

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**DR. MELINDA ESTES, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF SAINT LUKE'S HEALTH SYSTEM AND JIM SKOGSBERGH,
CEO OF ADVOCATE HEALTH, NAMED CO-RECIPIENTS OF NCHL'S 2023 GAIL L. WARDEN LEADERSHIP
EXCELLENCE AWARD**

CHICAGO, July 13, 2023, – The National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL) is thrilled to announce that Dr. Melinda L. Estes, president and chief executive officer of Saint Luke's Health System of Kansas City, and Jim Skogsbergh, chief executive officer of Advocate Health, have been selected as the highly distinguished recipients of the 2023 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award. This award has been steadfast in honoring healthcare leaders for more than 17 years, recognizing their unwavering commitment, exceptional values, and remarkable contributions that have significantly improved the health of the public through their exceptional leadership and organizational excellence.

The Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award is named in honor of Gail L. Warden, the renowned founding chairman of NCHL, president emeritus of Henry Ford Health System, and one of the foremost leaders in the healthcare industry. This award recognizes Warden's extraordinary accomplishments as a trailblazer in healthcare delivery, community wellness, health policy, and as a mentor and inspiration to future generations. It is a testament to his enduring legacy and leadership.

To commemorate their outstanding achievements, Dr. Estes and Skogsbergh will be formally presented with this prestigious award and honored during the esteemed [NCHL's 2023 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award Celebration](#). This highly anticipated event will take place on **Tuesday, November 14, 2023**, against the picturesque backdrop of Lake Michigan at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

Melinda L. Estes, MD is president and CEO of Saint Luke's Health System. With 14 hospitals and campuses serving the Kansas City metro and surrounding rural communities, Saint Luke's is one of the area's largest private employers. A board-certified neurologist and neuropathologist, Dr. Estes is a champion of strengthening physician engagement. In 2020 she served as chair of the American Hospital Association's Board of Trustees, and previously served as chair of the taskforce that created the AHA Physician Alliance. Dr. Estes served on the AHA's Metropolitan Hospital Council, Committee on Health Professions, and Advisory Committee on Health Care Reform. She is a frequent industry speaker and guest columnist, and the recipient of honors and awards from organizations including Cleveland Clinic, Sam Houston State University, and Becker's Hospital Review. In 2020, she was included on both Modern Healthcare's "100 Most Influential People in Healthcare" and "50 Most Influential Clinical Executives" lists.

"Dr. Estes, since joining Saint Luke's in 2011, has fostered an innovative and transformative culture, bridging the organization's rich history of compassionate care with advancements in equitable care, technology, workforce diversity, and clinical excellence," said David Ertel, chief financial officer at Vizient and one of the nominators of Dr. Estes for the award. Her efforts, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, have focused on addressing disparities in care, both in the Kansas City metro area and surrounding rural communities, while also promoting a fair and inclusive workplace for all Saint Luke's team members. Dr. Estes is an exceptionally deserving recipient of this honorable award."

Jim Skogsbergh is CEO of Advocate Health, the third largest nonprofit health system in the U.S. He previously served as president and CEO at Advocate Aurora Health, one of the 12 largest health systems in the country. Named one of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare by Modern Healthcare nine times, Skogsbergh is a leading voice on health care transformation and innovation; national health reform efforts; quality, cost and high reliability initiatives; patient safety; and health care providers' commitment to serving their communities.

"Having worked side-by-side many years ago on the board of the American Hospital Association – and today, as co-CEOs and partners in building the new Advocate Health – I nominated my esteemed colleague and friend for the Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award because I can think of no one more deserving in our field," said Eugene A. Woods, chief executive officer of Advocate Health. "From his relentless focus on creating the safest and highest quality environment for patients; to his deep commitment to teammates, which was never so evident than during the pandemic; to his emphasis on health equity for all communities – Jim is an innovator and a values-driven leader who has made unparalleled contributions to healthcare in America."

Skogsbergh is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), a past chair and member of the American Hospital Association (AHA) Board of Directors and a past chair of the Illinois Hospital Association's Board of Trustees. He is the recipient of the American Hospital Association's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, as well as the ACHE Career Achievement Award, the American Heart Association's 2023 Heart of Gold recognition, the 2015 Chicago United Bridge Award and B'nai B'rith's 2013 National Healthcare Award.

"I am deeply honored to extend my congratulations to Jim Skogsbergh and Dr. Melinda Estes on their well-deserved recognition as the recipients of this year's esteemed Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award," shared LeAnn Swanson, CEO of the National Center for Healthcare Leadership. "Their unwavering dedication to servant leadership, groundbreaking approaches, and exceptional contributions have not only significantly elevated the healthcare landscape but have also positively transformed the lives of countless individuals. Their visionary leadership and tireless commitment exemplify the pinnacle of excellence in healthcare, setting a remarkable precedent for the industry as a whole."

The NCHL formally invites all those who wish to celebrate this momentous achievement, to join us at the [2023 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award Celebration](#), the evening of Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

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About the National Center for Healthcare Leadership: NCHL is the leader in advancing evidenced-based leadership practices to drive quality care and improved outcomes. Through its three premier membership programs, including the Leadership Excellence Networks (LENS), US Cooperative of International Patient Programs (USCIPP) and National Council on Administrative Fellowships (NCAF), members are supported through collaboration, education, and research. These member benefits serve as a catalyst for organizations to find and apply leadership solutions that drive achievement of organizational goals as they pursue organizational excellence. Learn more about NCHL at www.nchl.org.