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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merrill Named Autism Pensacola CEO

Pensacola, Fla. (May 17, 2018) – Cate Merrill has been selected to serve as the next president and chief executive officer (CEO) of Autism Pensacola, Inc. (API). API’s board of directors voted unanimously to name Merrill to the leadership role. She begins May 29, following the retirement of Susan Byram, API’s founding CEO. Byram will continue to serve as executive consultant through July 2018.

Merrill is a Pensacola native. Her relationship with Autism Pensacola began when she volunteered to serve on the Board of Directors in 2008. She and her husband, Collier, together chaired the Connecting the Pieces Gala in 2013. Merrill earned her master’s degree in communication disorders at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette. She worked as a speech and language pathologist in a variety of settings, including schools, rehabilitation facilities, and private practice where she served patients with communication disorders, including Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Merrill said, “The most satisfying part of my job with this population has always been my ability to support families through diagnosis and steer them in directions most appropriate for their child and their family’s needs. I am eager to bring my experiences as a clinician, businesswoman, and community leader to Autism Pensacola. Susan’s vision and commitment to API has provided me the opportunity to lead an organization that has already made a difference in so many lives. I look forward to increasing our profile and working hard to take the organization to the next level of service for our community.”

Scott Remington, API board chairman, had this to say about the selection of Merrill for the CEO position. “Cate’s broad knowledge of autism coupled with years of experience working and volunteering in our community make her well equipped to lead.”

"Autism Pensacola is prepared for this transition to new leadership," said Byram. "Reflecting back on my career serving this wonderful organization and community, I am grateful to everyone who has supported me. I look forward to seeing Autism Pensacola’s next chapter unfold."

Autism Pensacola (API) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by autism. Established in 2002, API works to support and educate parents and professionals regarding the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with autism. API offers educational sessions and materials, support groups, training programs, and fundraising opportunities to increase awareness of autism and assist families and individuals living with autism. API serves both Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

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