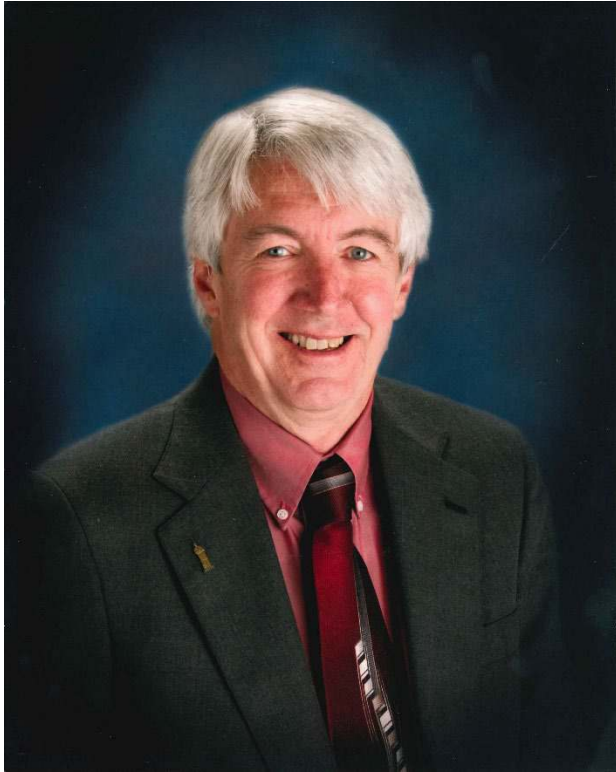


## 2022 Excellence in Governance Award Nominee



*Mike Miller, DVM*

*Lucas County Health Center, Chariton*

- Years of service at the hospital/organization = 9.5
- Total years of service in health care = 9.5

### **Nomination**

*Lori Johnson, Chief Operating Officer*

*Lucas County Health Center, Chariton*

Mike Miller joined Lucas County Health Center's board of trustees in 2013. Two years after joining, he became certified at the basic level of the IHA Trustee Certification Program. He saw the value of the program and, without hesitation, pursued certification at the advanced level, which he still holds today. As a long-serving trustee, Mike understands the importance of the IHA certification and strongly encourages other board members to become certified. In fact, Mike is one of the reasons why the health center has had 100% certification for many years.

But helping set our board members up for success is not the first initiative Mike has taken on and implemented at the board level. After attending a rural health meeting, Mike was introduced to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Framework for Effective Board Governance of Quality. He felt so strongly that this framework would improve our board, he spearheaded the initiative. He not only introduced the idea to hospital leadership, but also worked to get the other trustees excited about quality and its possibilities. Our Quality Committee, a subcommittee of the board of trustees, is beginning to look at the results of this process and Mike continues to be there every step of the way, encouraging staff and ensuring the hospital does what is best for our patients and community.

Mike is the definition of living a life of service and taking pride in making a difference in the community he serves. Although he devotes countless hours to our facility as a trustee, Mike's dedication to Lucas County Health Center goes beyond the administration level. He puts hours in at the ground level too as a Senior Health Insurance and Information Program counselor. In this role, he fills an incredible and sometimes overwhelming need in our community: serving populations that need help understanding and registering for health insurance. As a SHIIP counselor, Mike takes time to sit down with community members in a one-on-one atmosphere to discuss Medicare plans. He helps people review their needs and ensures they have plans that meet their health care needs while remaining financially viable. In typical Mike fashion, he goes above and beyond in this capacity too and holds "Welcome to Medicare" seminars for those who will be transitioning to the Medicare program. Because he believes so firmly in helping people navigate the Medicare world, he stays after the seminars to ensure every question is answered. This is a tremendous asset in our community, but if you asked Mike he would say "he's just helping out."

During the height of the pandemic, Mike was quick to offer suggestions and help. He was the first to offer a listening ear and helping hand and made it abundantly clear that the safety of our staff and patients were priority.

Shortly after the pandemic began, we found ourselves needing to start the search for a new CEO and, once again, Mike was there. He was frequently on-site helping or calling just to check in with the leadership team of the hospital. He wanted to ensure everyone was supported and knew he was available if anything was needed.

More recently, Mike has been a key member of the steering committee for our facility master plan project. He attended meetings with department managers, architects and engineers to help plan the future of Lucas County Health Center. He has a strong belief in setting up our facility for future success while honoring the history of where we started.

Mike is an active leader for our facility. Although many would simply attend monthly board meetings and go home, Mike takes his service beyond the four walls and board packets. Before and after meetings, it's common to see Mike walking through the halls of the hospital, talking with staff and doing a general "checkup." He is quick to bring concerns to administration and has no issue brainstorming ideas to improve the way we function, both as an employer and as a health care provider.

Although he dedicates countless hours to Lucas County Health Center, he still finds time to be an active member of our local Rotary Club. Once again, he uses this platform to serve as an ambassador for the hospital by providing information and presentations about hospital services and projects. When he was president, he even moved the club meetings to a hospital meeting room. What a great way to get people to come to the hospital!

Simply put, Lucas County Health Center is a better place because of Mike Miller and although he would prefer to stay behind the scenes and never asks for glory or recognition, we believe he is more than deserving of the Iowa Hospital Association Excellence in Governance Award.

### **Summary**

Mike Miller joined the board of trustees at Lucas County Health Center in 2013. Since then, he has put in countless hours toward the mission of providing health care to Lucas County. He is a frequent SHIP program volunteer, which does amazing work helping the public understand Medicare. You also will often see Mike throughout the hospital as he does rounds checking in on our staff and patients. We often joke that we should put him on the payroll! Mike is dedicated and compassionate and has helped steer the organization through some difficult times. Simply put, Lucas County Health Center is a better place because of Mike Miller and although he would prefer to stay behind the scenes and never asks for glory or recognition, we believe he is more than deserving of the Iowa Hospital Association Excellence in Governance Award.

## **Letter of Support No. 1**

*Kristine Kennedy, Volunteer Services Manager*

*Lucas County Health Center*

I write to support the nomination of Mike Miller for the IHA Excellence in Governance Award. As Lucas County Health Center's volunteer manager, I have been privileged to work with Mike as one of our Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) volunteers for the last five years. Mike's attention to the client's he serves allows him to provide free Medicare support in the most efficient and responsible way to our community. His role as a SHIIP volunteer allows him not only to support our community, but to act as an ambassador for our volunteer program and Lucas County Health Center. I have fielded numerous positive comments and thanks for Mike's help navigating the Medicare world for our patients, staff and community members. Mike is constantly working with me to improve our SHIIP program's support of our community. Being flexible with his volunteer schedule to accommodate our clients, offering free Welcome to Medicare seminars, mentoring new SHIIP volunteers, and educating me on Medicare are just a few examples. Mike gently became a leader for our Volunteer Department and SHIIP program. His ability to earn respect, trust and loyalty from others is a joy to witness.

On countless occasions, I witness Mike working with our administration and leadership teams to improve our health center's role in supporting our community. Mike is constantly discussing resources we can use to plan for success within our SHIIP program and Lucas County Health Center. Mike is respected by all who know and work with him. I trust him and look to him to develop my character as Lucas County Health Center employee.

He is very deserving of the Iowa Hospital Association Excellence in Governance Award for more than being an active board of trustee member. He deserves this award for all he does as a volunteer, board member and ambassador of Lucas County Health Center.

## **Letter of Support No. 2**

*John Shealey, CEO*

*Lucas County Health Center*

I write to support the nomination of Dr. Mike Miller for the IHA Excellence in Governance Award. Dr. Miller is now in his ninth year of distinguished service to the residents of Lucas County as a very active member of the Lucas County Health Center Board of Trustees.

During his service of governance at our county hospital, Dr. Miller has distinguished himself and our LCHC Board through his willingness to serve and his dedication to maintaining local health care excellence. During his tenure on our Board, he has held several positions to include serving as the Board Chairman. In addition to his dedication to excellence and quality at a local level, Dr. Miller has shown exemplary leadership at the regional and state levels through his involvement in various IHA committees and the SHIIP program.

Dr. Miller has been instrumental in supporting growth initiatives at LCHC to include the addition of new specialty services, Operating Room enhancement projects, medical equipment refresh projects, and the relocation of the specialty clinic to allow for the expansion of the Rural Health Clinic.

His diplomatic skills have been tested over the past nine years as LCHC has weathered the common challenges facing rural hospitals: physician access, distressed local economy, legislative impacts and more. He has seen many changes and stood steadily in a position of leadership through them all. Dr. Miller's leadership and focus on long-term strategic initiatives has allowed our rural hospital to survive and thrive during very turbulent times in health care.

Dr. Miller was a local businessman and owned his own veterinary practice before serving as a USDA facility inspector. He is a graduate of the Iowa State University and is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Please give Dr. Miller your highest consideration for the IHA Excellence in Governance Award.

### **Letter of Support No. 3**

*Natalie McGee, Trustee*

*Lucas County Health Center*

I would like to support Mike Miller's nomination for the Excellence in Governance Award. Mike is a long-time board member, and he is one of the best board chairmen I have had a pleasure to serve with. Mike is a well-respected, involved community leader who wants to assure that our county hospital, Lucas County Health Center, is providing the services that our community members expect. He runs a very efficient meeting and ensures every voice is heard and opinions are shared with the board.

Mike is attuned to our hospital culture. He is always willing to attend various educational opportunities that are provided through the hospital associations and shares his knowledge with the rest of the board. He has good rapport with our providers and our hospital administrator. He knows how to diplomatically hold people accountable. Mike is adept at ensuring or influencing us to make decisions that are in line with our strategic plan.

Mike Miller is most certainly deserving of this recognition. His leadership has helped guide Lucas County Health Center through some difficulties over the past several years.

#### **Letter of Support No. 4**

*Brian Sims, President and CEO*

*Good Shepherd Health Care System, Hermiston, Oregon*

I write to support the nomination of Michael Miller for the Excellence in Governance Award. Of the many hospital trustees that I have known, collaborated, and worked with, Mike Miller is hands-down one of the most dedicated hospital and community leaders around. The exceptional trustee is brilliant, but it is manifested by a love for their hospital and community. The most beloved trustee has these attributes and approaches their role with a servant's heart. This is Mike Miller!

The easy validation is Mike's recent recognition by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds as the 2022 Governor's Volunteer of the Year. It is due to Mike's dedicated contribution to Lucas County Health Center (LCHC) and Iowa healthcare that garnered this amazing award. I could say that I was shocked that Mike was recognized by Governor Reynolds, but I am not. Mike's journey as a trustee was already on its way by the time I had become the CEO at LCHC in 2015.

When I first met Mike Miller, he made it clear that he wanted to learn how to be a great trustee, give advice when asked, and lend his voice when required. It only took me a few months to learn I could call on Mike at any time. One could tell that Mike wanted nothing more than to be a trustee that understood good governance and helped make a difference. Mike represented LCHC at any Iowa Hospital Association meeting that I requested of him.

Many of our best discussions on health care policy and governance came during our many trips to Des Moines, especially when we attended the IHA Legislative visits at the Iowa capital. Often after a board meeting, I had a habit of walking around the hospital to visit with our night staff. One night, I asked Mike if he wanted to walk with me. His eyes lit up! From that point forward, I always asked Mike to round with me after a board meeting. Mike never asked questions, he just thanked them for serving. This simple act by a trustee showed our staff how important they were. Often, I would get comments about how proud one was by having a trustee walk with the CEO, and all the trustee did was say thank you.

During Mike's tenure as a trustee (and now board chair), LCHC has grown into a very respectable healthcare organization. As a trustee, Mike consistently meets the requirement for the Hospital Board and Trustee Certification Program. In fact, Mike leads a board that has

consistently been a three-star facility (100% of the trustees have been certified) for more than seven years.

As with most hospitals across Iowa and the nation, LCHC struggled financially, and the community perception of the quality of care was mixed. Mike was a voice in the community. Mike also participated in both the finance and quality committees. Because Mike did his homework, I could always expect the tough questions to come from him. But Mike asked the questions not to place blame, but rather to understand. And in those times of his need to understand, I am convinced it was that level of engaged governance oversight that helped propel LCHC to an NRHA Top 20 Facility for Quality in 2019, and a facility that produced a positive bottom line in FY 2019, FY 2020 and on.

There is a verse in Proverbs that states, "As iron sharpens iron, so should one person sharpen another." I believed I was helping Mike, but the truth is Mike Miller made me a better CEO. When I thought I was educating him, he was helping me. For any healthcare CEO, therein lies the value of a trustee. And that is the genius and the heart of Mike Miller.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at (541) 667-3409 or at [bsims@gshealth.org](mailto:bsims@gshealth.org) should you have any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.



## **IHA involvement**

### ***Education:***

- 2022 Governance Forum
- 2022 Critical Access & Rural Hospital Forum
- 2022 Hospital Day on the Hill
- 2021 Hospital Day on the Hill
- COVID-19 and CEO Turnover: What's a Board to Do?

### ***Board/Council memberships:***

- Council on Representation and Advocacy, 2018-2022
- 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021 classes, Certified Trustee

### ***IHA PAC Contributor:***

- 2020