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Sustainable Pittsburgh names dynamic visionary as new Executive Director

(Pittsburgh, PA – October 23, 2018) The Sustainable Pittsburgh Board of Directors is pleased to announce the hiring of Joylette Portlock, Ph.D. as the organization’s new Executive Director. Following a national search, Portlock replaces Sustainable Pittsburgh’s founding executive director, Court Gould, who served in the role for 20 years. Gould accepted a position at The Erie Community Foundation earlier this year.

Portlock, who studied biology and anthropology at MIT and completed her Ph.D. in genetics from Stanford University, has most recently served as Associate Director of Science and Research at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History and executive director of Communitopia. Communitopia is a nonprofit based in Pittsburgh that focuses on climate change communication and building healthier communities.

Shawn Wray, Sustainable Pittsburgh Board Chair, shared, “As Sustainable Pittsburgh looks to its next 20 years of service, the future remains bright. With Joylette at the helm, we are excited to build upon past accomplishments and chart a future towards further advancing Sustainable Pittsburgh’s vision of our region having a strong economy in which all people can live to their potential, are engaged, and prosper within the means of a clean and healthy environment.”

Established in 1998, Sustainable Pittsburgh serves as a convener and trusted advisor among diverse sectors. Having a mission to accelerate the adoption of sustainable policies and practices throughout the region, the organization uses a three-pronged approach: formal sustainability performance programs for workplaces and communities, professional development, and collaboration on regional policy initiatives. Examples of SP’s work include CEOs for Sustainability, the first executive council of its kind in the region, comprising CEOs from leading private-sector companies; the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program, helping to transform Pittsburgh from a “foodie” city to a “sustainable foodie” city; and the Sustainable Pittsburgh Challenge, a 12-month competition that cumulatively has seen 250+ employers save \$11 million in energy and enough water to fill Heinz Field 232 feet!

A subject matter expert and dynamic communicator, Portlock’s expertise aligns well with Sustainable Pittsburgh’s work to convene communities of decision-makers, its focus on outcomes, and its evolution towards working with consumers to help transform the marketplace. She is a practical leader, bringing people together to create needed, innovative change. Her success stems in part from her ability to take complex matters of

urgency (e.g. climate change) and translate them into something more relevant for individuals, empowering them to make well-informed decisions in their daily lives. She served as project lead and star for the *Don't Just Sit There – Do Something!* video series, comprising 34 short episodes rooted in science and humor that communicate societal challenges to a broad audience. Through the videos and elsewhere in her work, Portlock successfully and creatively bridges the gaps among scientists, stakeholder organizations, and the public.

“It’s so exciting to be joining Sustainable Pittsburgh at this moment in time,” Portlock said. “Given the dire report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change earlier this month, it has never been more important for us, across all sectors of society, to come together and forge appropriate solutions to the challenges before us. Sustainable Pittsburgh, given its history, programs, and potential, will play a critical role in that conversation. By investing in sustainability now, we have the power to define the terms, and make sure that the future we’re building is one we want.”

Portlock has worked on environmental issues at the local, state, and federal level, with a focus on global climate change since 2007. Previously she has worked for The Climate Reality Project, a nonprofit founded to increase public awareness of climate change, where she organized the national community of climate presenters. Later, she served as Western Pennsylvania Outreach Coordinator with PennFuture, a statewide environmental advocacy group where she worked with the organization's members, elected officials, and the public on energy, air, water, mining, and transportation issues.

“Joylette’s passion and vision for a more sustainable Pittsburgh is evident,” said Wray. “She is well positioned to lead the organization into its next chapter, advancing creative solutions with meaningful impact for the community.”

Portlock currently serves on the Allegheny County Board of Health, is co-chair of the Climate Reality Project Pittsburgh and Southwestern PA Chapter and was the founding organizer of the Swissvale Farmers Market, among other roles in the community. She will begin her position at Sustainable Pittsburgh in December 2018.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, **Sustainable Pittsburgh** (SP) affects decision-making for the Pittsburgh region to integrate economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental quality as the enduring accountability, bringing sustainable solutions for communities and businesses. SustainablePittsburgh.org

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