

# THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



## Michael Hansen, FACHE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Michael Hansen, Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) president and CEO, got his start in the health care field thanks to a part-time job.

While he was attending Louisiana State University to get his undergraduate degree in psychology, Hansen got a part-time job in a surgery department as an environmental services worker.

**“I did the cleaning of the ORs and worked the graveyard shift. I just made sure those areas were clean and ready for the next day and that kind of thing. So that’s kind of how I got into it,”** he said.

This experience inspired Hansen to go into health care. So, when Hansen’s boss asked him if he wanted to become an environmental service director after he graduated, Hansen said yes.

He moved to California where he spent eight years overseeing environmental services in hospitals in the Los Angeles area. From there, Hansen moved to the company’s corporate headquarters and started helping with purchasing and business functions of the corporate office.

After eight years of this work, Hansen was visiting his mother in San Antonio, Texas when she mentioned there was a human resources director position open in the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. Hansen applied just to appease his mother – not thinking he’d actually get the job. He was wrong. Hansen was hired and would go on to serve the Texas Department

of Mental Health and Mental Retardation for eight years.

While in Texas, Hansen obtained two master’s degrees in health services management and human resources development from Webster University in San Antonio, Texas.

Though Hansen enjoyed his work in Texas, he wanted to return to the acute care setting and he had aspirations to be a CEO one day. To do that, he needed more operational experience. That’s what led him to a vice president position with Spencer Hospital in Spencer, Iowa and then a promotion to their vice president of operations.

Hansen received his first opportunity to be a CEO in 2005 when he was hired by Mercy Sioux City which managed several critical access hospitals in Iowa and Nebraska. Hansen was sent to Pender Community Hospital in Pender, Nebraska to be its CEO. He stayed in that position for four years before the CEO position opened at CCH.

**“I saw a great opportunity when I came here to Columbus. The board had a good vision for where they wanted the hospital to go. They really wanted it to grow into a regional referral type hospital,”** he said.

Hansen became president and CEO of CCH in November 2009. In this position, he has the overall responsibility of the hospital and all the associated businesses of the hospital.

**“As CEO, it’s basically the hospital operations and as president, it’s all the other business affiliations we have,”** he said. **“Every day is a little bit different and challenging and that’s what I really enjoy about it.”**

On a typical day, Hansen could be handing operational issues at the hospital, looking at strategic ideas with the board or working with the many stakeholders CCH has in the community. But no matter what he is doing, Hansen said the work is made easier because of CCH’s great staff, physicians and volunteers.

**“Everybody is very collaborative and works together and that just makes my job easy and from the patient perspective, patients are extremely satisfied. We meet or exceed their expectations 99.9 percent of the time,”** Hansen said.

That patient satisfaction and quality is backed up by CCH’s many awards, such as its five star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), its Leapfrog Group ‘A’ rating, its recent Pathway to Excellence designation and it being named one of the top 100 rural and community hospitals in the country by the Chartis Center for Rural Health.

Despite these accolades, the thing Hansen values the most about CCH is the people who work there.

**“I think the thing that I am probably most proud of is the organizational culture we have created and just the high caliber of people we have and the experience our patients get,”** Hansen said. **“I just really enjoy the special people who work in health care and those are the people I want to be associated with and those are the people I’m honored to serve.”**

For more information on Hansen or how CCH has grown in his ten years as CEO, visit [www.columbushosp.org](http://www.columbushosp.org).