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Caritas Communities names Connell as interim executive director

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Braintree, MA The board of directors of Caritas Communities has named Frank Connell as interim executive director of the independent, non-sectarian, nonprofit organization, which provides housing to about 900 men and women in the Greater Boston area.

In addition, Gregory Rittchen, who has recently led Caritas's real estate assets initiatives, has been named interim chief financial officer and will continue in both roles.

Connell, who has been director of strategic initiatives at Caritas since February 2022, assumes the leadership position held by Karin Cassell Mitterando for four years. "It is an honor to be given the solemn duty of leading this team in an important transition for Caritas Communities," said Connell.

Mitterando, who began with Caritas as chief development officer and director of communications in 2013, led efforts to raise more than \$20 million of philanthropic funds to further the mission of Caritas Communities. She announced in July that she is resigning effective on Sept. 1, 2023.

During her tenure, Mitterando created new programs that provide essential wrap-around support for residents, including a robust supportive services team; navigated the staff and residents safely through the pandemic; and leveraged fundraising to make capital improvements in a portfolio of 34 properties in an organization founded in the 1970s by real estate developer P. Leo Corcoran.

"It has been a wonderful honor to serve Caritas Communities," said Mitterando. "My greatest respect goes to the Corcoran Family, my colleagues, the board of directors, and the donors. My deepest gratitude goes to the Caritas residents, whose stories, perseverance, and kindness have motivated me every day and made me a better person."

In the CFO role, Rittchen replaces Michael Lee, who recently relocated and resigned after about a year with the organization.

"I am thrilled to lead Caritas Communities' real estate and finance teams towards the next generation of permanent supportive housing in Greater Boston," said Rittchen.

The Caritas Communities board of directors expressed its thanks for Mitterando's fund-raising work and leadership over the last four years

“We welcome Frank and Greg in their important new roles,” said Ruby Cherfils, chair of the Caritas board. “Both of them achieved a lot in their previous positions at Caritas, and we look forward to continued growth and success as we assist them in supporting our residents in the homes we provide.”

Caritas Communities, an independent, non-sectarian, nonprofit housing provider, for almost 40 years has worked to prevent homelessness by providing very low-income single men and women with permanent housing, support, a sense of community and expanded opportunities. Caritas owns and operates 34 buildings in 17 Greater Boston communities, serving more than 1,000 individuals annually.

Caritas Communities continues to grow and serve men and women in the Greater Boston area who cannot afford homes in this high-cost area. The organization recently acquired 46 and 50 Winter St. in Quincy Point, with plans to build a 34-unit permanent supportive housing project. Caritas received planning board approval in June and is working with the city and state on the financing plan.

Connell joined Caritas Communities in October 2018. He held various positions at Caritas culminating in his appointment director of strategic initiatives. In every role, he has brought significant systems process improvements to leasing, fundraising, partnerships, and housing operations.

Previously he was self-employed as a keynote speaker and retreat leader beginning in May 2006. He served as director of Evangelization of Saint Mary of the Hills Parish in Milton, Mass., from Feb. 2016 to September 2018 and Youth Minister from 2005 to September 2018, and he volunteered in fund raising with the Archdiocese of Boston.

Connell has bachelor of arts in Psychology from Curry College in Milton and a master of business administration from Curry College.

Rittchen served Caritas Communities as director of real estate assets from June 2021 to present and continues in that role, leading the asset management team, overseeing the financials and strategy for the organization’s 34-building housing portfolio, and completing more than \$1.5 million in rehabilitation and renovation of properties.

Previously he was employed by TCAM Real Estate of Boston as a consultant, managing a portfolio of under-construction Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects on behalf of investor clients. He was a senior analyst at Wells Fargo and was co-founder of Third Estate Ventures of New York.

Rittchen was previously a portfolio manager at Arbor Realty Trust of Depew, New York, and investment sales associate for CPEX Real Estate in Brooklyn, NY.

He earned a bachelor of arts degree in Philosophy with a minor in Film and Media Studies at Colgate University, in Hamilton, NY.