My time at AIDS Foundation of Chicago

February 11, 2014 By David Ernesto Munar

Dear Friends,

As a person living with and concerned about HIV, I am enormously grateful to have spent the past 23 years of my career nurturing a vibrant and powerful community for social justice at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC). It is therefore with mixed emotions that I announce my plans to step down as AFC's president and CEO at the end of March to take the helm at the Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC).

My time at AFC has been rewarding beyond measure. I am proud to have served people affected by HIV, stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the bravest activists I have ever known, and worked to advance system changes with incalculable positive impact for vulnerable people and communities.

In my next chapter, I will channel my energies - and all that I have learned - to advance the mission of HBHC, which is Chicago's community-based health care provider for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) people and allies. As HBHC's president and CEO, I will apply new tools to the continued pursuit of health care justice for all, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of medically underserved populations.

I believe all people deserve non-judgmental, high-quality, and culturally competent care that they can afford. The dynamic health care landscape offers great opportunities as well as systemic challenges. For diverse LGBTQ populations, there can be no equality without health. This is why I plan to enlist HBHC's expertise in support of community-based advocacy, led by AFC and others, to ensure the implementation of the federal health reform law confers maximum benefits to people in our communities.

AFC is fortunate to rely on a talented staff and deep bench of stalwart leaders who advance our mission through results-oriented policy advocacy, systems coordination, and programmatic development. Tapping into our pool of influential leaders, the Board of Directors has appointed Policy Vice President John Peller - a local and national leader in HIV-related policy and programs - to the post of interim president/CEO, effective April 1. I am confident that under John's leadership, the organization will remain strong and determined to apply the knowledge and technical know-how amassed in nearly 30 years fighting the epidemic to accelerate the fight and help all those disadvantaged in the epidemic's wake.

As a trusted AFC ally and friend, I extend to you my heartfelt thanks for your kindness and steadfast support. Working together, we have an unprecedented opportunity to avail better

outcomes in the health and wellness of people affected by HIV.

Yours truly,

David Ernesto Munar
President/CEO

PS: Learn more about John Peller’s appointment to interim president/CEO and AFC’s 2013 accomplishments online at aidschicago.org.

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