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North Georgia Community Foundation Names Michelle Prater as its New President and CEO
Hall County resident comes to NGCF from United Way of Greater Atlanta

GAINESVILLE, Ga. (Sept. 11, 2015) – The North Georgia Community Foundation has named Michelle R. Prater as its new President/CEO. She will begin work Oct. 19.

Prater, a Flowery Branch resident, comes to the North Georgia Community Foundation with a strong background in nonprofit work, having most recently served as United Way of Greater Atlanta’s Senior Director for Volunteerism.

“I’ve had the privilege of working in several great nonprofits outside of Hall County including United Way of Greater Atlanta,” Prater said. “I’m very excited about the opportunity to come home and help make a difference here in my own community. The North Georgia Community Foundation has been a pillar in our community for 30 years. I look forward to continuing that important work, while expanding our services to make greater community impact.”

A Hall County resident since 1990, Prater has strong ties to the community through volunteer work. She mentored a student in the local school system from first grade through graduation from Gainesville High. Prater is active in 12 Stone Church in Flowery Branch and recently returned from a mission trip to Romania where she worked with children living in high poverty. She has family in the area. Her parents have lived in Hall County for 27 years and are retired from local businesses.

Prater replaces Jim Mathis who has headed the North Georgia Community Foundation since 1998. Mathis will remain with the Foundation through December 2016 to spearhead a major campaign to raise funds to support NGCF’s initiatives.

“I am proud to have been a part of the search committee led by our Vice Chair Daren Wayne and assisted by Tim Chason and Randy Cardoza of The Chason Group,” said Mathis, who has led the

Foundation since 1998. "We were looking for someone who had skills in banking, in nonprofit management, in leadership and someone with a passion for service to the community. Michelle has all of this and more. The North Georgia Community Foundation will grow and prosper through her leadership. I look forward to introducing her to our donors, advisors and the nonprofit community."

Prater has more than 15 years of leadership, donor relations and fundraising experience. Prior to her position as Senior Director, she managed all of the United Way of Greater Atlanta's fundraising for Gwinnett County.

Other nonprofit experience includes serving as Senior Representative at Map International, Director of Resource Development at United Way of Forsyth County and U.S. Finance/Sales Manager for Leadership Development International.

"Although Jim Mathis will naturally be difficult to replace, I am excited by the varied skill set, nonprofit agency experience and great passion Michelle brings to us as the new leader of our Foundation," Board Chair Strother Randolph said.

Prater has over 10 years of banking experience in this community, starting at First National Bank of Gainesville, then Regions and BB&T.

A search committee of current and former board members conducted a nationwide search with the assistance of The Chason Group, an executive search firm. The committee received more than 90 applications from 23 states.

"We have been extremely impressed with the candidates interested in this position," said Wayne, chair of the search committee. "Michelle is a perfect fit for the North Georgia Community Foundation. Her background in banking and nonprofit arenas and most recent leadership experience at the United Way of Greater Atlanta will be invaluable to the Foundation. Michelle has the vision and the passion to lead the NGCF to the next level both geographically and financially."

Prater holds a degree in Marketing and Management from North Georgia College and she earned an MBA in Leadership Development from Brenau University.

Founded in 1985 by Lou Fockele and other business leaders, the North Georgia Community Foundation supports nonprofit organizations and donors by building, distributing and preserving philanthropic assets to enhance the spirit of community and the quality of life in its region. The organization also promotes

training and networking among the region's nearly 300 nonprofits. For more information, please contact the foundation at www.ngcf.org or call (770) 535-7880 ext. 226.

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