



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **GLEAVES WHITNEY TO LEAD GERALD R. FORD PRESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION**

*Director of Grand Valley State University's Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies  
to take over role on Sept. 1*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – June 24, 2020** – Gleaves Whitney, who has served as director of the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies at Grand Valley State University since 2003, has been chosen to fill the role of executive director for the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation (GRFPF) effective Sept. 1. He will replace Joe Calvaruso, who will retire after serving as the Foundation's executive director since 2008.

"Gleaves has a strong background developing successful collaborations and partnerships, which will be beneficial for the Foundation's relationships with the National Archives and Records Administration, the Ford Museum and Library, the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, as well as Grand Rapids community and nationwide entities," said GRFPF Board Chair Mike Ford, son of President Gerald R. Ford and Betty Ford.

Credited with establishing the first sustained and comprehensive common ground initiative in U.S. higher education, Whitney received a National Endowment for Humanities grant for the program. Through his leadership, the Hauenstein Center has hosted major conferences that have helped revive the study of Midwestern history and launched the nation's first presidential question-and-answer column, "Ask Gleaves." He also developed the Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy at the Hauenstein Center, which now has more than 400 alumni serving in communities around the nation.

"Gleaves brings to the Foundation an exciting and innovative vision for our future work, both across Michigan and throughout the nation," said Ford. "We have great confidence that he will help us continue to advance the strong legacy of my father and mother for the greater good of our American democracy and the national well-being of all people."

Whitney was selected from a pool of candidates following a comprehensive national search. Calvaruso will assist Whitney with his transition through the end of August.

“I am honored to be selected as the new executive director of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation and to bring the legacy of President and Mrs. Ford to a new generation of Americans,” Whitney said. “The Ford family, Foundation trustees, and Joe Calvaruso have been instrumental in shaping what the Foundation is today, bringing critically important conversations about our nation’s 38th president to the forefront of our national dialogue. I am extremely humbled to have the opportunity to build on their considerable achievements.”

Before joining the Hauenstein Center, Whitney served in Michigan Governor John Engler’s administration as senior writer, chief speechwriter, historian, and assisted in the creation of the Michigan Department of History, Arts, and Libraries. He earned a bachelor’s degree in social sciences from Colorado State University, Fort Collins; and a master’s degree in history from the University of Michigan. He was presented with a Doctor of Humane Letters from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, Berkeley California; and was selected as a Fulbright Scholar to West Germany (1984-1985).

#### **About the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation**

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation fosters increased awareness of the life, career, values, and legacy of America’s 38th President. It does so through activities designed to promote the high ideals of integrity, honesty, and candor that defined President Ford’s extraordinary career of public service. The Foundation promotes the ideas, values, commitment to public service and historical legacy of President Gerald R. Ford and further promotes greater civic engagement and recognition of integrity wherever it exists in the public arena. It supports permanent and changing exhibits designed to promote historical literacy; conferences; educational outreach and other programs, both scholarly and popular, including at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum.

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