



children's home & aid

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Innovative Leader in Child Welfare Returns to Children's Home & Aid in CEO Role

(CHICAGO) – Michael J. Shaver, a leader in child welfare and human services experienced in redesigning public systems and community-based, non-profit agencies, will return to Children's Home & Aid, stepping into the role of President & CEO when the current leader, Nancy Ronquillo, retires June 30.

“Children's Home & Aid is a first-in-class organization,” Shaver said. “The agency has a well-deserved reputation for always looking for strategies to improve on the work and reach better outcomes for children and families.”

“What is so unique about a community-based organization is we have the ability to partner with the public sector to reach families not only when they are in crisis,” Shaver said. “We can tackle the problems earlier, making sure they don't become life-changing, big problems.”

Shaver served for seven years as Children's Home & Aid's Chief Operating Officer before leaving in 2014 to become the President & CEO of Children's Home Society of Florida. “Some of the most important lessons I learned about being an effective CEO, I learned from Nancy,” Shaver said. “I learned the importance of building a strong team, listening to the field, and humility.”

Ronquillo praised Shaver's strategic thinking and his dedication to children and families.

“Mike's considerable gifts give him a very unique range in terms of how he engages in the mission,” she said. “Mike thinks across systems. He has high-level conceptual capabilities and, in his bones, he is on fire about helping every child and every family thrive in their community.”

“Illinois is at a crossroads moment,” Ronquillo added. “In my 46 years in this work, I've seen very few times when the stars have aligned in this way. The new Pritzker Administration in Illinois, the leadership at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the federal incentive to target funding to prevent child abuse and neglect – all coalesce into opportunities to transform the lives of fragile children and families.”

Children's Home & Aid Board Chair Charlie Gofen noted that “throughout his career, Mike has shown relentless tenacity as he has tackled complex problems. He strives for meaningful change, and he delivers results.”

Shaver demonstrated his ability at Children's Home Society of Florida to spark change through technology and disruptive thinking. Using a seed grant from Microsoft, software developers and social workers came together in hack-a-thons to reimagine child welfare casework. The result was CaseAIM, a software platform that cut staff turnover in half and reduced – by an average of three months – the time children spent in foster care with Children's Home Society of Florida.

As President & CEO of Children's Home Society of Florida, Shaver also led the expansion of the effective Community Partnership School model. The number of Community Partnership Schools in Florida grew from one to 17, with state funding supporting the model increasing from \$400,000 in 2014 to a proposed \$10.2 million currently before the Florida legislature. The Children's Home Society of Florida's Community Partnership School, Evans High School in Orlando, won the prestigious Mutual of America Governor Hugh L. Carey Award in 2017 as well as Bank of America's Neighborhood Builder Award in 2018.

Shaver worked for the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) from 1998 to 2003, serving in a variety of roles including the Deputy Director of Budget, Research and Planning. His work included performance-based contracting for community-based, non-profit agencies, federal waiver demonstrations, and the redesign of intensive treatment and placement stabilization services across the state for children with serious emotional disturbances. These and other reforms were instrumental in reducing, by half, the number of Illinois children in foster care.

Shaver earned a MA in Public Policy from the University of Chicago, Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy and a BA in Political Science from Colorado College.

He is looking forward to returning to Chicago with his husband, Chris. Their move will bring Mike closer to his two adult sons, whom he adopted from foster care, and will allow him to spend more time with his five-year-old grandson.

The CEO search was conducted for Children's Home & Aid by the global executive search firm DHR International.

About Children's Home & Aid

Children's Home & Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois, serving nearly 40,000 children and families each year in over 60 counties. We partner with children, youth and families whose potential is at risk to create hope, opportunity, and bright futures. Since 1883, Children's Home & Aid has been a leader in responding to the changing needs of disadvantaged children and families in Illinois and shaping public policies in child welfare, early childhood and youth services. For more information about Children's Home & Aid, visit childrenshomeandaid.org.

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