



DALLAS ARBORETUM
AND BOTANICAL GARDEN

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Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden President Honored as Southern Methodist University Distinguished Alumnae

DALLAS, Texas (November 14, 2014) – On November 13, Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden President and CEO Mary Brinegar received the Southern Methodist University’s Distinguished Alumni Award—the highest honor the university bestows upon its graduates—for her outstanding contributions to the Garden and her involvement in the community. In her 18-year career, she has led the Garden’s leadership, fundraising and enhancements, including the opening of the \$62 million Rory Meyers Children’s Adventure Garden in 2013.

Brian Shivers, Dallas Arboretum chairman of the board and business leader, said, “Mary is a force of nature. She has an amazing ability to take a concept or an idea and turn it into something fabulous. A great example of that is The 12 Days of Christmas exhibit, which was an idea a board member’s wife had proposed to her. Opening November 16, The 12 Days of Christmas will become Dallas newest holiday tradition. Plus, Mary is really good at building an effective and professional team that has both breadth and depth able to help her carry her vision of the Garden.”

Mary Brinegar has devoted her career to enriching the lives of Dallas residents and visitors. After earning a degree in elementary education from SMU in 1969, she worked in the non-profit sector at KERA-TV, the Science Place and The Dallas Opera. She became president and CEO of the Dallas Arboretum in 1996.

Since Brinegar assumed leadership, the Dallas Arboretum has made improvements of more than \$100 million and achieved recognition as one of the world’s most beautiful gardens. MSNBC recommended a visit to the Dallas Arboretum as one of the “10 things you should

do in America in the spring.” Trip Advisor has chosen it as Dallas’ number one entertainment activity for the past four years, and *Fodor’s Travel* recently named Pumpkin Village one of “America’s best pumpkin patches.” The 2012 exhibit of glass works by Dale Chihuly attracted huge crowds and boosted membership to 38,000, and attendance approaches close to one million people annually. In addition, the Garden has been honored with many prestigious awards including the most recent one on November 13: the Dallas Regional Chamber’s Community Catalyst Award for its economic impact to the region. In 2012 and 2013, the Garden contributed more than \$340 million to the local economy, according to a study conducted by SMU.

With a passion for education, Brinegar’s highest accomplishment is the opening of the Rory Meyers Children’s Adventure Garden last year. Educators from SMU’s Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development participated in curriculum planning for the eight-acre garden where children’s scientific learning is enhanced through 150 interactive exhibits in 17 learning galleries. Recognizing its innovative education programs serving 4,000 adults and 100,000 children annually, the Dallas Arboretum received the 2013 Luminary Award presented by the Simmons School. Her additional awards include Theta of the Year, Junior League Sustainer of the Year, Fundraiser of the Year and “100 Women in 100 Years.”

About the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden:

The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden is located on the southeastern shore of White Rock Lake at 8525 Garland Road, Dallas, Texas 75218. The Dallas Arboretum is also the home of the internationally acclaimed Rory Meyers Children’s Adventure Garden. The Arboretum is open daily from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. General admission is \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors 65 and older, \$10 for children 3-12 and free for Arboretum members and children two and under. There is an additional cost of \$3 per person for entrance into the Rory Meyers Children’s Adventure Garden. On-site parking is \$10. *The Dallas Morning News* is the principal partner of the Dallas Arboretum. The Arboretum is supported, in part, by funds from the Dallas Park and Recreation Department. WFAA is an official media sponsor for the Dallas Arboretum. For more information about the Dallas Arboretum, visit <http://www.dallasarboretum.org/>

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