. I’m so excited to be in partnership with the

Scherman board and staff as together we work to realize all that is possible for our people and our country.”

Ibrahim Abdul-Matin is an environmental policy and sustainability expert. He is also an author, co-founder of the consulting firm Green Squash, and an alumni of the Marxe School at Baruch College, where he is now an adjunct lecturer for undergraduates. Abdul-Matin brings an invaluable perspective and knowledge to the Foundation’s environmental and climate justice grantmaking.

“I am deeply honored and humbled to join the Scherman Foundation Board. Climate change and social justice are two issues that I am passionate about, and I am excited to work alongside the board and the foundation’s partners to drive meaningful change,” said Abdul-Matin. “The board and staff are a special group and I look forward to contributing my skills, knowledge, and experiences to advance the foundation’s mission of promoting equity and sustainability in our communities. Together, I am confident that we can make a positive impact and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.”

Rasu Jilani is a cultural strategist, social sculptor, and the newly-appointed Executive Director of the Brooklyn Arts Council. He brings to the Scherman board a strong, intersectional creative vision and a deep connection and commitment to New York City’s cultural and artistic landscapes, which are particularly vital as the Foundation reshapes its Arts program with a racial justice lens.

“As a new board member of the Scherman Foundation, I am proud to join a distinguished group of diverse leaders who are dedicated to advancing innovative and impactful solutions and support to some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges of our time,” said Jilani. “With my expertise in social justice, arts, and culture, I am confident that my skill set and experience will be a tremendous asset to the Foundation’s mission of creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable world through strategic grantmaking and partnerships.”

Marianna Schaffer, Scherman Foundation Board Chair and Vice President of Programs at the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, shared her excitement for the new members.

“I’m thrilled to welcome Alexis, Ibrahim, and Rasu to the board. Each brings a unique perspective and expertise that will enrich our conversations and help us further our goal to advance justice and grow a culture of belonging in all aspects of our work,” said Schaffer.

In addition to these new board members, the Scherman Foundation is also announcing staff changes. Gisela Alvarez, who previously served as the Foundation’s Senior Program Officer, is now Program Director. Naiche Parker, who previously served as the Foundation’s Grants and Communications Manager, is now Program Officer and Racial

Justice & Communications Coordinator. Sami Stern has also joined the Foundation as its Grants Manager and Administrative Assistant. With these changes, the Foundation is moving forward with a reinvigorated sense of purpose.

“The addition of three new stellar board members with deep lived and professional experience in the Foundation’s areas of concern, as well as the restructuring of our staff to particularly elevate our racial justice work, marks a critical point in our historical trajectory,” stated Mike Pratt, President of the Scherman Foundation. “We can now embody and expand our ambitions to build a stronger, more transparent, and accountable grantmaking program guided by a joint commitment to racial justice and to organizing and movement-building.”

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