

## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2/10/2020

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## Matthew Coppedge to lead the Garner Chamber as President & CEO

**Garner, NC:** The Garner Chamber of Commerce will be under new strategic leadership very soon. After an in-depth national search by a six-person Search Committee and unanimous Board approval, Matthew Coppedge takes the President & CEO reins starting February 24<sup>th</sup>.

“The Chamber set out to find an exceptional individual who could take an already thriving Chamber and move it to the next level. Matthew is a highly skilled marketer with extensive management, community and economic development experience. His passion for development, for Garner and the entire region, aligned well with our next-level vision at the Chamber”, stated Board Chair, Melissa Oliver.

Matthew is a native North Carolinian with strong ties throughout the Triangle and eastern North Carolina. He brings extensive marketing, nonprofit management, and economic development experience to the Garner Chamber, as well as experience in the private sector and hands-on savvy as an entrepreneur. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and earned his MBA from North Carolina Central University.

He devoted 12 years of his career to Downtown Durham, Inc – first as Director of Marketing and then his innovation and management skills earned him the role of Chief Operating Officer. For over a decade, Matthew was an integral part of the team that focused on Downtown Durham’s revitalization. His vision, creative initiatives, leadership ability and partnerships with startups, retail & office tenants, arts & cultural communities, non-profits, elected officials and the public sector helped transform downtown Durham.

His marketing initiatives while in Durham generated national and international press including features in Tech Crunch, Fast Company & The New York Times and he has been a guest columnist & contributor for several publications. He was awarded for his creativity for The Smoffice, the World’s Smallest Office space competition, which won a global award as “The Most Unconventional Chamber Project in the World” by the World Chambers Congress.

Matthew shared, “I’m honored and thrilled to lead the chamber into the future; the opportunities available to the Garner area are enormous. Garner is the kind of town that a difference can be made, where economic development and community development partner for results”.

In addition to being active professionally, Matthew served on the Carolina Theatre Board of Trustees, SmART Grant Initiative Steering Committee, and Durham Cultural Advisory Board, among others. When not transforming and serving communities, he runs a popular Instagram account (Commandments of Style) focused on men’s style with over 45,000 followers and has partnered with global brands including Brooks Brothers, Polo Ralph Lauren, Tallia Orange, Untuckit, Target and Samuelsohn. Personally, he and his fiancé, Tara, live in the Triangle and are tying the knot on the North Carolina coast in the Fall of 2020.

Oliver finished, “Our Chamber is coming to the end of an era after 14 wonderful years under Neal Padgett’s leadership. Matthew is a driven individual with energy, knowledge, and presence. We’re ready as a Board, a Chamber, and a community of keen business owners to get to work on the next chapter.”

The Garner Chamber will host their annual Reverse Raffle & Taste of the Town Friday March 6<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 - 9:00 PM and invite members and the community to welcome Matthew and celebrate this new start together. Tickets available from Board members or by calling the Chamber Office at 919-772-6440.

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