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**CITY PARKS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD CHAIR
ROLAND S. MERCHANT, JR., A COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE EXECUTIVE**

MARCH 30, 2023 - New York, NY - [City Parks Foundation](#) (CPF), a nonprofit dedicated to transforming parks into vibrant centers of urban life for all New Yorkers, announced today that commercial real estate executive Roland S. Merchant, Jr. will take over as Board Chair for the organization. He has served on the board since 2014. Current Board Chair David Barse has completed his three-year chair term and will remain on as Executive Chair.

"All of us at City Parks Foundation are enormously grateful to David Barse for his tireless work during an extremely challenging time for our organization and for our city. The pandemic highlighted just how important parks are to New Yorkers, and City Parks Foundation was positioned to step up and support these critical green spaces thanks to David's leadership," said Executive Director Heather Lubov. "I am excited to work with Roland to continue to grow our free programs in parks all around the city."

Merchant brings an impressive resume with him to his new role as City Parks Foundation's Board Chair. The Senior Managing Director & Head of Institutional Advisory at CBRE Capital Advisors, has over 20 years of experience in finance, sales and real estate investment banking for major public and private institutional real estate investors. During his time on the board, Roland has served on CPF's leadership Executive Committee, Sports Committee, and Nominating Committee, and recently served as Vice Chair to the board. He will be the board's first African American chair. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and son.

"As a proud New Yorker, City Parks Foundation's mission to get people engaged with parks, keeping them at the core of neighborhoods, has always been inspiring to me," said Merchant. "It is an honor to follow in the footsteps of our previous chairs, and especially David, so I look forward to continuing his legacy with this talented Board."

In addition to serving as recent Board Chair, Barse is the founder and CEO of index company XOUT Capital and Executive Producer of the Academy Award and GRAMMY(R) winning documentary film "Summer of Soul," which he brought to City Parks Foundation's SummerStage festival as a free public preview. He leaves behind an impressive record at City Parks Foundation, including seeing the organization through the pandemic with prudent financial management and a pivot to digital programming. He then led the organization's 2022 Gala fundraiser and 2022 Tennis Benefit to their highest grossing in the event's history.



Barse, who joined the board in 2009, will continue to support CPF's mission as a board member.

"I've greatly enjoyed my time serving as Chair of City Parks Foundation's board, especially working with the fantastic staff who kept our programs going in parks during the pandemic. I love watching these programs thrive now that we're back at full force," said Barse. "I am thrilled to have Roland take my place and look forward to seeing his vision come to fruition."

About City Parks Foundation

At City Parks Foundation, we are dedicated to invigorating and transforming parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs -- located in more than 300 parks, recreation centers and public schools across New York City -- reach over 275,000 people each year. Our ethos is simple: thriving parks mean thriving communities. <http://cityparksfoundation.org>