

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Burns & McDonnell Senior Executive Leslie Duke Named New CEO of 100% Employee-Owned Firm**

Duke Poised to Lead Firm into New Era of Growth as Current CEO Ray Kowalik Retires at the End of 2023

KANSAS CITY, Missouri — [Leslie Duke](#) has been named the new CEO of [Burns & McDonnell](#), effective Jan. 1, 2024. In March, current Burns & McDonnell Chairman and CEO Ray Kowalik announced his retirement at the end of 2023, coming off a [record-breaking year](#) for the firm. Duke will be the eighth CEO in the firm's [125-year history](#).

Currently, Duke is the regional president and general manager in Houston, Texas. Over the past two decades, she helped expand the firm's customer base from one local Houston client when she joined the firm to more than 650 local, regional and national clients in the industrial, refining, chemical, manufacturing and power utility markets. During her tenure, the business has delivered over \$5 billion in engineering, procurement, construction, environmental and consulting services from the region.

"Leslie's strong track record of success and an extraordinary vision for the future makes her the right person to lead the firm forward," Kowalik says. "Leslie is poised to lead our organization into a new era of technology, innovation and growth, and I'm confident she will continue to build on our ownership legacy of caring for our clients, communities and one another."

Duke grew up in El Paso and joined Burns & McDonnell in 1999 as a structural engineer. She has served in multiple leadership roles, including opening and growing several new offices. She became a senior vice president in 2014 and was named the company's first female president in 2016.

She played an integral role in launching the firm's engineer-procure-construct (EPC) delivery method in the south-central region, and her efforts have led to the development and successful execution of many projects and programs. Under her leadership, Burns & McDonnell has been recognized by numerous industry and community organizations.

"I built my career on my ability to create and drive strategies aligned with the needs of clients, markets and our employee-owners," Duke says. "I'm truly honored and humbled to take on this new role. Burns & McDonnell has always been a trailblazer in the industry, and I am excited to contribute my experience to help us further our collective success."

In 2016, Duke was named a Who's Who honoree in energy by the *Houston Business Journal*. She is a member of the executive board of directors for the Greater Houston Partnership, serving as chair of the

infrastructure committee from 2018-2022, and is a board member of the United Way of Greater Houston, which recognized her as a Top Female Leader in 2016.

She earned a bachelor's degree in civil/structural engineering from Texas Tech University, where she was inducted as a Distinguished Engineer in 2018. She is an emeritus member of the Dean's Council for the university's School of Engineering. Duke is a registered professional engineer (PE) in Texas.

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About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of more than 13,500 engineers, construction and craft professionals, architects, planners, technologists, and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities. Founded in 1898 and working from 70 offices globally, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are [designed to build](#).