

LAWNDALE CHRISTIAN HEALTH CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW CEO

James L. Brooks, MDiv, is set to succeed Bruce Miller as the Chief Executive Officer

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CHICAGO – Lawndale Christian Health Center (LCHC) announced today that the Board of Directors selected James L. Brooks, current Vice President of Mission & Community Engagement at LCHC, to be the organization’s next Chief Executive Officer following the retirement of current CEO Bruce Miller.

James Brooks, MDiv, has served at LCHC since 2013, most recently as the Chief Ministry Officer and Vice President of Mission & Community Engagement. His experience as a healthcare leader is complemented by nearly 20 years of faith-based leadership experience in church ministry. He served as the Director of Youth Ministry at Grace Lutheran Church and School for eight years before serving as Senior Pastor at Harmony Community Church for the past eleven years.

The Board selected James for his commitment to LCHC’s mission, his well-established relationships and role in the community, and for his perspective as a generational Lawndale leader who lives in and has served the community for decades.

“We are confident that James will provide the leadership necessary to continue the growth of missional service and faithful community care that is central to LCHC. His deep understanding of the community and commitment to the LCHC vision will guide the work of this organization for years to come,” stated Rob Castaneda, Lawndale’s Board Chair.

In his most recent role in senior leadership, Brooks has been a motivator and encourager to carry out the mission of LCHC with excellence by equipping staff with tools for spiritual care. He leads the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team to advance equity-based initiatives at LCHC, engages local Lawndale partners, and builds alliances and partnerships to broaden and deepen LCHC’s impact within the community. His ability to effectively build relationships has provided him a platform to serve as the lead connector with the City of Chicago and other civic leaders to advance LCHC’s efforts to improve care. He has nurtured connections with elected officials and advocated in support of initiatives such as improvements to the state Medicaid program including funding to provide better services for those with substance use disorders.

In addition to his executive role at LCHC, Brooks has served as the Senior Pastor at Harmony Community Church for over a decade, a role he took over from his father. The Brooks family has had deep roots in North Lawndale since 1955, which has led to a love of the community and an awareness of the needs that exist among residents. He has sought innovative ways to love and serve like Christ within his community with an emphasis on caring for marginalized neighbors. Under Brooks’ leadership, Harmony developed community support services that include tutoring, a food pantry, crisis intervention, and trauma response.

Recently, Brooks has provided significant national community health center leadership through his role as Chair of the Board of Directors for Christian Community Health Fellowship (CCHF) and has served for many years as a board member for Lawndale Christian Legal Center. Additionally, he has served on the board of North Lawndale College Prep High School for six years.

James Brooks is a summa cum laude graduate of Concordia University where he majored in Organizational Management. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Northern Theological Seminary where he was the first Dr. John Perkins Scholar graduate. Additionally, Brooks completed his Youth and

Theology Certification at Princeton Theological Seminary and Clinical Pastoral Education unit at the University of Illinois Medical Center.

James' selection as CEO comes after a lengthy national search led by KEES Alford Executive Search team. KEES is a nonprofit executive search firm that builds diverse teams and dynamic leaders in the nonprofit and public sectors. KEES worked with the Board of Directors and Search Committee, chaired by Rochelle Forster, to identify final candidates from dozens of qualified applicants from across the country.

"The search for a new CEO was a rigorous national process. Being born and raised in Lawndale and having experience as a Lawndale leadership team member enhances James' leadership abilities and commitment to Lawndale and the entire community as a whole. We look forward to working with James as the new CEO," says Rochelle Foster, CEO Search Committee Chair.

James Brooks' vision for the future of LCHC is one of ongoing community partnerships that work for the good of its patients, staff, and neighbors. He will be the driving force in keeping LCHC advancing toward greater diversity, equity, and inclusion at every level; maintaining excellence in LCHC's services; and approaching every decision with prayer-filled humility.

"I'm deeply honored and incredibly humbled to be selected for this role. I am blessed to partner with all our staff, leaders, Board members, and those who have gone before us in Christ-centered service to our community. I pray God gives me the strength to continue to motivate and develop the mission of Lawndale Christian Health Center as we partner with our community to bring wellness to Lawndale and the neighboring communities," Brooks shared.

Lawndale Christian Health Center was founded by Lawndale Christian Community Church in 1984 to address unmet health needs in their own community. LCHC is built on this foundation of faith - its mission and values are shaped by the love of Jesus Christ summarized in the phrase, "Loving God, Loving People." Today, working out of seven full-time health centers and more than a dozen homeless shelter-based clinics, LCHC serves as a medical home to more than 63,000 patients and provides access to a full spectrum of affordable, high-quality primary health care and complementary clinical services including behavioral health, dental, optometry, and pharmacy. To learn more about Lawndale Christian Health Center, please visit, <https://lawndale.org>.

LCHC is grateful to James L. Brooks for his ongoing commitment to the organization and the Lawndale community and believes that this transition will allow LCHC to continue to provide quality, affordable healthcare with the love of Jesus. Visit lawndale.org/ceo-announcement to for more on this transition.

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