



**For Immediate Release**

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**COLUMBUS PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCES NEW CO-CHAIR**

COLUMBUS, OH – The Columbus Partnership announced today that Kirt Walker, chief executive officer of Nationwide, will become co-chairman of the Partnership effective January 1, 2023. Walker will lead the organization alongside Steve Steinour, chairman, president and CEO of Huntington Bancshares Incorporated, who has served as Columbus Partnership co-chair since January 2022.

Walker has been a member of the Columbus Partnership and its Governing Board since 2020. He also serves as chair of the Nationwide Children’s Hospital board and is on the American Red Cross Board of Governors. Additionally, Walker serves on the Board of Directors for Catalyst – an organization dedicated to accelerating progress for women through workplace inclusion.

“I’m honored to co-lead the Columbus Partnership’s Governing Board,” said Walker. “The Columbus Region has so much to be proud of as we continue to drive growth and development. I’m confident that the ongoing engagement of our business community, along with the strong partnerships among private, public and academic sectors, will continue to advance the vision for Columbus to become the most prosperous region in the U.S.”

Walker succeeds Nick Akins, chairman and CEO of American Electric Power (AEP), who will step down from the role of Columbus Partnership co-chair as he transitions from AEP CEO to executive chair of the AEP Board, where will remain an executive and officer of the company. Akins has been a member of the Columbus Partnership for 11 years and will continue to serve on the Partnership’s Governing Board.

“Nick has been a tremendous partner to me as co-chair of the Partnership, and there is no question his leadership has made Columbus a better place,” said Steinour. “We’re grateful to Nick for his service and grateful to Kirt for stepping into the co-chair position. He embodies the civic-minded business leadership that will help us build the best possible future for the Columbus Region.”

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**About the Columbus Partnership**

The Columbus Partnership is a nonprofit organization of CEOs from Columbus’ leading businesses and institutions. Through its business leaders and ally organizations across Central Ohio, the Partnership upholds a shared vision to make Columbus the most prosperous region in the country. The Columbus Partnership team also includes One Columbus, one of the nation’s top economic development organizations that serves the 11-county Columbus Region; and Smart Columbus, an innovation lab that advances what is new and next at the intersection of technology and community good. Learn more at [columbuspartnership.com](http://columbuspartnership.com).

**About American Electric Power**

American Electric Power, based in Columbus, Ohio, is powering a cleaner, brighter energy future for its customers and communities. AEP’s approximately 16,700 employees operate and maintain the nation’s largest electricity transmission system and more than 224,000 miles of distribution lines to safely deliver

reliable and affordable power to 5.5 million regulated customers in 11 states. AEP is recognized consistently for its focus on sustainability, community engagement, and diversity, equity and inclusion. AEP's family of companies includes utilities AEP Ohio, AEP Texas, Appalachian Power (in Virginia and West Virginia), AEP Appalachian Power (in Tennessee), Indiana Michigan Power, Kentucky Power, Public Service Company of Oklahoma, and Southwestern Electric Power Company (in Arkansas, Louisiana, east Texas and the Texas Panhandle). AEP also owns AEP Energy, which provides innovative competitive energy solutions nationwide. For more information, visit [aep.com](http://aep.com).

### **About Huntington**

Huntington Bancshares Incorporated (Nasdaq: HBAN) is a \$179 billion asset regional bank holding company headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Founded in 1866, The Huntington National Bank and its affiliates provide consumers, small and middle-market businesses, corporations, municipalities, and other organizations with a comprehensive suite of banking, payments, wealth management, and risk management products and services. Huntington operates more than 1,000 branches in 11 states, with certain businesses operating in extended geographies. Visit [Huntington.com](http://Huntington.com) for more information.

### **About Nationwide**

Nationwide, a Fortune 100 company based in Columbus, Ohio, is one of the largest and strongest diversified insurance and financial services organizations in the United States. Nationwide is rated A+ by both A.M. Best and Standard & Poor's. An industry leader in driving customer-focused innovation, Nationwide provides a full range of insurance and financial services products including auto, business, homeowners, farm and life insurance; public and private sector retirement plans, annuities and mutual funds; excess & surplus, specialty and surety; pet, motorcycle and boat insurance.