



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FORSYTH COUNTY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS EARNS
CERTIFIED PUBLIC COMMUNICATOR CERTIFICATION**

Gardner becomes second in Georgia to complete the program

Forsyth County, Georgia – Forsyth County government Director of Communications Jodi Gardner earned the designation of Certified Public Communicator in July, as she completed Texas Christian University's CPC Program in Fort Worth, Texas. Gardner is just the second Certified Public Communicator in the state of Georgia.

"I'm extremely proud of Jodi and her accomplishments; earning the Public Communicator Certification is one of many," said Forsyth County Manager Doug Derrer. "Jodi is a perfect example of a highly skilled professional who chose to serve the community and does so with great pride and unwavering commitment to excellence."

Started in 2013, the CPC program is the first of its kind in the nation. It is a post-baccalaureate, graduate-level certification program specifically designed for public information professionals working for counties, cities, school districts and other public and public-private agencies. During the program, which included two week-long summer sessions (one week each in 2015 and 2016), Gardner worked on developing a comprehensive communications plan for the county.

"Having seen the work product from the course, I can say without hesitation that Jodi's completion of this program will bring added value to her service and support to various government offices and the community," continued Derrer. "She is a consummate professional, and it is an honor and pleasure to serve alongside someone of her caliber."

The CPC program is a partnership of the Texas Christian University (TCU) Schieffer School of Journalism, TCU Extended Education and the Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers. Extensive classroom instruction with public relations, marketing and public administration professors was included, along with the latest information on metrics, social influence and digital media.

"Since our program started in 2013, more than 100 students have worked with us on creating strong communication plans for their counties, cities and school districts," said Jacqueline Lambiase, a director of the program at TCU. "Jodi has already been providing strong communication leadership in Forsyth County for over a decade, and with the county's recent branding, new website and new plan in hand, she can continue to promote the county's opportunities and natural beauty for its residents and visitors."

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Gardner was selected in May 2015 to receive the National Association of County Information Officers' Scholarship for the 2015-16 session of the CPC program, which paid for 50 percent of the tuition.

Gardner has been with Forsyth County government for more than 11 years. She and her team of three staff members manage the communications needs for the county. Their work includes operation of TV Forsyth (the county's 24-hour government cable channel), media relations, publications, *The Current* monthly electronic newsletter, social media, special event planning and more.

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