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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## New Members and Officers Elected to Xavier University of Louisiana Board of Trustees

New Orleans, La – Xavier University of Louisiana has elected three new members to its Board of Trustees for three-year terms; Dr. Michelle Dipp, Sister Jane Nesmith, S.B.S. ('72), and Ms. Carita S. Walker ('93). Sister Stephanie Henry, S.B.S., Xavier's newly elected President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament ('00), was also named to an ex-officio board position.

At the summer meeting, the Board also re-elected Mr. Justin Augustine III to serve as chair. Dr. Derek Robinson ('98) and Mr. James Mitchell were also designated to serve as vice chairs. Dr. Jennifer Goldsmith Adams was elected Board Secretary.

"As a product of Xavier, I understand the transformative power of a Xavier education," **said Chair Augustine.** "This group of outstanding leaders has committed to serving the university to ensure that it remains strong and relevant to the promotion of a more just and humane society and to ensure that every Xavier student is prepared to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society."

Dr. Michelle Dipp is a Co-Founder and Managing Partner at Biospring Partners, a dedicated healthcare technology growth equity firm. Previously, Dr. Dipp was General Partner at Longwood Fund and served as Managing Director at General Atlantic, launching their life sciences investment platform and leading multiple investments, including Ginkgo BioWorks, PathAI, and Immunocore.

"I am honored to serve Xavier, one of the nation's top ranked historically Black Universities," **Dr. Dipp expressed.** "As one of the leading institutions for undergraduate education, Xavier graduates represent the highest number of Black students who go on to achieve a medical degree or a doctorate degree in science, engineering, or pharmacy and who have a 93% job placement rate."

Sr. Jane Nesmith, S.B.S. ('72) is the Director of Black Catholic Ministries at the Diocese of Cleveland. Sr. Nesmith is a founding member of the National Black Sisters' Conference and an accomplished composer, author, and producer of several volumes of CDs and books.

Sr. Nesmith served as the Vice President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for seven years. Her experience includes serving as Parish Pastoral Administrator and Executive Director for numerous Indiana ministries. She has also been a teacher and campus minister for high schools in Louisiana and Jamaica.

"I'm excited about another opportunity to further the legacy of St. Katharine Drexel as Xavier University embraces her challenge to press forward and fear nothing," **said Sr. Nesmith.**

Ms. Carita Walker ('93) is the Chief Legal Officer at Shell Recharge Solutions, a Shell company dedicated to unlocking the possibilities of the electric mobility future through delivering innovative software and services. Ms. Walker also serves as Independent Director for Kayne Anderson Energy Infrastructure Fund, Inc. and Kayne Anderson NextGen Energy & Infrastructure, Inc. Ms. Walker was recently named one of Savoy Magazine's 2022 Most Influential Black Executives in Corporate America.

Ms. Walker was previously based in Doha, Qatar, with Qatar Shell Services, leveraging her deep environmental and corporate law background to support Pearl GTL, the world's largest source of gas-to-liquid products. Her experience includes serving as Shell's inaugural Leadership Counsel for Leadership Diversity Fellow, Governance Officer for Girl Scouts of the USA Girl Scouts of America Overseas – Doha, and leading environmental permitting for multibillion-dollar capital projects to enable businesses to successfully achieve their complex commercial transaction goals.

"I am a Xavier graduate, and as I revisit the identity and mission of the university, I am inspired by the institution's universal embrace of humanity," **stated Ms. Walker.** "Xavier continues to be a place where beating the odds is a regular occurrence."

Sr. Stephanie Henry, S.B.S. ('00) was elected President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in July. Prior to her tenure at Xavier, she was President of Xavier Preparatory School, now St. Katharine Drexel Preparatory School, also serving as a science teacher and campus minister. She also served as Director of Religious Education at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish.

"Xavier University's mission and success will always be close to my heart, as I am a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament, alumna, and former faculty member," **said Sr. Henry.**

Trustees continuing their terms include Ms. Alexandra Fell Allen, Rabbi Edward Cohn, Mr. Brandon Garrett, Dr. Richard Gilder, Ms. Suzanne Malveaux, Ms. Claudia Marmolejo, Mr. Meredith Marshall, Mr. Randall McHenry, Fr. Thomas O'Hara, Mr. Lyon Polk, Mr. James Swanson, Ms. Angela Vallot, Dr. David Weill, and Mr. Joseph West. Xavier President Reynold Verret serves as an ex-officio member of the Board.

Rotating off the Board after having served two three-year terms are Dr. Gilda Barabino ('78), Sister Theresa Chato ('71), Dr. John Jackson ('94), and Sr. Donna Breslin, who served ex-officio as President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.



**Dr. Michelle Dipp**  
**MD, Ph.D.**



**Sr. Stephanie Henry,**  
**S.B.S.**



**Sr. Jane Nesmith,**  
**S.B.S.**



**Ms. Carita Walker,**  
**J.D.**

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### **About Xavier University of Louisiana**

*Xavier University of Louisiana, America's only historically Black and Catholic University, is ranked among the top three HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier produces more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is also among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the country.*

*Established in 1925, by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African American and Native Americans to receive quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in art, business, education, biological sciences, chemistry, pharmacy and political science. More recent additions in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience and genetics, in addition to new STEM-based master's programs, have provided Xavier students (2815 undergraduates and 787 graduates) an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty, who are experts in their fields, to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula is to provide students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, thereby facilitating a more just and humane society for all. For more*

information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at [www.xula.edu](http://www.xula.edu) or contact Regi Reyes at (504) 520-5240 or [rreyes@xula.edu](mailto:rreyes@xula.edu).