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Jeri Krentz

Associate Director, Communications

The Duke Endowment

704-927-2260

jkrentz@tde.org

www.dukeendowment.org

THE DUKE ENDOWMENT NAMES NEW PROGRAM OFFICER

March 14, 2019 – Kristi Kessler Walters is joining The Duke Endowment as a program officer in Higher Education.

Walters previously worked at the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations in Jacksonville, Fla., as the Interfaith Program Fellow, program officer and senior advisor to the president. She led the Interfaith Leadership and Religious Literacy program area, cultivating partnerships that aligned with the Foundations’ philanthropic priorities in religion. As senior advisor, she provided support to the Higher Education program area and guidance to the president regarding strategic planning and assessment.

With a law degree from UNC Chapel Hill, Walters spent 18 years as a practicing attorney at Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP in Charlotte. She developed a new role related to professional development and diversity, which led to overseeing the human resources function across the firm’s seven offices. In her legal practice, she advised colleges and universities on specific issues related to higher education.

Before joining the law firm, Walters worked in the admission office at Davidson College, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in Religion, and at Duke University.

“With her breadth of experience and deep ties to the Carolinas, Kristi brings a valuable perspective to the Endowment,” said Susan McConnell, the Endowment’s Higher Education director. “She has a passion for higher education and understands its complexities, and we’re looking forward to her contributions to our work.”

The Endowment’s Higher Education program area supports four schools – Davidson College, Duke University, Furman University and Johnson C. Smith University – with a focus on academic excellence, making education more affordable for qualified students, and developing engagement opportunities that serve local communities as well as students.

Based in Charlotte, N.C., and established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, The Duke Endowment is a private foundation that strengthens communities in North Carolina and South Carolina by nurturing children, promoting health, educating minds and enriching spirits. Since its founding, it has awarded more than \$3.7 billion in grants. The Endowment shares a name with Duke University and Duke Energy, but they are separate organizations.