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Contact: Rachel Maher  
Tel: 404-546-7969  
Email: [rachel@parkpride.org](mailto:rachel@parkpride.org)

## Atlanta Leaders Join Board of Local Parks Organization

### PARK PRIDE ANNOUNCES SLATE OF 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

Atlanta, GA., February 2020 – A new cohort of leaders has joined the [Board of Directors](#) for [Park Pride](#), a local nonprofit working to engage communities to activate the power of parks.

Luis Avila-Estrada, Cox Enterprises; Atiba Mbiwan, the Zeist Foundation; and Susan Stainback, Sylvatica Studio, join 17 other local park advocates to comprise Park Pride’s 2020 Board of Directors. This group is tasked with providing governance and oversight for the nonprofit, including reviewing and approving the organization’s annual slate of park improvement grants. Last year, Park Pride awarded over \$1.3 million in grant funding to Friends of the Park groups across the Cities of Atlanta, Brookhaven, and Tucker, and unincorporated DeKalb County.

“As Park Pride embarks upon our 31st year, we are looking to build upon our Board of Directors to achieve ambitious goals set out in our Strategic Plan,” said Michael Halicki, Park Pride’s Executive Director. “Luis Avila-Estrada, Atiba Mbiwan, and Susan Stainback will help us in our mission-driven work to engage communities to activate the power of parks!”

Avila-Estrada, Mbiwan and Stainback each bring a unique set of skills and experience to the organization.

Avila-Estrada, who serves as Vice President of Governance and Compliance at Cox Enterprises, will lead a special initiative to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within Park Pride’s services and programs. Prior to working with Cox Enterprises, he worked at US Foods as the Interim General Counsel, Chief Compliance Officer, and Secretary. There he led a legal department of 72 people, overseeing several teams such as Ethics & Compliance. Avila-Estrada has been recognized by numerous organizations, including being named Business Leader of Color by Chicago United and Out & Proud Corporate Counsel by the National LGBT Bar.

Mbiwan, Interim Executive Director of the Zeist Foundation, offers his strong knowledge of Atlanta’s philanthropic community to benefit Park Pride’s Development Committee. Before joining the Zeist Foundation, Mbiwan served as a Program Officer for the Arthur M. Blank Foundation, where he managed a portfolio of 125 nonprofits based in Boston, New York City, Los Angeles, Phoenix, coastal South Carolina, and the state of Georgia. Prior to this, Mbiwan worked in the nonprofit field with a range of organizations that touched on youth development.

Stainback, Principal and Owner of Sylvatica Studio, will bring her knowledge of landscape architecture and planning to Park Pride’s advocacy efforts, working to elevate park issues within local and state governments. Stainback has worked as a licensed landscape architect since 1988 and founded Sylvatica Studio in Atlanta in 2011. A proponent of landscape architecture as a medium of multidisciplinary collaboration, Stainback has explored working relationships with artists, architects, ecologists, engineers, and plant people.

Mark Balloun, Chair of the Park Pride Board of Directors, is excited by the energy and talent of Park Pride’s newest board members. “I welcome the opportunity work side-by-side with Luis Avila-Estrada, Atiba Mbiwan and Susan Stainback. They bring great talents and expertise to Park Pride’s Board of Directors,” said Balloun.

For a full list of Park Pride’s Board of Directors, visit <https://parkpride.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/>.

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**About Park Pride:**

In 2019, Park Pride celebrated 30 years of engaging communities to activate the power of parks! Working with over 130 local Friends of the Park groups, Park Pride provides leadership, services, and funding to help communities realize their dreams for neighborhood parks that support healthy people, strong neighborhoods, vibrant business districts, a robust economy, and a healthy environment. Park Pride is active in greenspace advocacy and educating both civic leaders and the public about the benefits of parks, and annually hosts the Parks and Greenspace Conference, the largest parks conference in the southeast. Learn more about Park Pride at [parkpride.org](http://parkpride.org).