



~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON December 11, 2020 ~

**LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER (LSC) FINAL LEADERSHIP TEAM HIRES INCLUDE SC HONOR ROLL TEACHER OF THE YEAR, TEACH FOR AMERICA ALUM, KIPP INSTRUCTIONAL COACH, & CHARTER SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR**

With just under 200 days away from opening its doors to serve the community, Liberty STEAM Charter (LSC) has finalized its senior and school-based leadership teams to ensure a strong launch for Sumter's newest public school. After conducting a nation-wide search that spanned three months, LSC is announcing the following four additional individuals who have accepted various leadership positions within the organization.

1. Luna Velez (Sumter, SC) – Founding Managing Director of Operations
2. Sherman Logan (Dallas, TX) – Founding Director of the Primary Academy
3. Tanya Peckham (Sumter, SC) – Founding Instructional Coach for the Primary Academy
4. Sally Harris (Sumter, SC) – Founding Lead Teacher for STEAM Enrichment & LSC Leader Fellow

**Luna Velez** is a Senior Human Resource Services Professional with over 25 years of experience within K-12 urban public and charter schools and most recently served in the HR Department at Richland School District Two. Luna's blend of operations experience includes human resources systems/programs, student information systems, data/statistical analysis, finance/budgeting, training & development, employment and labor relations, and benefits administration. Luna holds an undergraduate degree in business administration and is a resident of Sumter County. In this role, Luna will plan, coordinate, & supervise the daily business operations of the school that include all matters of school administration that do not directly relate to instruction or scholar behavior. When asked what it means for you to join the LSC team and be a part of this community initiative, Luna stated "I am extremely honored and excited to be joining the LSC family and especially honored that I will be a part of shaping the lives of students, families, and the larger Sumter community. What is most exciting is that I am joining an amazing team who proudly claim a 'students first' mentality." Luna will assume her duties on December 15, 2020.

**Sally Harris** is a South Carolina native who was educated in the public schools of Richland School District Two and has 12 years of PK-12 experience in education. Her professional experiences span both traditional and charter schools. Sally's experience in the charter school sector started with joining Teach for America (TFA), where she first served as a teacher in Dallas. Sally took on several leadership responsibilities as a charter school teacher and was eventually promoted to serve as the Manager of Teacher Leadership Development for Teach for America in South Carolina. Sally used critical leadership skills she gained as a charter school teacher and leader to serve the students of Williamsburg County in a variety of roles as a school Title 1 Coordinator, curriculum coach, and school administrator. She has most recently been serving as a hybrid teacher-leader at Crestwood High and holds education degrees from the University of South Carolina. In this role starting next summer, Sally will spend her time teaching all STEAM enrichment classes and engaging in meaningful leadership development. As we expand, Sally will take on a future role as an academy director. Sally asserts that, "As a former charter school teacher-leader in Dallas, I have been eagerly awaiting the day when Sumter would open a high-performing public charter school. I am thrilled to have this opportunity to serve our community in making sure all children who walk through

our doors receive the joy-filled, high-quality, life-transforming education they deserve. There is no greater professional opportunity.”

**Tanya Peckham** has been an educator for 20 years, spending five years in Sumter School District where she is currently the Instructional Coach at Wilder Elementary. She has spent 18 years as a classroom teacher for 1st-3rd grade and served as an Assistant Principal overseas in the Kingdom of Bahrain for two years. Tanya holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in education from the University of Rhode Island. She received her first teaching award in 1998 when she was named First Year Teacher of the Year in Georgia. She received the campus Teacher of the Year title while serving in North Carolina (2004), Georgia (2008), and South Carolina (2019). Tanya was named the Sumter School District Teacher of the Year and a SC Honor Roll Teacher for 2021 as one of five finalists in the SC Teacher of the Year Program. In this role to begin next summer, she will work with the Director of the Primary Academy to provide individualized support and coaching to Lead Teachers and Teaching Fellows as they work to ensure that each scholar is able to reach his or her academic potential in a structured but nurturing environment.” Tanya explains her rationale for seeking out this opportunity in stating, “I am thrilled to be joining the founding leadership team of LSC, where the core belief is all students can learn and all means all. By working alongside these enthusiastic and passionate education experts, I am confident we will set a solid foundation for Sumter children to be successful academically, emotionally, and socially. I am incredibly proud to be a part of LSC as one of the founders to provide a high-quality education and develop critical thinkers & lifelong learners.”

**Sherman Logan** is an experienced charter school teacher and leader with a decade of experience. He began his career in 2012 as a Math tutor for Richmond Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. In this role, Sherman quickly discovered his passion for education and soon transitioned to becoming a classroom teacher. During the last five years, Sherman has been an impactful Math teacher with a track record of results at some of Texas’ highest performing charter networks to include IDEA Public Schools San Antonio, Uplift Charter Dallas Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) Dallas. In 2016, Sherman was named Teacher of the Year with IDEA Public Schools in San Antonio, Texas. Sherman holds education degrees from University of Richmond and Northcentral University. In this role to begin next summer, Sherman will oversee all instructional matters at LSC’s Primary Academy campus and relationship building with scholars, families, and staff while deepening and driving a school culture of exceptional excellence. Sherman states: “I am honored to be the founding Director of the Primary Academy and joining the Liberty STEAM Charter team and family. I have a unique opportunity to lead a school that will impact the lovely community of Sumter, South Carolina, and creating positive experiences for students and families. I am excited to help build a school for the community and serve the families of Sumter.”

Dr. Graham, Founding Executive Director, shared the following: “I am extremely pleased to announce that we have found an exceptional blend of talent & experience from both the traditional & charter setting in the final members joining our senior and school-based leadership team. Throughout the interview and evaluation process, these four individuals demonstrated a steadfast commitment to creating tremendous outcomes for students with a ‘no-excuses’ and ‘whatever it takes’ attitude. I am excited about the record of results each individual brings to the table as we continue to execute the vision for Sumter’s first public charter school.”

Dr. Trevor Ivey, Founding Chief of Staff, states that “I believe that this unique leadership structure will guide LSC to effectively implement its long-term goal to become a nationally-recognized high-performing public charter school and that this specific blend of local and national talent spanning both the traditional and charter setting will be key to a successful launch.” The next phase of LSC’s Talent Recruitment & Selection process is to hire its Founding Team of Lead Teachers for the Primary Academy. Under the two teacher model, each classroom will have a Lead Teacher and a Teaching Fellow to further ensure scholars receive individualized instruction. The starting salary for all first-year LSC teachers is \$40,000 with the opportunity to earn up to \$50K with incentive pay. LSC continues to accept applications (via the website) on a rolling basis for individuals wishing to join the Founding Team of Lead Teachers for its Primary Academy.

*Please direct questions to Dr. Trevor Ivey, Chief of Staff, via email at [tivey@libertysteamcharter.org](mailto:tivey@libertysteamcharter.org).*