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We are delighted to announce the appointment of Maurice Woods, as President and CEO of Easterseals South Florida (ESSF). With a professional background that includes leadership roles with Chicago Public Schools, Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and The Quaker Oats Company, Maurice has most recently served as Chief Strategy and Operations Officer for Broward County Public Schools.

Beyond his experience across sectors, Maurice brings a passion for addressing equity and inclusion disparities for individuals and families with disadvantages or disabilities. Stemming from his lived experience as a black man from an underserved community with family members that have disabilities, Maurice is grateful that his new role will be leading an organization rooted in societal issues related to civil rights, the Americans with Disability Act, and the Affordable Care Act.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided many challenges for our program participants. The disruption of routines and structure proved to be a real struggle for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Job losses for adults with disabilities accelerated. For the elderly, increased exposure risks and availability of health care resources significantly impacted their ability to access adequate health care services. The team at ESSF responded with resilience, creativity, and compassion to meet the needs of the children, youth, caregivers and older adults we serve.

As we enter the post-pandemic phase, Maurice brings extensive experience with programs and service-related solutions and a leadership approach to impact opportunities which will take Easterseals South Florida to the next level.

Committed to a better “new normal” and to mutually beneficial partnerships, Maurice believes, “the ability to strategically collaborate and align our Easterseals South Florida mission with organizations across multiple community and business organizations are critical pieces of our impact strategy, and working in conjunction with our national organization, we are well-positioned to attract partners that align with our mission and are looking to alleviate suffering for those individuals and families hardest hit by the pandemic.”

The Board of Directors has also hired our first Chief Administrative Officer, Barry Vogel. The Chief Administrative Officer is a new role focused on assuring ESSF implements effective financial systems and processes, has sufficient human resources and appropriate organizational structure, and meets compliance, ethical, legal and regulatory guidelines while meeting established program outcomes. Prior to joining our team, Barry served as Managing Director at Global First Year at Florida International University and as the Director of Administration at Johnson & Wales University.

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Past ESSF Board Chairman and Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Ryder Systems, Bob Fatovic, shares, "ESSF has grown significantly over the past six years, both in size and complexity of delivering services in the community's areas of need. Barry is an experienced administrative leader who can implement effective systems and processes to ensure ESSF continues on its growth trajectory efficiently. Barry leads by example and is a proven mentor and developer of management talent."

We are delighted to welcome this talented executive team to Easterseals South Florida and look forward to collaborating with them to help every child in our programs to reach his or her full potential and to assist every older adult we serve to live the most dignified life possible.

Sincerely,



Eric Vainder  
Chair, Easterseals South Florida Board of Directors  
Senior Managing Director, The Northern Trust Company