



Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc.

626 E. Broad St., Suite 400, Richmond, VA 23219

804-354-0641, VA Relay 711, HOMEofVA.org

March 16, 2022

CONTACT:

Mike Burnette, Direct Line: 804-237-7549 | Mike@HOMEofVA.org

HOME of Virginia Announces Next President & CEO

Thomas Okuda Fitzpatrick

Richmond, VA - Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) of Virginia, Inc. announced today that after a nationwide search, Thomas Okuda Fitzpatrick will serve as HOME's fifth president & chief executive officer in its 50-year history starting April 6, 2022.

Fitzpatrick has been a passionate and longtime advocate for HOME, having served on HOME's Board of Directors from 2013-2021. Fitzpatrick served as the chair of HOME's Board of Directors from 2015-2016, the chair of the Virginia Equal Housing Foundation from 2017-2020, and served as the chair of both HOME's Legal Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee.

"This is a pivotal time for HOME, as we celebrate the organization's 50th anniversary. We know that Tom's commitment to fair housing and housing counseling services, evidenced by his tireless volunteerism for more than a decade to further our mission, will help us continue evolving and winning new battles to defeat the old foe of housing discrimination in Virginia as well as have housing counselors ready for the ever-changing housing environment," said Marianne McGhee, board chair for HOME. "We also wish to thank Monica Jefferson, HOME's vice president & COO, for her leadership as interim president & CEO during this transition."

Fitzpatrick has devoted his career to changing systems, uplifting the voices of the historically underrepresented, fighting with and for underserved communities, and advocating for the disenfranchised. He joins HOME from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, where he serves as the director of the Division of Programs and Services and provides strategic leadership over the programs and grants for juvenile justice, child welfare, victim services, gun violence prevention, behavioral health, reentry, and adult community corrections and pretrial programs. Before joining state government, Fitzpatrick worked for the City of Richmond as the chief deputy director at the Department of Social Services and as a deputy director at the Department of Justice Services. He also previously worked as a civil rights attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Virginia.

Fitzpatrick received both his undergraduate and law degrees from the College of William and Mary and is a graduate of the Virginia Executive Institute, Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership, and Leadership Metro Richmond. He is actively involved in the community as a member of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board, a member of the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Virginia, and as a Richmond Chapter Board Member of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities.

"I am profoundly honored to have been selected to lead this storied organization, and I look forward to continuing in the proud tradition of aggressive enforcement of fair housing laws and ensuring that the promises of the Fair Housing Act can be realized," said Thomas Okuda Fitzpatrick. "HOME is well-known for its superb award-winning housing counseling programs and its precedent setting fair housing work. HOME plays a vital role as a watchdog for housing fairness, working to ensure equal access to housing for all of Virginia."

"Tom and I have collaborated on and off for the past 17 years in our respective efforts to rethink, reframe, and reform the criminal justice system," said Michael Herring, board member of HOME and former Richmond Commonwealth's Attorney. "Tom understands the impact policy decisions can have on the daily lives of those in affected communities. He diligently pursues his goals of justice and racial equity when tackling deeply entrenched practices. I look forward to Tom bringing the same tenacity he brought to reforming criminal justice systems to HOME's efforts for systemic changes in housing."

"I am thrilled for HOME that Tom will be the next CEO. He has had a deep commitment to HOME's mission of ensuring equal access to housing, without fear of discrimination," said Victor Branch, former longtime HOME board member and president of the Bank of America Richmond Region. "We witnessed Tom's ability to think strategically to navigate difficult policy issues as the chair of HOME's board. I am confident Tom will build upon HOME's successes and serve as a valued partner to Virginia's vast and diverse communities."

Tom succeeds Heather Mullins Crislip who was president and CEO from 2012-2021. Previous presidents include: the late Barbara Wurtzel Rabin, Kent Willis (retired), Connie Chamberlin (retired), and Heather Mullins Crislip (Richmond Forum).

To coordinate media interviews with Tom after April 6, 2022, please contact mike@homeofva.org to schedule.

About HOME:

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME of VA), founded in 1971, is a statewide fair housing and HUD-approved housing counseling 501(c)(3) non-profit. HOME fulfills its mission to ensure equal access to housing for all people by addressing the still glaring individual instances of housing discrimination. Additionally, HOME works to tackle systemically divisive housing practices on a larger scale through fair housing enforcement and research, advocacy, and statewide policy work. HOME also takes direct action to aid first-time homebuyers, families with homes under the threat of foreclosure, families facing eviction, and helps families with housing choice vouchers move to neighborhoods of opportunity. At a time when unequal access to housing and credit contributes most to the United States' growing wealth gap, HOME's multifaceted approach is a powerful catalyst toward furthering fair housing. You can learn more about HOME and all of its services at www.HOMEofVA.org.

You can also learn more about HOME's upcoming 50th anniversary events here at HOMEofVA.org/50.