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Tonya Creekmore and Tina Harris join Avison Young in Atlanta

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Highly regarded retail specialists join Avison Young to grow retail platform; Creekmore becomes Principal

ATLANTA, June 13, 2011 /PRNewswire/ - **Steve Dils**, Avison Young Principal and Managing Director of the company's Atlanta office, announced today that leading retail real estate professionals **Tonya Creekmore** and **Tina Harris** have joined Avison Young's brokerage operations in Atlanta.

Effective immediately, Creekmore joins Avison Young as a Principal and will focus on expanding Avison Young's retail management and leasing platform in the United States. Her responsibilities will include business development, asset management and anchor-tenant transactions. Creekmore was most recently Vice-President, Big Box and Peripheral Land Leasing/Development, with General Growth Properties.

Harris, who most recently operated her own consulting company, joins Avison Young as a senior retail leasing representative. A top performer for more than 10 years at General Growth Properties, Harris will focus her efforts on in-line mall leasing.

"Avison Young's powerful retail presence started in Canada but the company continues to add to its retail scale and depth of capabilities in the U.S.," comments Dils. "Tonya's solid knowledge of retail industry trends and her dedication to the business make her the perfect candidate to grow our retail mall property management and leasing capabilities in the U.S. Meanwhile, Tina is very well regarded by retailers and can deliver dynamic leasing capabilities to our clients. Both of these professionals will fit in very well with the top brokers we have hired in Atlanta - and across the company - over the past year."

Creekmore brings to Avison Young nearly two decades of experience in the commercial real estate industry. In the past three years, her responsibilities included securing big-box tenants for development and re-development of regional malls and community centers for General Growth Properties. Prior to that, Creekmore was a partner at North American Properties where her responsibilities included developments such as Camp Creek MarketPlace, Stonecrest MarketPlace, Coleman MarketPlace and Sodo. Creekmore's emphasis at North American Properties included shopping center development, company operations and oversight of the leasing department, as well as managing retailer relationships.

In her roles at North American Properties and General Growth Properties, she secured and negotiated transactions with Target, Sam's Club, J.C. Penney, Kohl's, Home Depot, Lowe's, Dick's Sporting Goods,

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Marshalls/TJ Maxx, Ross, Old Navy, 24 Hour Fitness, Jo-Ann Fabric, and Bed Bath and Beyond, as well as other national anchor, shop and out-parcel retailers.

Creekmore's background also includes eight years with Ben Carter Properties, where she was responsible for leasing retail development projects such as Mall of Georgia Crossing, Columbus Crossing and Conyers Crossing, as well as acting as a leasing liaison between Ben Carter Properties and third-party landlord clients.

Professional affiliations and accomplishments include: 40 Under 40 *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* 2007 Up and Comers; 20 Under 40 2010 Industry Leaders - Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW Network); International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) - co-chair of 2004 Southeast Conference and chair of 2005 Southeast Conference; 2009 CREW Atlanta Distinguished Achievement Award recipient; 2009-2010 CREW national board member and 2006 CREW Atlanta President.

Harris is a top leasing professional with 15 years of industry experience. She was a Top 10 producer for General Growth Properties multiple times during her tenure there. She has cultivated strong relationships with many top retailers and has leased projects such as Coastland, Governor's Square, Northpark, Oglethorpe, Peachtree, Regency Square, Riverchase Galleria, The Esplanade, and The Oaks Mall.

"Given their depth of knowledge and background working with mall owners, Tonya and Tina are significant additions to our rapidly-growing retail practice in the U.S. Their experience in developing and implementing management and leasing strategies will add value to investment properties," adds **Earl Webb**, Avison Young's President, U.S. Operations. "We are very pleased that Tonya and Tina will be bringing their outstanding track records to Avison Young and helping us grow our national retail presence."

Over the past two years, Avison Young has grown from 11 to 23 offices and from 300 to more than 700 real estate professionals across Canada and in the U.S.

"Although I will miss the opportunity to be a part of General Growth Properties' turnaround, I am thrilled to be on board as a Principal at Avison Young," says Creekmore. "Avison Young's commitment to fostering and maintaining client relationships played a critical role in my decision to join the team. We are in a unique position to leverage our experience and leadership in retail commercial real estate while still providing personalized attention to each of our clients. This is the kind of environment in which I thrive, so I'm confident this is just the beginning of a longstanding relationship."

Founded in 1978, Avison Young is Canada's largest independently-owned commercial real estate services company and the only national, Canadian-owned, principal-managed real estate brokerage firm in the country. Headquartered in Toronto, Ontario and ranked among Canada's leading national commercial real estate organizations, Avison Young is a full-service commercial real estate company comprising more than 700 real estate professionals in 23 offices across Canada and in the U.S. The company provides value-added, client-centric investment sales, leasing, advisory, management, financing and mortgage placement services to owners and occupiers of office, retail, industrial and multi-residential properties.

• Editors/Reporters: please click on links to view and download photos of Tonya Creekmore and Tina Harris

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