

2022 Excellence in Leadership Award Nominee



Timothy Charles, President and CEO

Mercy Medical Center, Cedar Rapids

- Years of service at the hospital/organization = 19 years
- Years of service in health care = 46 years

Nomination

Al Ruffalo, Chair

Mercy Medical Center Board of Trustees

I write to nominate Tim Charles for the IHA Excellence in Leadership Award (hospital CEOs).

Tim has had an immeasurable and lasting influence on the quality of life in our community.

Examples of Tim's innovative and forward-thinking leadership are visible throughout the corridor:

- Dennis and Donna Oldorf Hospice House of Mercy

- Family Caregivers Center of Mercy
- HallMar Village
- Hall-Perrine Cancer Center
- Jewel and Jim Plumb Heart Center, which is now under construction
- The Chris and Suzy DeWolf Family Innovation Center for Aging and Dementia

Under Tim's stewardship, these ideas evolved into world-class assets – situated right here in eastern Iowa.

Few industries are as complex and ever-changing as health care. Most recently, a worldwide pandemic launched the industry into a strange new world that has demanded brave and bold leadership. Yet, through these turbulent times, Tim's remarkable foresight, and health care industry expertise have paved the way for Mercy to maintain national recognitions for quality care – like Truven Top 100 Hospital recognition for eight years – as well as remain at the forefront of advances in medical technology. And grow and flourish in a time when many independent hospitals have been forced to realign and join with larger facilities. Mercy is one of the few remaining independent health care organizations – due, in large part, to Tim's visionary guidance.

Tim's influence on the organization's financial results is indisputable. Since joining in Mercy in 2003:

- Investments in staff salaries and benefits have gone from \$85 million to \$215 million.
- Mercy Foundation investments have increased from \$35 million to \$125 million.
- Revenue has increased from \$170 million to \$420 million.
- The organization has grown from \$325 million in assets to \$831 million.

As it relates to a broader influence in his field, Tim has also served for many years on the Iowa Hospital Association [board of officers and trustees](#) and the American Hospital Association Regional Policy Board, Region 6.

Everything Tim Charles does stems from his integrity, commitment to the well-being of our community and unwavering standards of excellence. Examples are:

- ***Especially for You*** – Since its inception, the Especially for You fund has helped nearly 12,000 people access more than 29,000 services. During its 31-year history – with Tim leading 19 of those years – the Especially for You race has raised more than \$6.6 million. Even through unforeseen circumstances, such as the pandemic, he worked with the Especially for You team to make sure that the race would happen, in some form and benefit our community. Additionally, in 2021, Tim supported the creation of Especially for You’s Breaking Barriers – a diverse group of women that provides new strategies to reducing racial disparities in breast cancer care in our community through education and relationship building.
- ***HallMar Village*** – HallMar Village is set to create a new standard for senior living and care for the Cedar Rapids community. As conversations began about serving this overwhelming need to help people with dementia, Tim set out on a mission to understand how we could reimagine memory care for an aging population. By collaborating with nationally known leaders in the dementia field and through visits to other facilities and interviews in the community, Tim and his leadership team developed the vision for a world-class facility in Cedar Rapids.

Wanting again to tap into expertise, Tim strategically aligned with Presbyterian Homes & Services – a national leader in housing services for older adults. When completed in 2023, HallMar Village will be an advanced, medically integrated community for older adults that will include specialized care for those living with dementia. HallMar Village will provide healthy living unlike any other options available today. This new senior living community will provide a full range of housing and services for the rapidly growing population of older adults in the region.

A true differentiation point for this project is The Chris & Suzy DeWolf Family Innovation Center for Aging and Dementia. This unique center will provide valuable services to support people living with dementia, as well as their care partners and families. It also will be a place where best practices in aging and dementia are

discovered, evaluated and piloted. In addition, the Center will support research and training on new advancements in memory care.

- ***Jewel and Jim Plumb Heart Center at Mercy*** – In 2021, Mercy announced plans to develop Linn County’s largest and most comprehensive facility dedicated to heart and vascular care: The Jewel and Jim Plumb Heart Center at Mercy – scheduled to open in mid-2023 – will be an integrated and patient-centered, state-of-the-art, 72,000-square-foot facility. This has long been a dream of Mercy’s heart team and, therefore, Tim’s, as well. Under Tim’s leadership, this unique facility is being brought to life. It will bring heart specialists and coordinated heart services within a single center as Mercy continues to develop the area’s leading heart program.

Under Tim’s leadership, Mercy’s heart program has experienced tremendous growth, now treating more patients in Linn County for heart care than any other hospital. Additionally, Mercy is the only hospital in Cedar Rapids ranked as a Top 50 Cardiovascular Hospital by Fortune and IBM Watson Health. It’s also the only hospital in the city to have earned the prestigious three-star rating – the highest rating – for open heart surgery by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

Not only does Tim cultivate a culture of giving back within the Mercy organization, but he also leads the way with his own time, treasures and talent. Tim is involved or has been involved in:

- American Hospital Association Metropolitan Hospitals Regional Policy Board 6 delegate.
- Captis Board of Managers.
- Cedar Rapids Medical Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) Commission, past chair.
- Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance Large Investors Innovation Council.
- Center for Health and Society Advisory Council at Coe College.
- Director of MedQuarter.
- Downtown Rotary.
- Iowa Hospital Association Board.
- Local chapter of the [Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation](#) (2009-2010 corporate chair for the JDRF walk-a-thon).
- Orchestra Iowa Foundation Board.

- Paramount Health Options.
- U.S. Bank.
- United Way of East Central Iowa.
- Vizient Upper Midwest board of directors.

Summary

Tim Charles adheres to a code of ethics that embodies honesty, sincerity, and openness through both his words and actions. He strives to always do the right thing for patients, families and staff. For example, the pandemic has been extremely challenging, but Tim assured employment for all staff and called upon expertise for use of telemedicine.

Tim's leadership style is rooted in Mercy's legacy of compassionate, outstanding health care. He's dedicated to Mercy's heritage as a 122-year-old, unwavering pillar of Cedar Rapids health care. The mission of Mercy is "to care for the sick and enhance the health of the communities we serve, guided by the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy." The guiding force of the founding Sisters is prevalent and alive in Tim's everyday leadership.

Letter of Support No. 1

Darlene Schmidt, CEO

Community Health Free Clinic, Cedar Rapids

Tim Charles has always been a strong advocate and supporter of Community Health Free Clinic and the marginalized patients we serve. Community Health Free Clinic (CHFC) provides free medical, dental, vision and prescription services for those without access to or the ability to pay for health care in our community. CHFC never charges for our services and is not reimbursed by the government. We are funded through the generosity of individuals, foundations, corporations, and our in-kind partners like Mercy Medical Center (MMC).

Whether it is writing off labs or x-rays Mr. Charles and MMC have made sure that the patients in our community who are seen at CHFC are cared for. Since 2011, Mr. Charles has provided Community Health Free Clinic with mid-level providers to ensure that we can see every patient who comes through our door.

When the pandemic first began, we had volunteers and staff who couldn't work, and we were contemplating closing the clinic. Mr. Charles reached out and said, "What do you need to stay open?" He felt the clinic was too important to the community to have us closed. He provided us with nurses from Mercy to ensure that we had the staff necessary to provide for patients who came to us for care.

In August 2020, our community was hit by a devastating derecho that caused widespread damage throughout our community. Much of our community, including CHFC, was without power for many days. Again Mr. Charles reached out to see what we needed. We had nearly \$500,000 worth of insulin in our refrigerators to be used for patients who couldn't afford it. He sent vans and staff to help us move out all this insulin to Mercy refrigerators to make sure that it would be available to the most vulnerable in our community.

Mr. Charles is a caring and compassionate leader who looks out for the health of all in our community. It is with great pleasure that I recommend him for the IHA Leadership in Excellence Award.

Letter of Support No. 2

William Galbraith, M.D.

It has been my privilege to observe Mr. Charles at work serving Mercy Medical Center over his nineteen-year career while I was a trustee for MercyCare Service Corporation and later as a director of Mercy Medical Center Foundation.

Tim Charles has accomplished so many notable achievements guiding Mercy Medical Center. I want to focus on two inspiring contributions benefiting broad areas of health care in the greater community.

When leaving New York's Northern Westchester Hospital in 2014, having gone there to check out Planetree Person-Centered Care, Tim noticed a sign for the Ken Hamilton Caregivers Center. He learned that Center offered caregiver education for families of hospitalized patients. Tim told me that triggered his thinking, "What are we doing in Cedar Rapids for family caregivers?" Answer: Develop a Mercy Family Caregivers Center! He made it happen!

Tim and wife Janice served the Alzheimer's Association as volunteers along with Judge David and Kathy Good before David went to live at Mercy's Hallmar because of advancing dementia. Tim had observed Kathy's efforts to protect David's quality of life before he died at Hallmar in 2015. Tim recruited Kathy, a licensed social worker, to co-create Mercy's Family Caregivers Center and to serve as its Founder and Director. As a member of Mercy Medical Center Foundation Board, I watched their stepwise progress as they developed the successful Center into a national model. An extension of the Family Caregivers Center will be housed in Hallmar Village which in partnership with Presbyterian Homes and Services is currently under construction. Hallmar Village is destined to become yet another major community benefit because of Tim Charles visionary leadership.

Tim's second accomplishment to emphasize is his role in support of Community Health Free Clinic's service to Cedar Rapids and surrounding communities. For 20 years, the clinic has provided free medical, dental, vision and prescription services to the uninsured and underinsured on a walk-in basis. There are no charges for services and no governmental reimbursement for

care. Since 2002, the Clinic has counted on volunteer physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, social workers and others to provide free care. Over recent years there are times when there are too few volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners or physician assistants to staff Clinic sessions. In keeping with the Mission of the Sisters of Mercy involving services for the sick and the poor, Tim arranged for two or three of Mercy Medical Center's employees to fill provider vacancies as needed with their professional services given without reimbursement from the clinic! Mercy Medical Center has donated an average of \$830,000 worth of laboratory and professional services per year over the past several years to support the Community Health Free Clinic's work.

Please feel free to contact me if there are questions concerning this information or other matters.

Letter of Support No. 3

Sister Susan O'Connor, Sisters of Mercy Legacy Liaison to the CEO

Mercy Medical Center

It is a distinct honor for me to write this letter of support of the nomination of Timothy Charles for the annual IHA Leadership Award. I have worked with Tim for over 18 years--during his time as executive vice president and chief operating officer as well as his time as President and CEO. My perspective on Tim's leadership comes as a Sister of Mercy, former vice president of Mission Integration and having a 46-year connection to Mercy Medical Center, Cedar Rapids.

Tim has many gifts that make him an outstanding leader. Some are tangible such as the vision for the Mercy Family Caregivers Center, Hall Perrine Cancer Center and HallMar Village. These buildings and services are making a wonderful difference in health care in this community. Tim is successful in seeing his vision come to fruition because he can work in partnership with others hospital Board Members, his administrative team, physicians and community leaders. It is a wonderful combination to be a dynamic visionary AND a practical person who wants what is best for the people who come to Mercy with care.

As he strategizes and plans for future needs in health care, Tim is also very connected to the heritage and traditions of the Sisters of Mercy who founded the hospital in 1900. Tim has taken to heart the message in an early fundraising letter: "it is our intent to keep pace with modern scientific methods and equip it with all the appliances that science furnishes for carrying out the purpose of its foundation. We will only be content when we have made it the peer of the best..." As a leader, Tim has poised Mercy to be "the peer of the best" as he supported the development of unique programs and services not always found in stand-alone community hospitals.

Over the years, Tim has made some decisions that may have seemed foolhardy to people who don't understand the importance of caring for people before the bottom line and not guided by the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy. One example of Tim's heroic decision-making ability came the day after Mercy was flooded and all patients evacuated in 2008. Tim promised all employees that they would continue to be paid their regular salary if they came to work every day and did what

needed to be done to get Mercy open for business once again. We had no patients in the hospital, but Tim cared for the thousands of Mercy caregivers who trusted his leadership.

Tim is a very involved leader in the civic community and serves on numerous boards. As the CEO of a major employer in the Cedar Rapids area, he understands the value of a Mercy representative helping to shape the direction of key partners in this area. We believe that we do things here at Mercy with the Mercy Touch, which is demonstrated by our values of integrity, compassion, accountability, respect and excellence. Tim demonstrates the Mercy Touch in the hallways, meeting rooms, board room and out in the community.

I am reminded of the adage, "You are only a leader if others are willing to follow." Tim Charles is a leader. He is a perfect example of what a leader in health care should be with the added perspective of being a leader in Catholic health care. Thank you for considering Tim for this wonderful recognition.

IHA involvement

Education:

- 2021 Noons in June: A Summer Leadership Forum Series
- 2021 Hospital Day on the Hill

Board/Council memberships:

- IHA Board of Officers and Trustees, 2010-2016, 2018-2021 (AHA Delegate)
- IHERF Board of Directors, 2016-2018
- IHA PAC Committee, 2010, 2021
- District G Chair, 2018

Attendance at IHA District Meetings:

- May 2022
- September 2021
- February 2021

IHA PAC Contributor:

- 2021
- 2020
- 2019
- 2018
- 2017