



DR. RUSSELL WIGGINTON MUSEUM PRESIDENT BIO

Dr. Russ Wigginton serves as the President of the National Civil Rights Museum. He assumed this role on August 1, 2021, and brings vast experience in education, fundraising, operations, and community engagement. Prior to assuming this role, Wigginton served as the Chief Postsecondary Impact Officer for Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) from 2019-2021, where he led the organization's work for postsecondary access, retention, and completion. Previously he served as vice president for student life and dean of students at Rhodes College from 2017-2019, where he oversaw the college's co-curricular experience for students.



From 2006-2017, Russ served as vice president for external programs and vice president for college relations, where he helped establish and implement institutional strategy for the college's engagement in Memphis and beyond, and oversaw the college grants, foundations and government relations, alumni relations, communications, career services, and continuing education departments.

Russ taught eight years in the History department at Rhodes, specializing in African American and community history. He has published a book entitled, *The Strange Career of the Black Athlete: African Americans and Sports* as well as articles and essays on African American social and labor history. Russ has served on numerous civic boards and advisory committees, including the National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis Zoo, New Memphis Institute, ArtsMemphis, Overton Park Conservancy, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Ballet Memphis, St. George's Independent Schools, KIPP Schools, and Facing History and Ourselves.

Russ graduated from Rhodes College with a BA in History and earned a PhD in History from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

He also has a son, Ryan, a 2022 graduate from the University of Richmond, and is married to Tomeka Hart Wigginton, Managing Director for Blue Meridian Partners.