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For Immediate Release

**For more information**

Susan Datz Edelman  
Vice President, Strategic Communications  
sedelman@jaxcf.org  
(904)356-4483

**INAUGURAL CLASS OF DELORES BARR WEAVER FELLOWS INTRODUCED**

*Women's Giving Alliance provides entry opportunity for aspiring members*

**Jacksonville, FL** – The inaugural class of Delores Barr Weaver Fellows was introduced to members of the Women's Giving Alliance (WGA) at the group's Member Forum today.

An initiative of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, WGA is a donor education and strategic grant making initiative that encourages women to be informed about community issues and intimately involved in their solutions. WGA Members develop leadership skills through research, grant making and community engagement. Any woman who is willing to make the minimum annual donation of \$1500 is welcome to join.

In an effort to further expand its sphere of members, WGA—with generous funding from the Delores Barr Weaver Fund and other sponsors—offered a group of select young women from Northeast Florida a special opportunity: to become full WGA members through a shared financial arrangement for four years, in the hope that Fellows will join on their own in year five.

“We are so pleased to introduce this pilot class of Delores Barr Weaver Fellows which encompasses such a diverse group of younger women,” noted WGA President Paula Liang. “We specifically tried to attract potential new members under 40 that come from a wide range of backgrounds, occupations, neighborhoods and ethnicities.”

Each of the Fellows has been assigned a seasoned WGA member as a mentor. The 2015 Fellows (with their mentors in parentheses) are:

Melissa Beaudry (Lise Everly)	Heather Houston (Kimberly Grant)
Sara Bonderud (Kimberly Mariani-Jones)	Emily O'Leary (Martha Barrett)
Yaima Coto (Kristi Brandon)	Samantha Alves Orender (Suzanne Perritt)
Brittany Duke-Anthony (Jo Hoskins)	Sabeen Perwaiz (Crystal Freed)
Angela Grewal (Mary Pietan)	Jennifer Simmons (Heather Geraghty)
Meredith Guess (Alison Korman Shelton)	Karen Estella Smith (Donna Orender)

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For more information about the WGA Fellows program, contact Joanne Cohen at [jcohen@jaxcf.org](mailto:jcohen@jaxcf.org) or (904) 356-4483.

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**About Women's Giving Alliance**

The Women's Giving Alliance, an initiative of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, is a dynamic group of diverse women who pool their philanthropic giving to make a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in Northeast Florida. Since 2001, hundreds of women in Northeast Florida have become WGA members, making an annual contribution of \$1,500 each. Through those contributions, WGA has made grants totaling more than \$4 million to more than 30 non-profit organizations to support critical community services for women and girls. It also has built an endowment exceeding \$2 million to ensure the future of its philanthropic work. For more information: [www.womensgivingalliance.org](http://www.womensgivingalliance.org)

**About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida**

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida ([www.jaxcf.org](http://www.jaxcf.org)), Florida's oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Now in its 51<sup>st</sup> year, the Foundation has assets of more than \$312 million and has made grants in excess of \$332 million since 1964.