



## ***Foundation President and CEO Amie Shei, PhD reflects on her first 100 days in the role:***

On April 1, 2022, I became the Foundation's second President and CEO, following in the footsteps of founding President and CEO Jan Yost, EdD upon her retirement after nearly 23 years in the role. It is an honor to have been appointed to continue the Foundation's nationally recognized grantmaking and to serve as a steward of its assets which are intended to improve the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts.

In addition to the Foundation's financial assets, which were seeded from the sale of the non-profit Central Massachusetts Health Care health plan and which were recently augmented by a \$500,000 donation from the Central Massachusetts Independent Physicians Association Foundation, the Foundation has significant human capital. I am grateful to have the backing of a distinguished and dedicated Board of Directors, the guidance of committed Community Members, and the support of a small but mighty team which goes above and beyond to advance the Foundation's mission. Together, we will weather the inevitable ups and downs of the financial markets and the political climate, looking ahead to the future and working towards meaningful and sustained change.

I stepped into this role soon after the untimely passing of global health legend Paul Farmer, MD, and I could not help but reflect on the influence he had on my decision to pursue a career in public health and health policy, which later led me to health philanthropy. In a 2008 *Boston Globe* interview, Dr. Farmer said, "I go to bed worrying about all the promises we've made, and I get up each morning thinking we haven't made enough promises." In trying to improve health in some of the poorest regions of the world, Dr. Farmer championed the approach of accompaniment whereby doctors should walk alongside their patients "to break bread together, to be present on a journey with a beginning and an end."

This idea of accompaniment is deeply embedded in the Foundation's approach to grantmaking. Developed by Dr. Yost, who was recently presented with the Terrance Keenan Award in Health Philanthropy at Grantmakers In Health's national conference, the Results-Oriented Grantmaking and Grant-Implementation approach maximizes the chances of a project's success. Foundation staff are deeply engaged with community-based organizations through all phases from application to grant implementation to sustainment, accompanying our grantees in developing strategies, evaluating progress, and celebrating victories together. It is a proven model that has led to profound policy and systems change in oral health, housing and homelessness, children's mental health, and more, and it is a model that will help us address some of the most pressing challenges facing us today including safe drinking water, foster parent supports, rural transportation,

and early education and care workforce development. Sometimes, walking alongside our grantees and partners entails literally walking together to rally at the State House, but other times it can be more figurative as we accompany them in briefing public officials, helping draft new legislation, brainstorming ways to overcome barriers, connecting with other advocates, examining evaluation results, and more – all of which we have done this spring and will continue to do.

We cannot do this work alone, and I am grateful for those who accompany us in this work. The Foundation benefits from many partnerships with nonprofits, businesses, public officials, and advocates. In addition, our partnerships with other funders such as the C.F. Adams Trust and the Shields Family Foundation have enabled us to co-fund several current projects and effect greater change. The Foundation has other partnerships on the horizon too, and I look forward to seeing them come to fruition so we can jointly maximize our impact in the region. There is much more to come.

For each of these first 100 days, I have woken up thinking of the promises made and the promises to be made. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to be of service to this incredible region of Central Massachusetts, and I look forward to all that we will achieve together.

In accompaniment,

*Annie*

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