



Special Announcement

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Brian Gragnolati Named Recipient of NCHL's 2025 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award

CHICAGO, IL, July 9, 2025 – The [National Center for Healthcare Leadership](#) (NCHL) is honored to announce that **Brian Gragnolati**, President & CEO of Atlantic Health, has been selected as the 2025 recipient of the Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award. For 20 years, this prestigious award has celebrated exceptional leaders who advance health and well-being through courageous leadership, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to organizational excellence.

“Getting his start in health care as an EMT in college gave Brian a unique perspective, laying the foundation for a lifelong commitment to caring for others and for those on the front lines of providing care,” said American Hospital Association President and CEO, Rick Pollack. “In addition, his expert grasp of complex health care issues, and his ability to articulate new ways of thinking about them, has distinguished him as a genuine thought leader in times of rapid change. He is that rare leader who is not content to rest on past achievements, and instead, always looks around the corner for the next big idea and innovation to improve care and expand access. Brian’s commitment to excellence and dedication to improving the lives of so many people and advancing health in America make him a worthy recipient of this honor.”

Gragnolati brings more than four decades of leadership experience, most recently serving as President & CEO of Atlantic Health, a \$6 billion integrated care network that serves 14 counties and nearly 7.5 million residents across New Jersey. Under his leadership, Atlantic Health has become nationally recognized for its focus on access, patient experience, and innovation, while creating one of the region’s most desirable workplaces for its 24,000 team members.

“Brian Gragnolati’s career is a model of visionary leadership anchored in service—to patients, to the workforce, and to the broader healthcare field,” said Jill Schwieters, Chair of the NCHL Board of Directors. “His commitment to operational excellence and talent development has created ripple effects well beyond Atlantic Health. He exemplifies the values of this award and the legacy of Gail Warden.”

The Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award honors the founding chair of NCHL, president emeritus of Henry Ford Health System, and one of the nation’s foremost healthcare leaders. The award recognizes individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to improving health and health care through bold leadership and a dedication to building healthier communities.

“To receive an award named for Gail Warden—someone I deeply admire and who helped shape the modern landscape of healthcare leadership—is truly humbling,” said Brian Gragnolati. “I’ve had the privilege of working with extraordinary teams throughout my career, and this recognition reflects their passion, resilience, and commitment to improving lives and building healthier communities.”

Brian Gragnolati will be honored at the 2025 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award Celebration, held on the evening of Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. The celebration will bring together national healthcare executives, educators, and changemakers to recognize his achievements and honor his contributions to the future of healthcare leadership.

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