



Tonya M. Matthews, Ph.D.
CEO and President

A thought-leader in museum engagement and open-classroom, hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education, Dr. Tonya M. Matthews serves as the Michigan Science Center's chief executive officer and president. Her diverse background includes academic and professional work as a Ph.D. scientist, educator, community volunteer and award winning writer/poet, and she currently serves on the Boards of Directors for the American Alliance of Museums and Chatfield College.

Prior to the Michigan Science Center, Matthews served as the Vice President of Museums for Cincinnati Museum Center, directing the education, research and community engagement footprints of 3-museum, 3-research center, multi-site institution. During her tenure, she was instrumental in positioning the museum as a thought leader in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education and engagement. She created Museum Center's signature program in early childhood educator training in science that now annually trains more than 150 early childhood teachers throughout the region with measurable classroom impact. Her responsibilities at the museum also included creating and sustaining private-public-corporate partnership to support science, history and early childhood learning within the museums and across a 3-state wide footprint. In 2009, Matthews was named to the National Assessment of Educational Progress Science Advisory Board to help develop the next iteration of the "Nation's Report Card" on science.

Matthews also worked with the Maryland Science Center as manager of BodyLink, an innovative, multimedia education center focused on biotechnology. During her tenure at the Science Center, she created an outreach lab program for city high school students and was instrumental in founding institutional partnerships between BodyLink, the National Institutes of Health, University of Maryland and the Baltimore City Health Department. Matthews also served as adjunct and visiting faculty at several colleges including, Stevenson College in Maryland and George Washington University in Washington, DC, and spent an early part of her career at the Food and Drug Administration in the division of restorative and neurological devices.

Matthews completed her doctoral work at Johns Hopkins University in biomedical engineering and baccalaureate studies at Duke University in biomedical and electrical engineering. Her undergraduate degree also includes a certificate in African/African-American Studies. She is the recipient of a Whitaker Foundation Award for Engineering Excellence, and an alumni member of the National Society of Black Engineers and the Society for Women Engineers.

A published, performing poet, as a writer Matthews is most noted for her insightful social commentary and poetry-based community engagement. She has published four poetry collections, including *Still Swinging* (Three Sisters Press) now in its second edition, and produced the critically-acclaimed debut CD *The Legend of AFRODITE*. Matthews is an alumni of the Hurston-Wright Writing Fellows, where she studied with renowned poet Sonia Sanchez,



as well as a Library of Congress Center for the Book honoree. Her grassroots poetry commentary and contributions to new American poetry are commemorated with a permanent exhibit in the Reginald F. Lewis Maryland Museum of African-American History and Culture.

Matthews has served on various boards for diverse organizations and has participated with mentoring programs for more than a decade. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and The Links, Incorporated. Throughout her studies and varied work, Matthews continues to teach, learn and engage – finding the perfect home inside of museums, a field that thrives on community partnerships and a commitment to all children and every lifelong learner.

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