

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP WELCOMES PAULA JUST TO ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHICAGO – April 1, 2026 – The National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL) is pleased to announce the appointment of **Paula Just, Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative and Experience Officer at Health First**, to its Board of Directors. Paula has more than three decades of healthcare leadership experience and a distinguished track record of advancing workforce excellence, organizational culture, and the human experience in healthcare delivery.

In her role at Health First, Paula leads enterprise-wide strategies focused on people, culture, and experience, with oversight of Human Resources, Facilities, Construction and Real Estate. She is deeply committed to maximizing the contributions of healthcare teams through thoughtful leadership development, engagement, and system-wide alignment—core principles that closely reflect NCHL’s mission to advance leadership excellence across the healthcare ecosystem.

“I am honored to join the NCHL Board of Directors and contribute to an organization that is shaping the future of healthcare leadership,” said Ms. Just. *“I look forward to collaborating with fellow leaders to strengthen the workforce, elevate the human experience in care delivery, and advance innovative leadership practices across the field.”*

“Paula Just is an exceptional addition to our Board of Directors,” said NCHL Board Chair Jill Schwieters. *“Paula has served in several of our nation’s prominent healthcare organizations and provided operational and executive leadership throughout her career. Her role as a Chief Human Resources Officer provides her with a clear understanding of the need to develop and support healthcare leaders across this country. Paula’s values and passion for service align closely with ours, and we are thrilled to have her join the Board.”*

Paula’s career spans 33 years in healthcare, human resources and leadership. She began her career as a Compensation and Benefits Analyst at St. John’s Mercy Medical Center (now Mercy) and has since held leadership roles at nationally recognized systems including Tenet Healthcare, BJC HealthCare, and SSM Health. In addition to her operational leadership, Paula has contributed to the development of future healthcare leaders as an adjunct professor at Webster University.

NCHL continues to bring together a diverse and accomplished group of leaders committed to advancing evidence-based leadership practices and strengthening the healthcare workforce. Paula’s appointment reflects the organization’s ongoing commitment to elevating leadership excellence and fostering innovation in how healthcare organizations develop and support their people.

NCHL is fortunate to have nationally recognized leaders continuing to serve on its Board, including:

- Jill Schwieters, NCHL, Board Chair
- Kaitlyn Apodaca, Sr. Strategy Planning Consultant, Seattle Children’s
- Jeanne Armentrout, Former EVP & CAO, Carilion Clinic
- Denise Brooks-Williams, EVP & COO, Henry Ford Health
- Maxine Carrington, JD, SVP & Chief People Officer, Northwell Health
- Bob Clarke, Chairman, Furst Group and NuBrick Partners
- Richard "Chip" O. Davis, PhD, CEO, Rochester Regional Health

- David Ertel, CFO, Vizient, Inc.
- David Gillan, Chief Customer Officer, Sodexo U.S. Healthcare and Seniors
- Carrie Harris-Muller, SVP & Chief Population Health Officer, OhioHealth
- M. Michelle Hood, EVP & COO, American Hospital Association
- Jessica Melton, Chief Transformation Officer, University of Florida Health
- Jeffrey Simms, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair for Alumni and External Relations in the Department of Health Policy & Management at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health

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About the National Center for Healthcare Leadership

The National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL) is the premier national convener advancing leadership excellence to meet the evolving demands of healthcare. Through a unique, multi-stakeholder membership model, NCHL connects leading health systems, academic institutions, and corporate partners in a shared commitment to developing high-performing leaders and organizations.

NCHL's three flagship communities—Leadership Excellence Networks (LENS), U.S. Cooperative for International Patient Programs (USCIPP), and the National Council on Administrative Fellowships (NCAF)—serve as platforms for strategic collaboration, leadership development, and the exchange of evidence-informed practices. Together, these communities enable members to strengthen workforce capability, accelerate innovation, and drive improved outcomes across the healthcare landscape. Learn more about NCHL at www.nchl.org.