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NORTH CAROLINA OPERA RECEIVES MAJOR GIFT FROM PROGRESS ENERGY FOUNDATION

Raleigh – The newly formed North Carolina Opera announced today a gift of \$60,000 from the Progress Energy Foundation. The gift will be used to realize the vision of the new company, that is, to bring to the Triangle a dynamic cultural resource that delivers main-stage productions, arts education in the schools, training for aspiring artists, and a broad menu of community outreach programs.

Eric Mitchko, North Carolina Opera’s new general director tasked with launching the inaugural season, responded with gratitude. "With this generous gift, the Progress Energy Foundation shows its commitment to having a thriving opera company in the community. We are extremely grateful for this gift. It demonstrates a shared belief that opera is essential. This is a wonderful example of the kind of support that will help the company flourish."

"The Progress Energy Foundation is pleased to provide this financial support for North Carolina Opera," said Rob Caldwell, Progress Energy vice president of Efficiency and Innovative Technology and also a board member of North Carolina Opera. "Supporting the arts helps enrich the economic vitality of this region, and enhances the quality of life in the communities where our employees and customers live and work."

Progress Energy (NYSE:PGN), headquartered in Raleigh, NC, is a Fortune 500 energy company with more than 22,000 megawatts of generation capacity and approximately \$10 billion in annual revenues. Progress Energy included two major electric utilities that serve about 3.1 million customers in the Carolinas and Florida. The company has earned the Edison Electric Institute’s Edison Award, the industry’s highest honor, in recognition of its operational excellence, and was the first utility to receive the prestigious J.D. Power and Associates Founder’s Award for customer service. The company is pursuing a balanced strategy for a secure energy future, which includes aggressive energy-efficiency programs, investments in renewable energy technologies and a state-of-the-art electricity system. Progress Energy celebrated a century of service in 2008. Visit the company’s Web site at www.progress-energy.com.

Progress Energy invests in a wide variety of local organizations and initiatives to add to the overall quality of life in the area it serves. Grants focus on education, the environment, economic development and employee involvement. During 2009, Progress Energy invested nearly \$10 million in the communities it serves.

North Carolina Opera was created when The Opera Company of North Carolina and Capital Opera Raleigh merged earlier this year. For its inaugural season, North Carolina Opera will mount both large-scale and more intimate productions in a variety of venues across the Triangle. Casts will feature singers of international renown, as well as emerging talent from across the state. The company will offer programming in area schools and numerous outreach activities and events throughout the region.

North Carolina Opera will raise the curtain on its debut season with Puccini’s “Tosca”, October 15 and 17 in Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center for the Performing Arts in Raleigh. Visit www.ncopera.org for more information.

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