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## **THE NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION**

**PFLUGERVILLE, TEXAS**, July 1, 2018 - The National Foster Parent Association proudly announces the election of Karen A. Poteet as our new President effective July 1, 2018.

“Karen brings an array of essential leadership skills to the NFPA and has been instrumental in expanding our range of supports for foster and adoptive families, as well as relative caregivers nationwide,” according to Irene Clements, Executive Director.

Karen, who holds a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration/Political Science from Baylor University, has a tireless dedication to our mission. She brings historical knowledge of the association, and expertise in working with individuals and organizations on local, state, and national levels make her uniquely qualified to take the NFPA successfully into the future.

In her current capacity as the NFPA’s vice president, Karen has served for two consecutive years as chair of the NFPA’s annual education conference. Last year in Houston and this year in Orlando, Karen worked with a team of colleagues, presenters, exhibitors, hotel management, and funding contributors to assemble an enriching program for 600 participants. This year’s conference, June 28 – July 1, featured many dozens of workshops on topics of special significance, including caring for immigrant children, preventing children from social media dangers, parenting children impacted by substance use, and managing compassion fatigue.

All members of the NFPA Board of Directors are volunteers who bring work and special parenting expertise to fulfill the mission of the NFPA. Karen has held positions of increasing responsibility within the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. Currently, she is the Interim Director for Aging Services, overseeing 19 major programs and an annual budget of \$325 million with a statewide team of 165 staff. Previously she served as Administrator of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance. Karen and her husband were licensed as foster parents in Illinois where they adopted their two youngest children.

Karen recognizes the contributions of our country’s foster and adoptive parents and kinship caregivers, the largest group of volunteers in our country providing 24 hour-round –the clock care for children who have been separated from their parents because of abuse, neglect, special medical circumstances, or federal policies impacting immigrant families seeking asylum.

Karen follows Pat Llewellyn who served conscientiously as the NFPA’s president for two, two-year terms.

### **New Vice President**

The NFPA Board also elected a new vice president, Thomas Rector, from Northern California. Tom and his wife, Michelle, own a large retailing, manufacturing, and construction company. The philanthropic focus in their lives is children and youth- centered organizations. Throughout his career, Tom has applied his professional skills to many volunteer organizations focusing on fundraising or governance, organized youth sports, hosting exchange students or leading non-profit organizations.

His role as foster and an adoptive parent has led to mentoring and instruction of the application of BioSocial Cognition to Foster and adoptive parents both locally and nationally; College of the Redwoods Foster Kinship

Care, California State Adoptions, and AAC. Thomas facilitates training of CASA Advocates, parent and teen training for St. Joseph Hospital, the Paso a Paso program, and is a national speaker on BioSocial Cognition.

Thomas and Michelle have been married for 47 years, have five children, (three birth, two adopted), and eight grandchildren. He enjoys dancing, playing soccer, and baseball.

### **Executive Committee and Board of Directors**

Karen and Tom will lead the five-member Executive Committee which includes the re-elected Treasurer and Member-at-Large, and the Secretary. Please visit the NFPA's website, [NFPAonline.org](http://NFPAonline.org) for the names and a brief description of the other 14 members of the Board of Directors and the many other excellent resources that the National Foster Parent Association has to offer.