



Howard Brown Health CEO to Step Down After Decades of HIV and LGBTQ Service

David Ernesto Munar began as an HIV client in 1994 before leading Chicago's Howard Brown Health, an LGBTQ and HIV health provider.

February 15, 2024 By Laura Schmidt

David Ernesto Munar, president and CEO of Chicago's [Howard Brown Health](#) (HBH), one of the largest [LGBTQ](#) and [HIV](#) health care organizations in the nation, is stepping down after 10 years of leadership, [according to HBH](#).

"It has been the honor of my life to lead an organization that has meant so much to me, my family and the LGBTQ+ community, especially those of us affected by HIV," Munar said in an HBH news release. "Given the explosion of political and cultural attacks against us, standing up for our rights and meeting our community's needs is more important than ever. I am proud to have played a part in shepherding Howard Brown's growth to combat stigma, discrimination and health inequities across [Chicago](#)."

Munar first connected with HBH as a patient when he was diagnosed with HIV at one of its clinics in 1994. For more than 20 years, he held various positions at AIDS Foundation of Chicago, including as president and CEO. In 2014, Munar became president and CEO of HBH. At the time, the organization offered primary care and sexual health services to fewer than 8,000 patients at three locations in Chicago.

Today, HBH is a \$200 million health care organization offering comprehensive and [affirming care](#) to more than 38,000 patients across 10 locations in Chicago.

"The board celebrates David's work to expand and support equitable access to affirming care for the Chicago LGBTQ+ community," said board chair Mike Mazzeo. "The board of directors and the organization overall are grateful for his leadership and vision this past decade. We thank David for his dedicated service to Howard Brown and to our communities."

During his tenure as president and CEO, Munar helped designate HBH as a federally qualified health center, which helped expand community care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, Munar focused on overseeing quality-improvement projects, including the opening of a permanent

home for the Broadway Youth Center, transitioning to a modern electronic health record system and constructing a new health center in the [Northalsted community](#), home to one of the largest LGBTQ communities in the Midwest.

What's more, in the past year, HBH achieved its highest patient satisfaction scores and served more patients than any other time in its 50-year history.

"The board has begun a [comprehensive process of identifying new leadership](#) for the organization, which will incorporate and engage internal stakeholders as well as the broader community," Mazzeo said.

In related POZ news, see "[HIV Headlines Two Big Events During One Week in Chicago \[VIDEOS\]](#)," an October 6, 2023 article about Chicago's AIDS Run & Walk (which raised \$520,000) and the new LGBTQ and HIV clinic Howard Brown Health opened in Lakeview.

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