

Press Release

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Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance and Chamber of Commerce Announce New CEO

(Arkadelphia, AR) – After an extensive national search, the Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance (AREDA) and Area Chamber of Commerce has named Shelley Short, IOM as the new CEO, beginning September 6th, 2022. Short brings over 15 years of economic development and chamber of commerce experience to Arkadelphia. Most recently she served over seven years as Vice President of Programs and Partnerships at the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Executive Director of the Arkansas Economic Developers and Chamber Executives (AEDCE) organizations. Prior to her work at the Arkansas Chamber and AEDCE she served more than nine years in multiple roles at the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC), finishing her time at that organization as the Director of Marketing. In January, the search committee elected to work with The PACE Group, a Dallas, TX based firm that specializes in national economic development and chamber of commerce executive searches, to provide candidates for the committee’s consideration.



AREDA CEO Search Committee Chair, Dr. Wesley Kluck said, “It has been a pleasure over the past several months to work with an excellent group of local community and business leadership through a streamlined and ultimately successful national search process. I can say that I am very pleased with the recommendation of Ms. Short to be our organization’s next leader and am thankful to the board for making it official. Shelley Short has the best state and regional connections and a proven background of success. We are very excited to welcome her to Arkadelphia!”

Dr. Kluck continued by saying, “Shelley has lived and worked in Arkansas throughout her entire career. She loves our state, is passionate about our community, and I cannot think of anyone better to market Arkadelphia to businesses.”



During her time at the state agencies, Short managed all marketing efforts including trade show participation, site location consultant events, advertising, website development, and communications related to both internal and external marketing of Arkansas as a business location destination. She successfully led the merger of Arkansas Economic Developers and Arkansas Chamber of Commerce Executives into one unified entity in 2016, now known as AEDCE. This created one of the only joint chamber and economic development membership organizations in the country. Ms. Short also worked on the public policy/political front helping to manage the effort in 2016 to pass a ballot initiative known as Issue 3. This Issue allows chambers and economic development organizations to contract with municipalities for services and project support.

When asked her thoughts on being chosen for the position Short responded, "I am honored to be selected by wonderful leadership in Arkadelphia and Clark County. They are passionate and committed to growing their community and region." She continued, "I look forward to working with the Alliance team to craft a vision together that will bring prosperity and economic opportunities to all those who call Clark County home."

Short holds a B.A. of Political Science from University of Central Arkansas and a M.A. in Political Management from Regent University. She is also a graduate from the University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute as well as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Organization Management. She holds membership in several economic state, regional, and national economic development and chamber of commerce associations, including Arkansas Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE), International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC), U.S. Chamber of Commerce Business Leads Workforce Fellowship, and others.

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About The Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance

The Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance (The "Alliance") is an umbrella organization that oversees the chambers of commerce for Amity, Arkadelphia and Gurdon, the [Economic Development Corporation of Clark County \(The "EDCCC"\)](#) and the [Clark County Industrial Council \(The "CCIC"\)](#). The Alliance was formed pursuant to the [Clark County Strategic Plan](#), a long-range visioning document created over a fifteen month period by approximately 500 residents of Clark County with the purpose of identifying and implementing comprehensive community initiatives that improve quality of life and economic opportunities for all residents of the county. The purpose of the Alliance is to bring about economic growth in Clark County.

About The Arkadelphia Area Chamber of Commerce

The Arkadelphia Area Chamber of Commerce is a business-driven leadership organization responsible for fostering the economic growth and development of the Arkadelphia area, to ensure that business, industry, and education may operate profitably, and to enhance the learning opportunities and quality of life for every citizen.

About The PACE Group

The PACE Group is a leading executive search firm, specializing in recruiting executive leadership for economic development organizations and governments across the United States.