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Illinois Partners Welcomes New Executive Director Lauren Wright

CHICAGO, IL – The Illinois Partners for Human Service Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Lauren Wright as the organization’s new Executive Director. Illinois Partners’ mission is to protect and support the state’s most important resource—the residents of Illinois—by creating a strong and more stable human services sector. Wright officially began her role as new executive director August 8, 2019.

Wright is part of Illinois Partners’ next generation of leadership as the organization continues to develop and invest in innovative strategies to advocate for the entire sector, protect funding and fair policies and ensure that human service providers have a seat at the table in Springfield. She succeeds Judith Gethner, Illinois Partners founding executive director, who retired in June after nearly 10 years of service.

Under Gethner’s leadership Illinois Partners began as a start-up and grew to over 800 human service provider partners located in every legislative district throughout the state.

“Lauren brings exceptional energy, vision and proven leadership with building coalitions, cultivating relationships with diverse stakeholders and creating new opportunities for operational growth and sustainability,” said Sherrie Crabb, Illinois Partners Board Chair. “Both the board and staff is confident that her leadership will propel Illinois Partners to the next level of advocacy and value for our partners and our great state of Illinois. We expect Lauren to expand our reach and further our important work in partnership with human service providers, legislators, businesses, funders and key stakeholders.”

Wright has experience engaging global partnerships with a focus on coalition building at the ground level, grassroots advocacy and sustainable programming. She served as Director of Programs at Mama Hope, a nonprofit dedicated to partnering with grassroots organizations around the globe and investing in programs that support education, climate justice, health, gender equality and financial security. Wright led Mama Hope’s programs, which more than tripled in size during her tenure from eight communities in four countries to 30 communities in nine countries.

In addition, Wright’s deep understanding of the challenges of rural communities, based on her work in Ghana at the United Hearts Children Center, will bring unique insights on nonprofit management, collaborative opportunities and the challenges of providing access and support to human services in rural Illinois.

Wright holds a Master of Arts in Sustainable Development from SIT Graduate Institute and a master’s degree in International Policy and Practice from George Washington University. She is a member of the Young Women’s Giving Council at Chicago Foundation for Women; an associate board member of the Awakenings Foundation; and member of the Acumen Leadership Corps.

Today's leadership change announcement is part of an extensive search conducted by the Illinois Partners board and Kittleman & Associates, a nonprofit executive search and recruiting firm.

About Illinois Partners for Human Service

Illinois Partners is the largest shared voice of human service organizations across the state with coalition partners in every county and legislative district. Illinois Partners focuses on collective advocacy to protect funding and fair policies for human services so that all Illinois residents can reach their potential and fully engage in our communities.

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