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## WEDU PBS Appoints Paul Grove as New President & CEO

### Grove Joins from Chattanooga's WTCI PBS



**Tampa Bay, FL –** [WEDU PBS](#) has named **Paul Grove** as its new President and Chief Executive Officer, effective June 10, 2019. Grove is joining WEDU from WTCI PBS in Chattanooga, where he has served as President and CEO for thirteen years. WEDU's board of directors selected Grove after conducting a national search to replace Susan Howarth, who led the public media station for eight years; Howarth died in September. Vice president of content Jack Conely has served as interim president and chief executive during the search process.

"Paul's leadership skills and experience will take WEDU into an exciting next chapter," says **Brian Keenan**, chair of the board and head of the search committee. "Coming from WTCI – a station going through its own period of growth – he has a proven track record in forging new partnerships and thinking expansively about leveraging technology. Paul has a clear passion for public media, with more than 25 years in the business, and is able to inspire innovative approaches to programming, underwriting, and funding support."

The move marks a return to WEDU and Tampa for Grove. Prior to taking the CEO role in Chattanooga, he served as vice president of national programming and production at WEDU, helping launch the long-time Emmy-winning series "A Gulf Coast Journal." He was at the station for twelve years.

As WEDU celebrates its 60 years of serving the public, Keenan says, having the top job means being able to stay on strategy but also pivot when necessary to adjust to ongoing changes across the public media landscape. "Paul will help WEDU build on our strong fundamentals but also adapt to the shifting realities of funding, platforms, viewer habits, and more. We are teeing up for the next six decades of meeting our communities' needs."

"WEDU is recognized as one of the top PBS stations nationwide – for its content, reach, and overall excellence," says Grove. "It would take a truly extraordinary place and team to compel me to move from a wonderful station like WTCI, and this is that opportunity. I am thrilled to return to WEDU and to such a talented, dedicated organization. I am also happy to come home to Florida – to be a part of the growth and changes happening in this region, and to enjoy and explore the richness of the culture, politics, and personalities in this area."

#### **Experience building new partnerships**

As CEO of WTCI, Grove was the youngest chair elected to the Tennessee Public Television Council. His tenure has seen a 40% growth in station viewership, a move to a new digital broadcast center, and projects that have exponentially raised the station's visibility and impact at a local and national level.

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Under Grove's leadership, WTCI worked with other PBS stations in the state to pilot a project providing secure communications for first responders during emergencies – developing what will be the first statewide “datacasting” system in the country. Grove’s team at WTCI also collaborated with state education departments to become one of the first stations in the country to populate the digital education platform that became PBSLearningMedia.org.

### **Transition timeline**

The official start date for Grove is June 10, 2019. Jack Conely will continue to serve as Interim until that date, at which point he will report to Grove.

“The incredible leadership that Jack has shown since Susan’s passing has been humbling and a testament to Jack’s dedication to this station and its people,” says Keenan. “Every member of the board is grateful for Jack’s stepping up and taking the helm as Interim CEO. He continues to inspire the staff, and we all look forward to seeing him grow further in the WEDU organization in the coming years.”

### **Meeting the expanding needs of the Tampa Bay region**

“WEDU has been afforded unprecedented opportunities over the past few years – expanding viewership and programming as well as our reach into areas of interest that our growing region is demanding,” says **Don DeFosset**, immediate past chair of the board and member of the search committee. “Paul is a leader who can capitalize on this growth.”

“I am thrilled to take on this role for WEDU at this pivotal time for the station and for the Tampa Bay region,” says Grove. “Serving the needs of the area’s expanding communities – with both in-depth local content as well as national PBS programs – is how we remain an essential partner to individuals and families, whether they are new to the region or have lived here for years.”

Grove received his undergraduate degree from the University of Florida, and has four sons, including two in high school. He and his family will move to Tampa after the school year.

### **ABOUT WEDU PBS**

WEDU is West Central Florida’s PBS station reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station website, [www.wedu.org](http://www.wedu.org) and various social media platforms, monthly member magazine *Premiere*, educational outreach activities and a myriad of special events. WEDU’s focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for men, women and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (Marketing & Research Resources, Inc. M&RR, January 2018). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit [www.wedu.org](http://www.wedu.org); WEDU Public Media on Facebook and Twitter (@wedupbs) or call (813) 254-9338.

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