

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Columbia Gardens Cemetery President Named 1st Vice President of Virginia Cemetery Association

Daun Thomas Frankland, President of Columbia Gardens Cemetery, Arlington, VA was recently named 1st Vice President of the Virginia Cemetery Association (VCA). A VCA board member since 2018, Frankland headed up the planning committee for the association's 77th annual meeting, *"Cemeteries Reimagined: Cultivating a Welcoming Atmosphere to Shatter Stigmas and Inspire Celebrations,"* held in Lynchburg in June. The conference drew notable speakers, including John Bolton, President, International Cemetery, Cremation & Funeral Association; Mary Pope Hutson, President of Sweet Briar College; Dr. Rev. Joe Cobb, Mayor of Roanoke; and Amber Caron, Director of Communications for Wreaths Across America.

Columbia Gardens Cemetery was founded in 1917 by Frankland's great-grandfather and has been managed continuously by the Thomas family for more than a century. Since becoming president and superintendent of the cemetery in 2015, Frankland has overseen significant renovations and improvements, including converting the historic superintendent's house into a spacious event center surrounded by terraces and gardens and recently completing construction of a major road project to connect a new section of the cemetery with legacy sections. Planning has begun for transforming a barn on the property into a conservatory for special events.

Frankland continues to expand the cemetery's services with the opening of the new Garden of Reflection, which features green burial sites, cremation niches and traditional burial plots. Throughout her leadership at Columbia Gardens, Frankland has placed strong emphasis on involving community members with the cemetery by hosting biannual community festivals, participating in Wreaths Across America and offering the "Dew Crew," a summer landscaping internship program for local teens.

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### About Columbia Gardens Cemetery

Columbia Gardens Cemetery serves the needs of families of all denominations and faiths, all nationalities and all walks of life. Founded in 1917, Columbia Gardens is family owned.