

2022 Young Executive Achievement Award Nominee



Ben Davis, CEO

Osceola Regional Health Center, Sibley

- Years of service at the hospital/organization = 5
- Years of service in health care = 19

Nomination

Kathy Winter, Quality and Ancillary Services Director

Osceola Regional Health Center

As an employee of this facility for almost 31 years and someone who has worked in health care for over 45 years, I know excellence when I see it. Ben became CEO of the Osceola Regional Health Center (ORHC) in 2017. In the past five years, not only has he provided leadership and guidance during turbulent times, but he has also helped change the culture of our organization in ways I could have never imagined. Ben arrived as an interim CEO following an abrupt administration change and immediately faced a major problem with our pharmacy. Ben brought in a new system and personnel. ORHC now has an in-house pharmacist and pharmacy tech who

oversee an integrated e-pharmacy system that ensures patient safety by meeting Iowa Board of Pharmacy standards while also providing superior patient services.

Ben's next task was to assemble a capable administrative council that oversee ORHC's diverse departments. Ben recruited a chief nursing officer, chief financial officer and a director of senior living services from two of the major health systems in our area. They joined two seasoned ORHC staff members on his administrative team. He also established a human resource department and brought in a human resources director from one the biggest employers in our region to fill out his team. He challenged the administrative council to rebrand our facility and so, within two years of his arrival, the old Osceola Community Hospital became Osceola Regional Health Center. ORHC better reflects what our organization is: a hospital, a wellness center, an assisted living facility, the county public health agency, the only licensed day care center in our county and a revenue generating thrift store that supports the day care.

But Ben's leadership is more impressive than a name change or administrative restructuring. Under his guidance our independent living facility became an assisted living facility. We also became a certified facility to administer chemotherapy. In 2021 we did a remodeling project that included the front lobby, a new medication room, new scope cleaning equipment and area redesign and, most importantly, a redesign of our emergency department entrances to improve patient comfort and safety. He has actively helped recruit four primary care physicians for our community as well as several outreach providers. Ben's greatest achievement has been to change and revitalize our attitude and culture. Then, he took our mission statement and condensed it into three words: Quality, Service and Impact. Every employee at ORHC now knows the mission statement and more importantly, knows to implement it through everything they do. To ensure the employees could implement that mission statement, he tasked the administrative council to develop core values. Those values, Compassion, Respect, Excellence, Accountability and Teamwork for Everyone (CREATE) now guide every decision we make. Ben also established a service excellence initiative that focuses on empowering front line staff. This initiative enabled staff to take our core values and develop service standards based on those values. Our Service Excellence Initiative empowers front line staff to become involved in our journey to become the employer and provider of choice in our service area.

There is no relationship more symbiotic than a health care system and the community it serves. Accordingly, Ben's leadership goes beyond the walls of ORHC. He is dedicated to our community and serves as an active member of Rotary, on the Chamber of Commerce board, is the president of Kiwanis, and is a member of the child care Advisory Board. Ben is the consummate advocate for Osceola County and networks with key community leaders to enhance child care, housing, and business opportunities to ensure continued economic development. Finally, Ben's commitment to both ORHC and regional health care has led him to the position of chair for District A of the Iowa Hospital Association.

Ben was recently honored by the Northwest Iowa Review in their 20 under 40 recognition program of notable leaders in our area under the age of 40. On May 16, 2021, our community became the subject of national attention when a train carrying explosives derailed at the edge of Sibley. This was the type of emergency that our teams had drilled for but hoped would never occur. When the call came, Ben arrived at the hospital within moments. He took command of the facility and was present at the hospital into the night, as conditions changed regarding both the perceived danger and the scope of the local evacuation. He provided excellent support to our staff through a trying and frightening situation and made sure we were prepared for the worst-case scenario which, thankfully, did not come. Ben was personally accessible at the nurses' station as he worked directly with the county's emergency management team and directed our front-line staff. During the chaos and national scrutiny, the Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals reached out to the hospital, and they were very impressed when their evening call to the nurses' station was answered by the CEO. Everyone involved has since commended Ben and I know we are fortunate to have a leader who will selflessly do whatever he can to care for our patients, employees and our community.

When Ben took over at ORHC in 2017 we faced both an immediate crisis and additional long-term challenges, Ben met both head on. But, as the years have passed, the world has continued to throw challenges at ORHC. Some were global, others more local. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ben took the initiative to organize weekly meetings between Osceola County Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management, Sibley-Ocheyedan School District,

Avera Medical Group Clinic, two local nursing homes, Osceola County Public Health and key hospital department managers to ensure good communication. This was followed up with by a quick weekly update for all ORHC department managers. Ben sent out daily email updates that provided the staff both important information and simple encouragement. Ben provided weekly video updates with our medical providers and community health leaders. Ben's calm demeanor, open communication, and team approach were essential as our staff and our community overcame the challenges and tragedy of COVID-19. The true impact of the on-going pandemic is yet to be determined however Ben's proactive approach in expanding mental health services is a testament to the commitment and care for our community. As of July 1, 2022, ORHC will launch our mental health specialty services headed by a recently employed psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. Joined with a mental health counselor, community members will receive a thorough assessment, diagnosis, plan and evaluation to address their needs.

I feel so fortunate to have Ben Davis as our leader. He is extremely deserving of this award as he comes to work every day with the simple mission of living our core values of compassion, respect, excellence, accountability and teamwork for everyone.

In the almost five years as CEO at Osceola Regional Health Center, Ben Davis has lived every day as a humble, selfless leader. Between creating a new leadership team, expanding services, navigating a pandemic and changing our culture, Ben's accomplishments have not gone unnoticed. Regardless of the task at hand, Ben's continual focus is for the good of the patient. He leads in our community, advocating for economic advancements and willing toward those goals. His presence at our organization and in the community provides peaceful confidence and reassurance; I am grateful to have Ben as our leader!

Summary

Ben Davis is a selfless, caring, forward thinking leader. Ben started his health care career as a CNA at the age of 16. Ben has worked as a radiology technologist and radiology department manager before taking the reins at our facility. He truly realizes that every individual is an important part of the health care team. He treats each employee with dignity and respect and because of that he has earned the loyalty and respect of all the team members at Osceola

Regional Health Center. He works tirelessly to help all of us improve and to make our hospital the hospital of choice in our area.

Letter of Support No. 1

Abby De Zeeuw, President, Board of Trustees

Osceola Regional Health Center

I have had the privilege of working with Ben Davis as a member of the board of trustees at Osceola Regional Health Center for 2 ½ years. Ben has served as the CEO/President of our organization since 2017. He has a solid understanding of regulations within the health care realm, knows the basics of accounting and has excellent organizational and time management skills. He can analyze and decipher information to drive results for the hospital. He nurtures the potential in people by putting the right people in the right positions and gives them the tools so they can work toward common goals and strategies.

His performance has earned him recognition and accolades. Most recently from the health care Service Excellence Conference where he was named Inspiring CEO/President for his work with our Service Excellence Team at Osceola Regional Health Center. I have known him to be one of the most reliable and dedicated CEOs.

He also serves the community well and is involved as a leader not only in health care affairs but also locally, volunteering his time for various organizations.

Our entire board values his input and industry experience. I would highly recommend him for this award.

Letter of Support No. 2

Sheila Storbakken, Registered Dietician

Osceola Regional Health Center

Ben Davis is deserving of recognition for his work as a young hospital CEO in Iowa because he has been an inspiring leader for the staff and community members in Osceola County and at Osceola Regional Health Center. Ben came to our facility five years ago. At that time, the status and morale of our critical access hospital was very low. Ben recognized some of what was needed to keep our facility from losing hope and from going under. Ben led the way to change Osceola Community Hospital into our successful Osceola Regional Health Center. Synonyms for inspiring are motivating, encouraging, enthusing, instigating and rousing. Ben has all those attributes to get us to where we are now and where we want to be in the future.

Ben brought creativity, discipline, friendliness, kindness, and a high level of expectation of quality with him when he arrived at ORHC. He improved communication with staff by having weekly email updates, quarterly informational meetings and by attending some department meetings. Ben started daily rounding through the hospital to see firsthand for himself any changes that needed to be made.

Ben was named a Pinnacle Achiever for Inspiring CEO/President by Custom Learning Solutions in 2021. Ben also was named to the Northwest Iowa Review's "20 Under 40," for his numerous accomplishments. Under Ben's leadership, our facility has grown and positively changed in so many ways. Staff morale has improved, the quality of service to our patients and residents has progressed, and the reputation of ORHC has been enhanced. The satisfaction of so many people has grown with Ben's leadership. Ben is inspiring!

Ben is constantly promoting the ORHC values of Compassion, Respect Excellence, Accountability and Teamwork for everyone with every group interaction we have here. He is enjoyed and respected by the staff. Ben tries to promote a professional culture for us to take excellent care of our patients and assisted living residents. Ben also promotes a culture of fun, so that we enjoy our time together. Ben has initiated a hospital picnic, softball game versus the

clinic, food trucks during the summer, occasional free T-shirts, employee use of the Wellness Center, retention bonuses for staff and more!

Ben is very involved in community groups and functions. His activity in the community has helped to make him a well-known community expert on health care and his opinion is respected. Ben became very visible in the community by living here with his family and being a part of several service organizations such as current President of Kiwanis, and a member of Rotary Club, Sibley Chamber of Commerce and Child Care Advisory Committee. He has become known as a very reasonable, knowledgeable health care administrator. Ben is often quoted in the local newspapers and radio station for his thoughts on current health care issues. During the pandemic, Ben moderated interviews with our medical director and public health director that were shown on Facebook and hundreds of people viewed these and responded positively. Ben was decisive and always truthful during those turbulent times!

Ben is like other CEOs in his ability to be a leader. But to know Ben is to understand how special he is as a leader. Ben will always practice what he asks his staff to do. One year ago, our town had a train derailment and parts of the town had to evacuate on a Sunday afternoon. Ben came to the hospital and was a calming presence for staff and patients during this time. He stayed until everything had settled down in the evening.

Ben is leading ORHC in an extensive building and re-modeling plan as ORHC has continued to grow under his guidance. As a young executive, Ben has many ideas of his own, but he is taking the time to listen to the ideas of staff, board members, community members and building experts to make sure that this project will be completed with the future of ORHC foremost in mind. Ben is very keen on wanting to keep our facility up to date and ready for the future, to provide the quality health care that our community has come to expect. Ben has continued to lead our facility in the present, but he is always looking to the future and how we can be the hospital and employer of choice.

Please consider Ben for this prestigious award. Ben is deserving of this recognition for his work as CEO at Osceola Regional Health Center and in the town of Sibley and Osceola County.

Letter of Support No. 3

James Craig, Superintendent

Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District

Ben Davis has been very supportive of the school district, has worked to bring new services to our hospital, and serves on numerous committees for the betterment of Sibley and Osceola County.

I have worked with Ben on several projects that include advertising and financial contributions to the school district. Ben spearheaded our efforts to put up a videoboard in the high school gym and has provided sponsorship for athletic uniforms through the hospital board. As a result of Ben's work, we have the equipment and means to bring in nearly \$25,000 in new revenue for our activity fund that wouldn't have been possible without him.

Ben is a visionary and has worked to bring new doctors and services to our regional hospital. Resident doctors have increased under Ben's leadership and have moved to the community. The local day care was operating under the auspices of the hospital, but this arrangement was costing the hospital funding. Ben has worked to get the day care to become its own not-for-profit organization with a governing board, so the hospital does not have to absorb the day care budget. Ben's work has grown our hospital and helps to grow and support our community.

I serve with Ben on several committees including day care, housing and workforce. I am also a Rotarian with Ben in the Sibley Rotary Club. Not only is Ben a young entrepreneur, but he is also someone committed to our community; his family lives here, is growing here, and benefits personally from his commitment to growing Sibley and Osceola County.

It is my distinct honor to support the nomination of Ben Davis for the IHA Young Executive Achievement Award. Please feel free to contact me to discuss his qualifications further.

Letter of Support No. 4

Stephanie Neppl, Executive Director

Osceola County Economic Development Commission

Since I first started working with Ben Davis in his role at Osceola Regional Health Center (ORHC), he has proven to be a huge asset to our rural communities in Osceola County.

We are one of the smallest populated counties in Iowa, and we are proud and grateful to have such an amazing health care center and medical providers. Ben does an outstanding job recruiting doctors and health care providers to ensure quality care for our communities. I know as the economic development director for the county how difficult recruitment can be, and Ben is doing an incredible job keeping our services and staffing as needed. He is always looking ahead and identifies needed services and works out how to make them a reality.

Ben is always at the table. His leadership in our community on critical issues including housing, workforce and child care are top notch. He leads as a Chamber board member, Rotary and Kiwanis member and has been heavily involved in recent child care and housing strategic planning processes to ensure growth in our communities. Ben rarely says no – and when he participates in community issues, he is present and is an active member. He serves on Career Day panels at our local high school to discuss paths in health care, he attends workforce meetings with major employers and cares deeply about the growth and challenges in rural Iowa and finding solutions together. I find Ben someone I can always call to discuss any topic in our community – he is a great sounding board and always helpful.

Ben represents the Osceola Regional Health Center so well and I'm often amazed at all that he has on his plate – he never gives hints to all the challenges facing rural health care, and he loves our community so much. I can't think of a better leader in Sibley and Osceola County than Ben. We are so lucky to have him!

He is a very deserving nominee for the IHA Young Executive Achievement Award. Thank you for your consideration.

IHA involvement

Event attendance:

- 2022 Basics of Proposed Rural Emergency Hospital Conditions of Participation and Payment
- 2022 Governance Forum
- 2022 Hospital Day on the Hill
- 2022 Critical Access & Rural Hospital Forum
- 2021 IHA Virtual Governance Forum
- 2021 Critical Access and Rural Hospital Forum
- 2020 Sweeping Changes to the Stark and Antikickback Regulations: Final Rules for Hospitals
- 2020 Preparing for the New Normal in Survey Process
- 2020 NOONS IN JUNE: an IHA Summer Leadership Forum virtual series
- 2020 IHA Virtual Annual Meeting
- 2020 IHA Governance Forum
- 2020 COVID-19 Provider Relief Fund: Preparing for Upcoming Reporting Requirements and Audits
- 2019 IHA Board Retreat and Planning Session
- 2019 IHA Annual Meeting
- 2019 Critical Access Hospital CoP: Ensuring Compliance Webinar Series
- 2018 IHA Governance Forum
- 2018 IHA Annual Meeting
- 2018 Critical Access and Rural Hospital Forum
- 2017 IHA Annual Meeting

Board/Council memberships:

- ServiShare Board of Directors – 3/1/22 – 10/11/23
- IHA PAC Committee - 2022
- IHA District A Chair 2022
- IHA District A Vice Chair – 2019-2021

- IHA District A Chair 2019-2020
- Council on Representation and Advocacy 2020-2021
- Council on Health Information 2019

Attendance at IHA District Meetings:

- 2021 District A – Q3
- 2021 District A – Q2
- 2021 District A – Q1
- 2020 District A – Q4
- 2019 District A – Q2
- 2019 District A – Q1
- 2017 Statewide District Meeting

IHA PAC Contributor:

- 2022
- 2020
- 2019
- 2018
- 2017