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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Southwest Airlines' Linda Rutherford Named
Metrocrest Chamber's 2016 Business Woman of the Year**

Award to be given during Women's Business Conference Sept. 23

ADDISON/CARROLLTON/FARMERS BRANCH, TX – Sept. 7, 2016 – The Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce's Women's Business Forum Committee is pleased to announce **Linda Rutherford**, Southwest Airlines' Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, as its **2016 Business Woman of the Year**. The award, chosen from nominations received from Chamber members, honors one outstanding woman from the Metrocrest business community and is sponsored by Edward Jones, Sheryl Giles. The conference is presented by Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Carrollton.

"Receiving several 2016 Business Woman of the Year nominations for Linda was only natural," said Erin Carney, President of the chamber, adding "Linda has given much more than her professional contributions to the community; she has fully embraced the role of community leader and advocate, serving in volunteer capacities both locally and throughout the country. Linda's influence has significantly impacted the lives of many local businesses and residents, and she has become a role model in her industry, our community, and for me, personally."

Rutherford is Vice President and Chief Communications Officer at Southwest Airlines, where she leads Media Relations, Employee Communications, Emergency Response and Business Continuity, Strategic Public Relations, Social Business, Charitable Giving and Community Relations, Visual Communication, Employee Engagement and Travel, and Community Affairs and Grassroots. Rutherford earned a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism from Texas Tech University where she graduated magna cum laude and was the 1988 Outstanding Journalism Graduate. Before starting at Southwest Airlines in 1992, Linda was a reporter for the Dallas Times Herald newspaper where she gained extensive newspaper and magazine reporting experience. Rutherford was named one of PR Week Magazine's "Champions of PR" in 2016.

The Business Woman of the Year is nominated by her peers and then voted on by the Women's Business Forum Committee. This honor is meant to recognize someone who has given her time, talent, and treasure to improve her community and encourages others to do the same. Rutherford truly



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embodies those qualities in her professional and personal life. Rutherford is passionate about education and has served on the Texas Tech Alumni Association Board since 2008. Additionally, she serves on the Board of Trustees for the Institute for Public Relations and the board of directors for the Lewisville ISD Education Foundation. The Communication & Outreach Department Rutherford leads is also responsible for Southwest Airlines' giving in the communities the airline serves.

"I am truly honored to be named 2016 Business Woman of the Year by the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce," said Rutherford. "The Metrocrest Chamber is an outstanding organization with which I've been proud to be involved for many years. I'm proud to work for a Company that is passionate about the community and connecting People to what's important in their lives. I feel lucky to work for a Company that cares so deeply for the communities it serves."

Rutherford will accept the Business Woman of the Year award during the **Women's Business Conference** on Friday, Sept. 23. This full day of enrichment will include seminars and activities, a vendor expo, the Metrocrest Chamber Business Woman of the Year revelation presentation, and a keynote speech over lunch by Dr. Stacey Radin, author of "Brave Girls: Raising Young Women with Passion and Purpose to Become Powerful Leaders." The Women's Business Conference will be held at the Addison Conference & Theatre Centre, at 15650 Addison Road in Addison from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$100 for the all-day conference or \$50 for the luncheon only. For tickets or more information, contact info@metrocrestchamber.com, or call 469-587-0420.

The mission of the **Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce** is to create economic prosperity for our members by providing programs, resources, and support that assist and benefit business, government and citizens resulting in a vibrant place to live and work. The Metrocrest Chamber offers numerous networking opportunities throughout the year that provide its members the opportunity to engage prospective customers and promote awareness of their organization.

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