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NSMHA Taps Veteran Behavioral Health Executive Damien Cabezas as Next CEO

CHELSEA, Mass. – North Suffolk Mental Health Association’s Board of Directors has announced that veteran behavioral healthcare executive Damien Cabezas will succeed Jackie K. Moore, Ph.D, as Chief Executive Officer of the Chelsea, Mass.-based behavioral health nonprofit. Cabezas starts on June 13 and Moore will assist through the transition.



“In her 17 years of service to our organization and the people we serve, Jackie has NSMHA positioned as one of the most innovative and responsive providers of behavioral healthcare in Massachusetts,” said Board President Deborah Wayne, O.D. “We believe that Damien is the right person to build on her successes and lead our organization into the future.”

Cabezas comes to NSMHA from Mercy Care in Atlanta, where he is president of the federally-qualified health center that offers a continuum of integrated behavioral and medical health care, including dental and vision services. Prior to Mercy Care, Cabezas was CEO of Horizon Behavioral Health in Lynchburg, VA, for more than seven years, overseeing a budget of \$52 million with more than 700 employees and 35 locations.

The son of immigrants who grew up in New York, Cabezas earned a Master of Social Work degree from Fordham and a Master of Public Health from New York Medical College. He has experience working in and leading a wide variety of programming that mirrors the many services offered by NSMHA, including day programs, outpatient and residential programs, and substance use, addiction and recovery services.

"The first time I visited Chelsea, met the Board and staff and visited the neighborhoods and programs, it felt like home," Cabezas said. "As a son of immigrants, my parents received support from the non-profit community, family, and friends to get back on their feet. That personal experience led me at a young age to know that public service was my calling. I am humbled and thrilled to lead this amazing organization and mission and I look forward to partnering with the North Suffolk Board, leadership, team, and community. The opportunities are many and the future is bright."

Founded in 1959, NSMHA has an operating budget of about \$65 million and employs more than 900 people in over 75 programs throughout Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, Charlestown and Boston. It serves adults, children and families of all ages who are experiencing mental health challenges and substance use disorders; those with developmental disabilities; or those who need Early Intervention services from birth to age 3. The agency provides services in nine languages, including ASL, through its four outpatient clinics; 39 residences, including two providing residential addiction treatment; and three Recovery Support Centers. It operates a robust Training Center as well as a 24/7/365 Recovery Support hotline.