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**GEORGIA HEART INSTITUTE WELCOMES
THREE INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGISTS**

GAINESVILLE, Georgia — People in Northeast Georgia now have more choices for advanced lifesaving heart care. Georgia Heart Institute, the comprehensive heart and vascular service line of Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS), recently welcomed interventional cardiologists Zachary George, MD; Stéphane Rinfret, MD; and Olga Toleva, MD, to its growing practice.

“We are excited to welcome these three experts, who bring decades of experience in patient care as well as teaching and research,” says Habib Samady, MD, president of Georgia Heart Institute. “We are committed to building a team with unparalleled talent and expertise, and each of these doctors illustrates our mission of bringing the future of heart care to communities throughout Georgia and beyond.”

Dr. George has served as attending interventional cardiologist at Prisma Health Greenville Memorial Hospital in South Carolina and Revere Health St. George Hospital in Utah, and he is also an assistant professor of clinical medicine at the University of South Carolina. Dr. George is an early adopter of novel interventional cardiology technology, and he has been a primary site investigator for a host of devices and procedures. He began and completed his training at Indiana University, including a three-year general cardiology fellowship, one year as chief fellow of Cardiology, and a one-year interventional fellowship.

Before joining Georgia Heart Institute as the director of the Complex Coronary Disease Center, Dr. Rinfret spent over 20 years serving patients and students. An internationally

renowned academic and clinical physician, Dr. Rinfret has written the textbook "Percutaneous Coronary Intervention for Chronic Total Occlusion" as well as hundreds of published articles. He is a professor at the Emory University School of Medicine and previously worked as an interventional cardiologist at Emory St. Joseph's Hospital, Emory Hospital Midtown and Emory University Hospital. Dr. Rinfret earned his medical degree from the University of Montreal, where he also completed residencies in surgery and internal medicine and a fellowship in cardiology. He also trained in interventional cardiology and research at the Montreal Heart Institute and at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical. He earned a master's degree in clinical epidemiology from the Harvard School of Public Health.

With more than 20 years of experience, Dr. Toleva joins Georgia Heart Institute as lead interventionalist for coronary physiology. In addition to interventional cardiology patients, she specializes in the evaluation of patients with coronary microvascular disease and vasospasm. She is an associate professor at the Emory University School of Medicine and worked in interventional cardiology at Emory St. Joseph's Hospital and at the Emory University Women's Heart Health Clinic. She previously was an assistant professor of cardiology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, and an interventional cardiologist at St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg. Dr. Toleva earned her medical degree from the Medical Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria, and her master's in public health from the Clinical Effectiveness Program at the Harvard T.H. Chang School of Public Health. She completed residencies in family medicine and internal medicine at the University of British Columbia, a cardiology residency at the University of Alberta, and a fellowship in interventional cardiology from the University of Alberta.

Interventional cardiologists specialize in using flexible tubes called catheters, along with specialized imaging, to repair narrowed arteries, damaged or weakened blood vessels, and

impaired parts of the heart's structure. Their minimally invasive techniques allow for less pain, shorter recovery time and better outcomes for patients. Georgia Heart Institute's interventional cardiologists do procedures in the cardiac catheterization labs at Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) Gainesville and NGMC Braselton. They are often called upon to perform lifesaving procedures for patients who have suffered a heart attack, cardiac arrest or other medical emergencies.

Drs. Rinfret and Toleva see patients at the Georgia Heart Institute locations in Braselton, Buford and Gainesville, and Dr. George sees patients in Braselton. Learn more about life-saving cardiac care at georgiaheartinstitute.org/interventional-cardiology or call 770-219-0950 to schedule an appointment.

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ABOUT GEORGIA HEART INSTITUTE

Georgia Heart Institute is the most forward-thinking heart and vascular program in the state and includes one of the largest cardiology practices in the region, including more than 80 practitioners seeing patients at more than a dozen locations. With a multi-disciplinary team of experts treating nearly every type of heart and vascular disease and participating in leading national research, we're providing advanced care that ensures lasting heart health for generations. Request an appointment and learn more at georgiaheartinstitute.org.

The experts of Georgia Heart Institute also form the core of the cardiac care team at Northeast Georgia Medical Center's five hospitals in Gainesville, Braselton, Winder, Dahlonega and Demorest. It's all part of Northeast Georgia Health System, a non-profit which serves more than 1 million people across the region. Learn more at nghs.com.







