FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forthofer becomes new institute director

Melinda S. “Lyndie” Forthofer, PhD, has been named director of the Institute for Families and Society (IFS) at the University of South Carolina, reporting to the vice president for Research and Health Sciences. She will also serve as associate dean for research at USC’s College of Social Work.

IFS enhances the well-being of families through the integration of research, education, technical assistance and consultation. These activities occur at the community, state, national and international levels through collaboration with community groups, social institutions and government. The institute has played an integral role in creating, implementing and facilitating many important projects such as SC First Steps, the SC Medically Fragile Children’s Program, and the Sisters of Charity Foundation’s Fatherhood Initiative, to name a few.

As IFS director, Forthofer is responsible for fostering university-community partnerships and integrating research, practice, and policy, as well as increasing NIH and other funding.

“Dr. Forthofer was identified during an extensive national search. The expertise, energy, and leadership she brings to USC are key to our plans for the Institute for Families and Society going forward,” said Harris Pastides, USC vice president for research and health sciences. “I am delighted that she will oversee our research and scholarship in this area.”

Formerly an associate professor in the Department of Community and Family Health at the University of South Florida, College of Public Health, Forthofer earned her B.A. in Sociology and Gender Studies from Case Western Reserve University in 1992, and her Ph.D. in Health Behavior/Health Education and Sociology from the University of Michigan.

At the University of Michigan, she served on the staff of the NIMH-funded National Co-morbidity Study at the Institute for Social Research. At the University of South Florida, she co-founded the CDC-founded Florida Prevention Research Center and served as director of its Research Methods and Evaluation Unit from 1998-2005.

Forthofer’s research interests include social epidemiology, prevention science methodology and community-based health promotion. Her research is aimed at explaining the mechanisms through which social structure and social context influence health outcomes.

###