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# NEWS

## For Immediate Release...

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### **Jody L. Lomeo Named New ECMC Corp. CEO** ***ECMC President Mark Barabas continues as hospital COO***

**Buffalo, NY – Jan. 9, 2009** – The Board of Directors of the Erie County Medical Center Corp. today announced the appointment of Jody L. Lomeo as the next chief executive officer of the public benefit corporation, which is now part of Great Lakes Health System.

Mr. Lomeo is a former ECMCC board chairman who five years ago led the search committee that hired Michael A. Young, ECMC's previous CEO.

Mr. Lomeo, 40, most recently served as vice-chair of the ECMCC board and is also vice-chair of Great Lakes Health System, the board New York State created to combine ECMCC and Kaleida Health. Since July 2008, Mr. Lomeo served as ECMCC's interim CEO while the corporation board conducted a national search for a new leader.

The six-month search yielded four semi-finalists from outside Buffalo and a fifth semi-finalist, Mark C. Barabas, ECMCC's current president and chief operating officer. He agreed to continue as president and COO, responsible for ECMC's day-to-day operations.

Late last year, the five board members on the search committee initiated the decision to conclude the search process and select Mr. Lomeo. As ECMCC board members conducted the search process, it became clear that the qualities ECMCC needed in its new arrangement with Great Lakes Health made Mr. Lomeo an ideal choice.

It also became apparent that it would be difficult for one person to handle the external business of ECMC, relating to Erie County, labor union contract negotiations, the State University of New York at Buffalo and Great Lakes Health, as well as run day-to-day operations.

After an agreement to form what is now Great Lakes Health was worked out under a judge's direction last summer, a new spirit of cooperation developed. Immediately after his appointment as interim CEO, Mr. Lomeo made it a priority to normalize relations with ECMCC's new partners, Kaleida Health and Great Lakes Health. Mr. Lomeo took the initiative to create a more conciliatory environment between the two major health care organizations – Kaleida and ECMC – which enhanced the level of cooperation.

Mr. Lomeo also initiated the dialogue that led to an agreement impacting the 2009 Erie County budget, and continues to be involved in the negotiations to resolve other county-ECMCC issues. Perhaps most significant, Mr. Lomeo personally led final negotiations that recently resulted in an innovative contract with ECMCC's nurses, the Western Region District of the New York State Nurses Association, who had worked without one since 2005.

"ECMCC is a different place than it was four years ago when Mike Young took over. It is financially successful and professionally run," said board and search committee chair Kevin Cichocki, D.C. "We realized what we needed for ECMC was a leader of change who could build consensus, trust and continue the momentum we have established."

"Introducing an outside CEO in this environment could have been risky and definitely would have slowed the momentum to create a new health system with Kaleida, Great Lakes Health, UB and Erie County. In fact, many individuals from these organizations reached out to me to ask if we could get Jody to stay," Cichocki continued.

“Jody did not want this job and we had to convince him to take it,” he added. “But after all the semi-finalist interviews, we felt that Jody’s experience, the respect and trust he earned from our other health care provider partners, county and university leaders, and the achievements he realized in the last five months singled him out as the best-possible person for the job that needs doing today,” Cichocki said.

Mr. Lomeo is an independent financial consultant in Williamsville, where he specializes in individual investing and retirement planning.

“This was the furthest thing from my mind last summer. I continued to refuse the job, even a week after I was offered it,” Mr. Lomeo said. “But the more I looked at how much has changed in the health-care sector in the last six months, and the more I looked at my wife and three young sons and realized that I want to help deliver health care excellence to this community for them and everyone else, the more I realized I had to accept it.”

“I am most gratified for the opportunity, for the support of the ECMCC board, and especially for the encouragement and backing of the leaders of Kaleida, UB and Great Lakes. We disagree on some things, and they know that I will be a forceful advocate for ECMCC going forward. But they also know that patience, compromise and collaboration are the tools we all need to use to improve this community’s health care systems. And I pledge to everyone that those will be my main tools.”

Mr. Lomeo, first appointed by former Erie County Executive Joel A. Giambra in 2001, initially served on the ECMC Board of Managers before becoming the first chair of the Board of Directors of the public benefit corporation.

He received his B.S. degree in finance from the University at Buffalo after two years at Fordham University in the Bronx. He is an active alumnus of St. Joseph Collegiate Institute in Kenmore, and a member of its board of trustees.

Mr. Lomeo is also a board member of the U.S. Small Business Administration Buffalo District Advisory Council and is involved in many other organizations and charities throughout Western New York. Mr. Lomeo, a Business First 40 Under 40 honoree in 2007, was born and raised in Buffalo and lives in East Amherst with his wife Mary and their three sons.

“I would not take this position if I didn’t feel the stars are lining up and we can make real progress in reforming health care delivery in Western New York,” Mr. Lomeo said. “I don’t know if it will take two years, or five years, but together with everyone involved, we will greatly improve health and hospitals in this region.”

Sharon Hanson, ECMCC board vice-chair and search committee member, said that the logic of selecting Mr. Lomeo became obvious because he made so much progress in a short time on previously intractable issues.

“I know that Jody shares my great love and respect for this institution. But beyond that, Jody got results that defied everyone’s expectations, when he was supposedly only an interim caretaker. He has built relationships with all our partners, constituencies and outside leaders, and has already earned the professional respect of our doctors, nurses and staff,” she said.

Robert Gioia, board chair of Great Lakes Health, and James Kaskie, CEO of Kaleida and Great Lakes Health, have worked closely with Mr. Lomeo for more than a year.

“Jody stands out as a bridge builder. Now that we are colleagues, and from what I’ve seen in the last six months, I think Jody is an ideal choice to lead ECMCC into the region’s health care future. I look forward to continuing to work together and building upon the momentum we have created with Great Lakes Health,” Mr. Kaskie said.

“Jody Lomeo is the right person, at the right time, for this job. He brings experience, but also a fresh perspective and a commitment to make a real difference in this community,” said Mr. Gioia, a search committee member. “There’s been much talk, and now progress, about improving health care delivery in Western New York. I truly believe Jody is the ideal person to lead and build relationships for ECMCC that will ensure that the whole ECMC team is a crucial component of this effort.”

Mr. Barabas [pronounced BEAR-a-bus] has more than 20 years of experience as a senior health care executive. Before coming to ECMC in 2007, he was CEO of Mercy Suburban Hospital in East Norriton, PA for three years, and chief operating officer there from 2000-2003. From 1993-1999, he was CEO of Community Hospital of Lancaster in Lancaster, PA. Barabas, 55, also worked at a hospital in Youngstown, OH and did his administrative residency at Mercy Hospital in Buffalo. His degrees are from Youngstown

State University and the University of Toronto and he is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

“We are pleased with the appointments of Jody and Mark, because they understand the role physician involvement plays at ECMC and the clinical initiatives that are needed at the physician level,” said Dr. Yogesh Bakhai, President of the ECMC medical and dental staff. “We look forward to working with them, Great Lakes Health and the whole team to make this the best hospital it can be.”

#### **MORE ABOUT ERIE COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER:**

*The ECMC Corporation includes an advanced academic medical center (ECMC) with 550 inpatient beds and 136 skilled-nursing-home beds, on- and off-campus health centers, more than 40 outpatient specialty care clinics and the Erie County Home, a skilled nursing facility. ECMC is the regional center for trauma, burn care, rehabilitation and is a major teaching facility for the University at Buffalo. Most ECMC physicians, dentists and pharmacists are dedicated faculty members of the university. More Western New York residents are choosing ECMC for exceptional patient care and customer service provided as a result of its Culture of Care.*

#### **MORE ABOUT GREAT LAKES HEALTH:**

*Great Lakes Health System of Western New York is the entity comprised of ECMC, Kaleida Health, the University at Buffalo and physicians throughout the community. By bringing together hospitals, healthcare service providers and specialty service providers, Great Lakes Health delivers the highest-quality services and advances the cause of 21<sup>st</sup>-century medical research. It is committed to serving the region, while aspiring to be a world-class destination for exemplary healthcare delivery and innovation.*