Rotary Club of Atlanta names Gina Simpson Executive Director

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Veteran civic leader to guide one of the largest and most influential Rotary clubs in the world

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Atlanta, June 30, 2020: The Board of Directors of the Rotary Club of Atlanta, Georgia's first Rotary Club and for years one of Rotary International’s largest and most influential affiliates, is pleased to announce the selection of Gina Simpson as Executive Director, effective July 13th. She succeeds Linda Thomason Glass, the club’s Executive director for the past 20 years.

Until March 2016, Simpson honed her volunteer engagement skills as President & CEO of Hands on Atlanta, where she oversaw a successful reengineering of this leading community-based volunteer service organization. More recently, she spent 44 months as Deputy Commissioner of Alabama’s Department of Human Resources, for which she led statewide quality assurance initiatives affecting hundreds of thousands of residents.

John O’Neill, Chair of the Rotary board of directors, announced the appointment. “Throughout our executive search process,” noted O’Neill, President of Cushman & Wakefield’s Southeast and Southcentral Region, “Gina demonstrated just how closely her leadership experiences and approach to public service matched with the Club’s aspirations for greater engagement in the major issues affecting our region.”

Observed Cannon Carr, chair of RCA’s search committee, President-elect of the club and CEO of CornerCap Wealth Advisors, “There has never been a more critical time for us as Rotarians to support our community. After an extensive regional search, Gina was our unanimous choice to assume the newly redefined role of Executive Director.”

“I am genuinely excited by the opportunity to work with such a wonderful group of leaders,” said Simpson, “many of whom I’ve had the privilege of collaborating
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with before. Rotary’s members are among our region’s most engaged leaders. It will be a distinct pleasure to work with such a strong group, especially as the club explores new opportunities for community engagement and impact.”

Gina Simpson has modeled “Service above Self,” Rotary's driving tenet, throughout her career, whether as volunteer, volunteer manager, public servant, nonprofit leader or devoted friend. She was a member of Montgomery’s Sunrise Rotary Club and a Paul Harris Fellow before moving back to Atlanta late last year, and she has participated along with other Atlanta Rotarians in one of the club’s annual mission trips to Honduras. A graduate of Leadership Atlanta (class of 2010), she appreciates our region’s history, challenges and opportunities.

As Executive Director, Simpson will succeed Linda Thomason Glass, who is stepping down after 20 years of service to Rotary. In a message to the membership, O’Neill thanked Glass for “a terrific job managing the numerous responsibilities associated with the role,” noting she had played a significant part in the growth and prestige of the Club.

The mother of two, Gina Simpson holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Jacksonville State University, a Masters in Social Work from the University of Alabama, and a Master in Public Administration from Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School. Gina and her husband, Rudi Lueg, North America Managing Director of Exotec, are avid skiers who love the outdoors.

Speaking of the search for Executive Director, O’Neill noted that “Gina was part of an incredibly talented slate of candidates thanks to the exceptional work of our search consultants, Sam Pettway and John Sparrow of BoardWalk Consulting. John and Sam, both members of our Club, appreciate the uniqueness of downtown Rotary and the leadership qualities required for the Executive Director position; they guided us brilliantly throughout the process.”

In addition to O’Neill and Carr, other members of Rotary’s Executive Director search committee included Pat Upshaw-Monteith, CEO, Leadership Atlanta; Janine Brown, Atlanta Managing Partner, Alston & Bird; Gretchen Corbin, CEO of Georgia Lottery; club President-Elect Katharine Kelley, CEO, Green Street Properties; and past club President Robert Balentine, Chairman of Balentine.
About Rotary Club of Atlanta

For over a hundred years, the Rotary Club of Atlanta (RCA) has counted among its members a disproportionate number of the metro area’s leaders. The Club’s current membership—predominantly CEOs, Managing Partners, Executive Directors and the like—lead established institutions, start-ups and everything in between. About 80% of the members head private-sector entities, while about a fifth lead nonprofit organizations. Collectively, they represent every significant sector of the region’s economy, and the Club’s board and membership committee work diligently to ensure a continuing focus on emerging sectors as well.

Regardless of their individual professional focus, RCA members share an abiding commitment to “service above self,” a core tenet across all of Rotary, and the range of outlets for such service is as varied as the members themselves are. A recent informal survey revealed that the Club’s members have served on well over a thousand volunteer boards, committees and initiatives, each in its own way striving to make the Atlanta region and the world a better place.

Rotary Club of Atlanta is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation governed by a volunteer board and enhanced by a robust committee structure that engages a significant percentage of the membership. The Club’s community efforts are supported by a strong program of philanthropy, which in 2019 enabled grants to nonprofits totaling over $400,000.