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## **Watkins Announces 2020 Retirement from Community Foundation of North Florida**

*~ Leadership of only CEO in organization's two-decade history  
built a stable, growing institution ~*

Joy Watkins, who has led the Community Foundation of North Florida to becoming one of the most important and respected philanthropic organizations in the state, announced today that she will retire as the Foundation's president and CEO in March 2020. As the only CEO in the CFNF's history, Watkins' leadership helped generate \$91 million in contributions. She will help the Foundation through the hiring, training, and transition to its next leader.

In 2000, the Community Foundation of North Florida made Watkins its first hire. At the time of her retirement, she will have served as its chief executive for 20 years. Through her vision and hard work, the Foundation has become the region's premier resource for helping people create legacies of giving and helping nonprofits grow endowments.

"For two decades, Joy has provided exemplary leadership, and we know she will be hard to replace," said Matt Brown, Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Directors. "The Community Foundation is in great shape. It is fiscally strong, growing, and positively impacting our community – and it will continue to do so. Joy has built a tremendous staff and infrastructure that positions the Foundation very well for the future."

Under Watkins' distinguished tenure, the Foundation has grown from \$900,000 in assets to nearly \$70 million, received more than \$91 millions in contributions, and provided almost \$30 million in grants to support a wide variety of nonprofits.

"This is a bittersweet but exciting time for me," Watkins said. "It has been and continues to be an honor and privilege to serve as President and CEO of the Community Foundation, but I'm ready for the next chapter in my life. I've enjoyed working with so many generous people in this community who care about and support worthy causes."

Watkins added that one of the most enjoyable parts of her job has been "to get to know the passionate and determined people who work at local nonprofits and make our community a better place to live and work."



The Foundation Board is forming a search committee to begin the process of hiring a new CEO, the first time it has been tasked with that job.

Carrol Dadisman, founding president of CFNF, said: "Finding and employing Joy Watkins was, by far, the most important step in building a solid foundation and ensuring success of the Community Foundation of North Florida. Joy's professional experience, leadership qualities and personality formed the perfect fit for introducing CFNF to our community -- and for spearheading its impressive growth for 20 years. Thanks to her, the foundation is poised for even greater contributions to north Florida."

Before joining the Community Foundation, Watkins practiced law in Atlanta, primarily in the areas of estate and charitable planning. She is involved in both national and statewide associations for community foundations, serving as a national reviewer for the Community Foundation National Standards Board in Washington, D.C., and as a past member of the leadership team and past chair of Community Foundations of Florida. She is also a past president of the Tallahassee Regional Estate Planning Council. Watkins received a degree in business administration from Eastern Kentucky University and earned her law degree at the University of Florida College of Law.

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