



MEDIA RELEASE

For further information:

Cindy Samuelson

(785) 233-7436; (785) 249-1727

csamuelson@kha-net.org

DENNIS FRANKS TO RECEIVE ASSOCIATION'S HIGHEST HONOR

(Aug. 7, 2024) – It is with great pleasure that the Kansas Hospital Association announces Dennis Franks, CEO, Neosho Memorial Regional Medical Center, in Chanute, is the recipient of 2024 Charles S. Billings Award.

The Charles S. Billings Award, named after the association's first president, was created in 1971 to recognize distinguished service and outstanding contributions to the field of health care in Kansas. The Kansas Hospital Association reserves this award for those who have shown their commitment, leadership and dedication to that noble pursuit. Franks, the 44th recipient of this award, has demonstrated these qualities during his devoted health care career of 43 years.

Franks has served as the CEO at Neosho Memorial Regional Medical Center since 2006. During those years, he has been a steadfast advocate for Kansas hospitals and the communities they serve. Prior to coming to Kansas, he served as the chief executive officer and chief operating officer in two Oklahoma hospitals. Before his civilian career, he served as administrator/commander and chief operations officer for the U.S. Air Force in San Antonio, Texas, in addition to other health care and administrative positions.

Franks' commitment and excellence in service to health care has made an impact. He served as a member of the KHA Board of Directors from 2011-2020, serving as chair in 2019. He also served on the Healthworks foundation (then KHERF) Board of Directors from 2010-2016, serving as chair in 2014. He has served on numerous KHA committees including KHA Leadership and Governance Committee, KHA Executive Committee, KHA Political Action Committee, the Rural Health Visioning Technical Advisory Group and the Medicaid Provider Assessment Committee. Franks also has served on the American

Hospital Association's Grassroots Advocacy Committee for Rural Hospitals, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas' Provider Advisory Committee and the KUMC Rural Health Advisory Board. He is a Baldrige Fellow and a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

“For more than 18 years, Dennis has been a loyal advocate for health care and hospitals in Kansas,” said Chad Austin, KHA president and CEO. “Whether on the local, state or federal level, he has educated and informed policy makers and leaders on important issues such as expanding access to health care and new models of health care delivery.”

The Kansas Hospital Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization existing to be the leading advocate and resource for members. KHA membership includes 237 member facilities, of which 121 are full-service, community hospitals. Founded in 1910, KHA's vision is Optimal Health for Kansans.

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