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Valparaiso, IN, February 24, 2011- Taltree Arboretum & Gardens has named Alexis R. Faust as President and Chief Executive Officer effective March 15. Reporting to the Board of Directors, Faust will provide vision and direction for the organization, and is responsible for overall development, programming and management of Taltree.

Faust comes to Taltree from the University of Arizona, when in 1997 she was hired to coordinate the development of a new science master's degree program. Three years later she took over the helm as Executive Director at the university's Flandrau Science Center and Planetarium. There she has been a driving force behind the development of a new University of Arizona Science Center as part of Tucson's downtown redevelopment. In that capacity, she also spearheaded the design of a unique pedagogical approach to learning in public institutions.

Prior to her time with the University of Arizona, Faust served as Associate Director for Public Outreach at Columbia University's Biosphere 2 Center in Oracle, Arizona. During her tenure at Princeton University, she managed the Materials Institute and the Center for Complex Materials, where she directed the development of science education outreach initiatives.

In New Jersey, Faust served on a National Science Foundation committee to assist in defining educational activities for NSF-funded Centers, was an invited presenter to Congressional leaders as part of the Coalition for National Science Foundation Funding, and taught and mentored Trenton youth. She also served as management consultant and interim outreach director of the Invention Factory Science Center.

"I look forward to joining the excellent team at Taltree and to forging new partnerships and collaborations across the Lake Michigan region," said Faust. "I am also eager to work with the local community to broaden Taltree's reach and continue to grow its important legacy."

Faust has a B.A. in English and Philosophy from Lynchburg College. She is a member of the Association of Women Faculty, the Association of Science-Technology Centers, the American Association of Museums, the Tucson Association of Museums, Southern Arizona Attractions Alliance, Natural and Cultural Heritage Alliance, an associate member of the Board of Directors of the Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans in Mexico, and a member of the

Advisory Boards of the Tucson Wildlife Center and the Maya Past Unearthed Project of the Education Development Center.

In her spare time, Faust has been working to finish a series of children's books on the ecology and wildlife of the Sonoran Desert. The books are structured to create opportunities for families to learn together. In addition, she loves to hike, horseback ride, dabble in photography, and, of course, garden.

"I feel confident in her role as leader in Taltree's next chapter," Taltree Founder Damien Gabis said, "With her background in strategic development, project management and community engagement, Alexis is the perfect choice for elevating Taltree to the status of world-class distinction."

*Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, a 501(c)3 public charity, offers over 300 acres of reserved woody plant collections, gardens, woodlands, savanna, wetlands, and prairie with more than three miles of hiking trails that allow visitors to experience the natural biodiversity of the landscape. Themed displays include the Hitz Family Rose Garden, Native Plant Garden, Oak Islands, and coming in 2011, the Taltree Railway Garden. Taltree Arboretum & Gardens is open all year round and located just south of U.S. Hwy. 30 between Merrillville and Valparaiso, IN at 450 West 100 North. Admission to the grounds is \$5 for guests; free for Taltree members and children under 5. For more information, please visit [www.taltree.org](http://www.taltree.org), e-mail [info@taltree.org](mailto:info@taltree.org) or call (219) 462-0025.*

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