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Inman White, MS

## The Dynamic Duo

*From the Desk of Dale Shreve,  
mhca President & CEO*

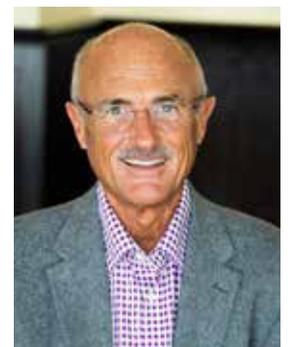
The role of the CFO has evolved in recent years. As automated systems simplify many fiscal tasks, the CFOs and their finance teams are able to focus on more strategic tasks and play a pivotal role in driving change within their organizations. With their unique perspective of business operations, CFOs can offer CEOs invaluable prospective and retrospective guidance and actively participate in key business and operational decisions, not just the financial ones. In fact, most CFOs now see identifying areas of new value as one of their primary responsibilities.

As behavioral healthcare organizations have recognized the need to be more business-like, the right CFO is essential to the organization's future success. Strong CFOs are especially critical now, when businesses must find ways to stay on sound financial footing, balancing employment costs with unforeseen expenses due to COVID-19, while also preparing to thrive as market conditions improve.

The key to a CFO's success as a true strategic partner is dependent in large part on a healthy relationship with the CEO. Successful CEO-

CFO relationships are like a strong marriage in many ways:

- They work best when the parties have complementary personalities and can recognize and appreciate each other's strengths
- They must be built on mutual trust and a shared vision for the future
- They require commitment and collaboration to overcome rough patches and achieve shared goals



*Dale Shreve*

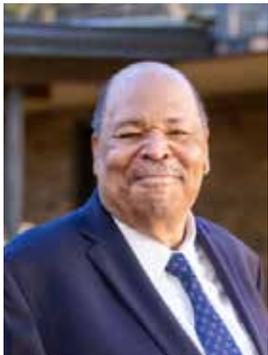
When all these ingredients come together, the marriage works well and the organization thrives. Still, there are a number of ways this marriage can go bad, and if it does, it can tear an organization apart.

If you are looking to hire a CFO, in addition to fiscal acumen and exceptional leadership and communication skills, some key qualities to consider are:

- Practical (and maybe even a

*Continued on Page 11 >>*

# Member Spotlight: Inman White of Community Healthcare



*Inman White*

A Texas native, Inman White grew up in a small, dusty oil town just south of Austin, Texas. While some of us may recall having to

mow the lawn as children, Inman's job was to water the road outside his house to help keep the dust down. We recently interviewed Inman and we hope you enjoy getting to know him better as much as we did!

**mhca:** Tell us a little bit about your childhood and your family.

**Inman:** I attended kindergarten

in a funeral home and rode in a hearse, which did double duty as a school bus and was the first air-conditioned car in the town. My younger sister was a perfect kid, but I had a wide imagination and nearly fatal curiosity. I needed structure, so for first grade, I was sent to the Catholic school. My parents were both educators and allowed me to roam the campuses of the historically black colleges and universities they visited, so I met a lot of fascinating people over the years. I played the saxophone when I was younger, but I haven't played since college. Someone I never met (except through old records), but greatly admired, was Charlie Parker, an amazing saxophonist. As I got older, I couldn't shake the desire to understand music the way he did. He did improvisation with



*Inman and Family Circa 1998*

his music; his philosophy was more that the rules to music kept it from being art – he believed in creating art with music – not to see a note and play it, but to get inside the note.

After college, I married Anthesia and we had two children. Our

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*Inman with his mom, sister and children at the Annual Texas-Monthly BBQ Competition in Austin, TX*



daughter, Breia Elizabeth, graduated from Texas A&M. She currently lives in LA and works as a picture editor. She is an independent contractor and works mostly with reality TV. One of her most recent projects was an Oprah interview of Mariah Carey for Apple TV. Our son, Inman Banks, went to the New England Culinary Institute in Vermont and is now a chef in San Francisco. Banks says the pandemic has devastated the restaurant industry and adapting to new normal has been a challenge; he went from Culinary Director for three Downtown and Marina District restaurants that served customers in dining rooms to one restaurant serving customers in “Parklets.”

We lost Anthesia in 2007.

**mhca:** Describe how you found yourself working in behavioral healthcare administration.

**Inman:** After college, I was looking for something to bring meaning to what I was reading and feeling during the turbulence of the late sixties and early seventies. By accident, I ended up in a situation with 6 or 7 others stuffed in a VW and we all filled out applications at a state hospital some 50 miles away

from the college. I had a degree in social work but was hired as a ward aide. That first night I was captured by the work. Nothing had prepared me for



*Son, Inman Banks, Filming Segment at 30 Rock*



*Daughter, Breia Elizabeth*

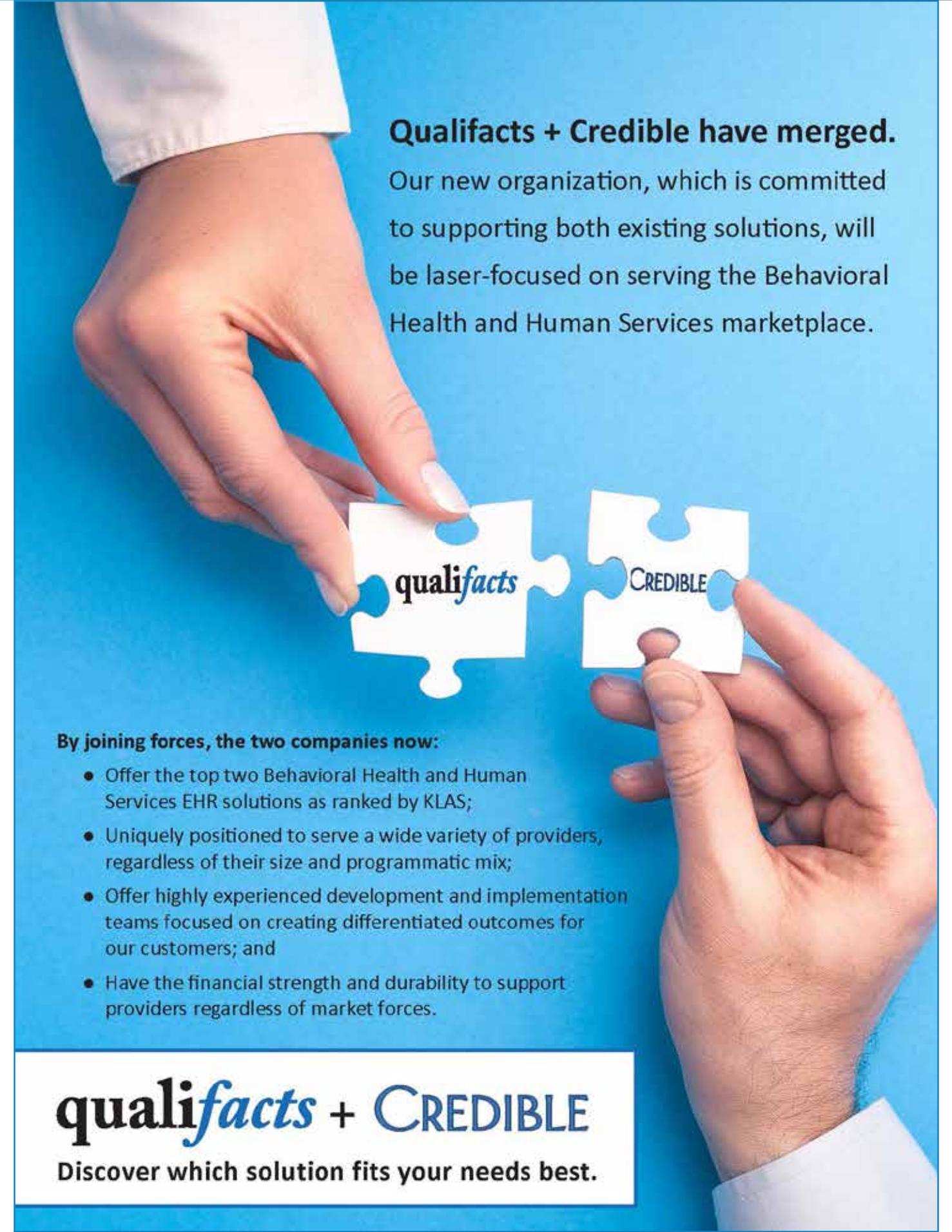
what was behind the units’ locked doors as I entered with a newly-minted key. That first night at the end of our shift, three people in that VW had already quit on different units. Thankfully, the driver wasn’t one.

William Gunstanson, Director of the hospital’s social work department, made an opportunity for me to move from the ward to his unit in response to a “cold call” I had made to his office. He frankly said that he didn’t believe that administration was going to let him hire a black person to be a social worker. He asked me if I knew how to type and I said yes, and the rest is history. He put me on nights as a secretary to take calls from people doing admissions and that allowed me to attend staffings, get to know people, etc. When a social work position opened, he slid me into it in a way that didn’t call attention or cause an uproar. While I was working there I earned a Master’s Degree. Little did I realize how much that first

night on the ward would influence so many more to come. I am still both a ward aide and a social worker at heart.

**mhca:** Of what professional accomplishment are you most proud?

**Inman:** That’s easy – I remember the evening when I first came back to East Texas from Austin. Newer drugs were coming out and older psychiatrists were refusing to prescribe them because they were expensive, and they weren’t very familiar with them. We got new people in and did things to find money to cover the cost of the new drugs. A person who received services came to a Board meeting and presented me with a plaque. He described to the board the trauma of going into and out of the state hospital. He said every time he left, he lost a piece of himself. He finally felt better when he got on the newer



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medication and felt whole. It was an emotional moment for me. Everybody swore I paid him to come in and do that in front of the Board. I'd almost forgotten about all it took to get the newer drugs in place. It was the high point of my career to reflect on how the decisions were made to have an impact on people's lives.

**mhca:** Any lessons learned the hard way you'd like to share for the benefit of others?

**Inman:** I know that the more I'm convinced of something, the more I need to challenge why I'm so convinced. The process of being convinced of something makes you set other ideas to the side. When I'm so sure I've got the answer – I take a breath and look around. We were recently getting ready to do a project and I just happened to ask Lee his opinion and he said honestly, I think it's one of the most ridiculous things ever and he listed off all the reasons. I asked him why he didn't bring this up before and he said, "Because you were so passionate about it and I didn't want to disappoint you." So, just don't exclude possibilities too soon and be aware of how you react to hearing the truth.

**mhca:** Describe your worst-ever day at the office.

**Inman:** Probably 9-11. I was 6 hours away in Austin at the time. I had just stepped out of the shower

when I saw the second plane hit. I jumped in my car and headed back right away before any calls or anything. I could only imagine what my people were dealing with and thinking. We didn't have great telecommunication back then and I knew I had to be there. We didn't have the dust from 9-11, but we certainly had a fog over all of us. Our Medical Director at the time was in DC and rented a car to get home. We just had no basis for understanding it.

**mhca:** What do you love/enjoy most about what you do?

**Inman:** Obviously it's the people. Seeing people doing better than they ever have before. Nurturing and bringing out the best in people. It's a perfect match for my spirit.

**mhca:** What is the strangest/funniest incident you've experienced in your career?

**Inman:** Not funny at the time – I thought I was fired. I was working the Dallas admissions unit. I'd say there were 45 people on that floor. I was assigned to take a group out to use the phone. Leave the locked unit and go to another unit to let them use the phone. One guy wanted to go smoke in the enclosed courtyard and I agreed to let him go out there. This guy climbed a tree, went over the roof, and ran away. I didn't realize it until we went to do the count. My supervisor was dressed all in white and looked at me and said "White, what's going on. You're missing one." I told him I let the guy go



*Touring an Underground Missile Silo with Peers in Arizona*



*Dinner with Peers Denis Regnier and Bill Nelson*

into the courtyard. With my head hanging low, I thought I was going to be fired. Instead, he looked into my eyes and replied, "Don't worry about it White, that's how we know they are cured."

**mhca:** Have there been any fellow mhca members who particularly inspired you?

**Inman:** Dick DeSanto, a founding mhca member, and all of my peer partners whom I have been able to grow with and remain energized for the work that is still to be done.

**mhca:** How can your mhca peers be most helpful to you right now?

**Inman:** I probably wouldn't know it unless it happens. For example, I got a text the other day from a member and they said, "I was on a zoom with some of your staff and clients and you have a really sharp

staff person here, keep up the good work! I miss seeing you – hope everything is ok.” I didn’t realize how much I missed that! Just taking the time to reach out.

**mhca:** What are you reading/listening to right now, and why?

**Inman:** I grew up around books and now my kids and I connect every Sunday and we take turns picking books to read together. This was all my son’s idea – he called and said we don’t get to see you and we miss hearing your crazy side of things. So, this was all his idea to do the books together – every Sunday rain or shine. My daughter picked out our current one – and it’s *Caste* by Wilkerson. *The Warmth of Other Suns* was also good. All her friends are reading it and though it’s not one I would have chosen myself, it’s good. Curious about the architecture of the human condition that likes to assign status and separate people as it exists around the world.

I took my initial stance in the early chapters – wanted to argue with some of the things in there – but it has been an eye-opening, heart-stopping reading experience.

On my desk right now is – *Lincoln on the Verge* by Ted Whitmer – talks about the 13 days it took Lincoln to get from Springfield to DC to be inaugurated. A very descriptive narrative that provides texture to understand what was going on in the country. All of the behind the scenes maneuvering and conspiracies and how premature the capital was at the time. It humbles me as I read it and I reflect on how fortunate we are to have a country that still strives for a more perfect union.

**mhca:** What do you do for fun/relaxation?

**Inman:** I’m a Spotify-narian – I love listening to music and podcasts. Our center even has a podcast called *Learn More with the Core* on

Anchor FM.

**mhca:** Is there a surprising fact about yourself you’d like to share with your peers?

**Inman:** After my wife passed, her puppy and I learned to eat peanut butter out of a jar together. Meis-kha, an Australian Shepherd and Border Collie mix, and I took turns with separate forks. One forkful for her and one for me. However, if I forgot and got our turns mixed up, she would place her paw on my hand holding the fork, and would pull it back over to her. ■

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# Memphis Conference - Home Edition

While COVID kept us from hosting our 2020 Fall Conference in Memphis, nearly 200 **mhca** members joined us for our first-ever 100% virtual conference on Wednesday, October 14. The presentations and audience participation during the **mhca** Memphis Conference – Home Edition were everything we hoped for, and members seemed to agree, giving the event a 4.6-star rating out of 5!

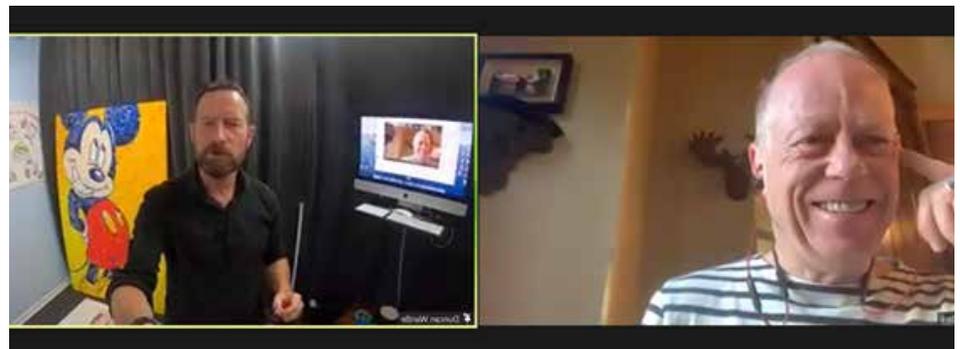
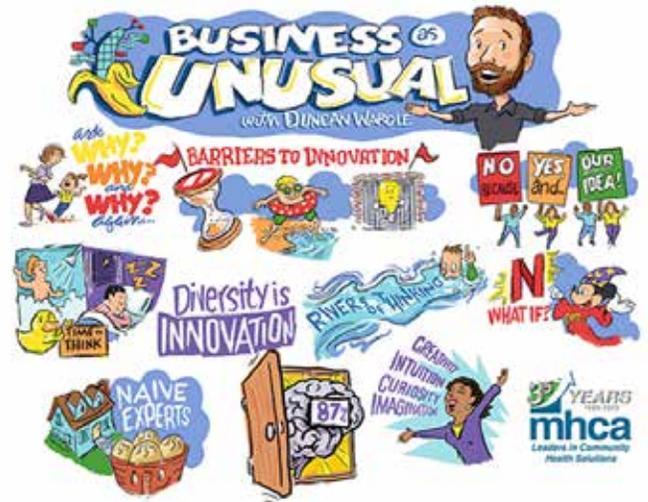
One of the most fun and interactive sessions, Business as Unusual, was sponsored by Genoa Healthcare and led by Duncan Wardle, the former Head of Innovation and Creativity for Disney. Duncan shared tools and tips for developing a culture of creativity throughout an organization, engaged with attendees via polls and online chat, and even invited a few members to virtually join him on stage. If you missed the session or need a refresher on all the tools he shared to help us think more creatively, you can watch the full recording of his session as well as all the others online at <https://mhca.com/conference-presentations/2020-memphis-home-edition>.

Our Innovation Expo panelists, Monarch President & CEO Peggy Terhune; AllHealth Network President & CEO Bill Henricks, Chief Clinical Officer Cynthia Grant and Executive Director of Acute Care Services Harold Geolingo; and, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System President & COO Phyllis Persinger, did an excellent job of conveying the essence of their unique programs, processes and initiatives during mini-presentations.

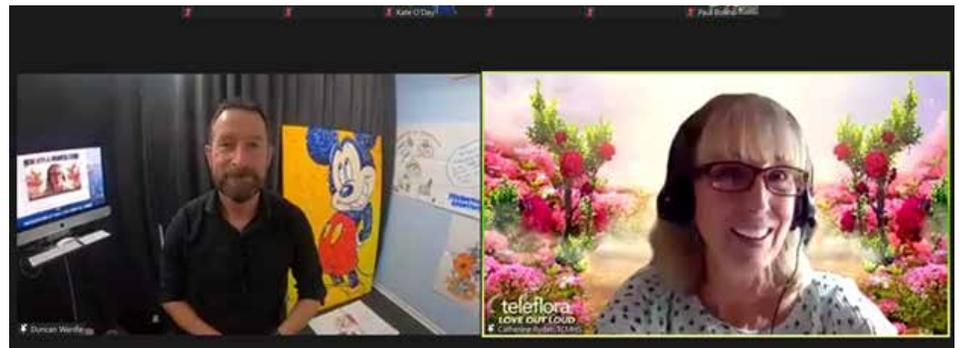
All members providing presentations this year are in the running for our inaugural Most Innovative Member awards, which will be presented during our Annual Meeting **mhcainsider** Fall 2020

in Clearwater Beach, Florida, on February 24, 2021.

Theresa Gallion offered expert advice on addressing HR issues during her session on Employment Law and Workplace Best Practices During and Post COVID. There was a great deal of audience Q&A and she answered a variety of



*Duncan with Carl Clark, CEO of Mental Health Center of Denver*



*Duncan with Catherine Ryder, CEO of Tri-County Mental Health Services*



*Duncan with Steve Bossart, VP of Business Development and Marketing for Coleman Professional Services*

questions related to FFCRA requirements, freedom of speech versus workplace social media policies, and more. Her presentation, as well as sample social media policies and employee communications templates, are available on our website.

Leadership Incubator, sponsored by MHRRG and Negley Associates, featured Spectrum HealthCare Group CEO April Rhodes, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare President & CEO Don Savoie, and Terros Health President & CEO Peggy Chase talking about their paths to CEO and how they are managing succession planning at their organizations.

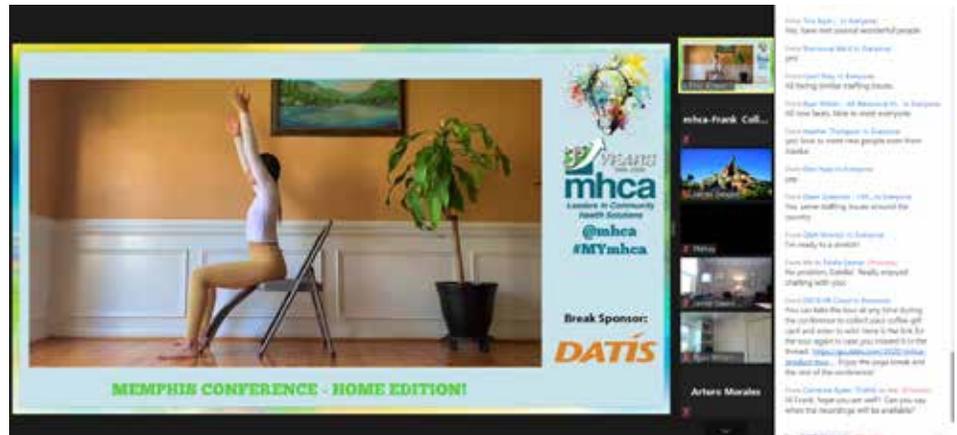
Brett Culp, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, took the audience on an emotional roller coaster during our closing session. Brett is known for the films *Legends of the Knight* and *Look to the Sky*, both of which explore the power of heroic stories and heroic individuals to inspire us to believe in a better tomorrow. He shared video clips that demonstrated how stories can connect individuals to an organization's mission and goals, help us realize our greatest personal and business potential, and renew our collective sense of hope for the future. His session was definitely worth watching again; just be sure to have some tissues handy!

Finally, to give our event an authentic Memphis feel, we were entertained by an excellent Elvis Presley impersonator and we held a drawing for a gift basket provided by The Peabody Memphis, which was won by Diane Bowen.

Our valued vendors really stepped up to the plate to make this online event both informative and fun for our members. In addition to the session sponsors we've already mentioned, our hearty thanks go out to trivia game sponsor Streamline Healthcare Solutions, Uber Eats lunch sponsor The Meyers



*Spectrum HealthCare Group CEO April Rhodes, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare President & CEO Don Savoie, Terros Health President & CEO Peggy Chase*



Group, chair yoga sponsor DATIS, final break sponsor Netsmart and longtime education sponsor The Martyn Family Foundation. We truly value your commitment to mhca and look forward to connecting with you again soon. ■

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# Craving Connection? Join Us in Clearwater Beach, Florida!



After nearly a year of isolation, many members are eager to return to in-person conferences with their **mhca** peers. We look forward to hosting all those ready to travel to Clearwater Beach, Florida, for our Winter Conference and Annual Meeting February 23-25 at the beautiful Opal Sands Resort. Our hotels and **mhca** staff will be taking extra precautions to help ensure attendee safety, and all attendees will be required to comply with any local and state pandemic policies in place at the time of the event.

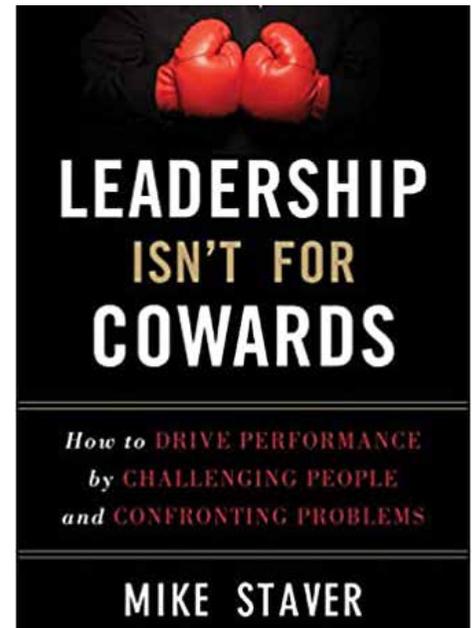
For those who are not ready to resume travel, **mhca** will be live streaming all of our general sessions so members can attend and participate in this conference from afar. When registering for the conference, please mark either "Attending In-Person" or "Attending Virtually" on your registration form so we can plan accordingly for both in-person and online attendance.

Some highlights of our conference agenda include a Tuesday afternoon Leadership Incubator, *Leadership Isn't for Cowards*, sponsored by

MHRRG and Negley Associates. Facilitated by Mike Staver, a leadership development expert who has conducted industry-specific research on the traits that make leaders thrive, this session promises to engage and equip both new and seasoned leaders. If you aren't bringing your leadership team along to Clearwater Beach, we strongly encourage you to have them participate in this session remotely to take advantage of this opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

A consistently top-rated speaker, Monica Oss, CEO of Open Minds, will lead a discussion on key strategic issues during our Wednesday morning opening session. Attendees will benefit from an update on the shifts in the behavioral health market landscape - and the changes to the financing and delivery of behavioral health that are likely to endure.

Dr. Stephen Trzeciak will kick things off on Thursday with an overview of "compassionomics" - studying the scientific effects of compassion on patients,



patient care, and those who care for patients. He is an author of the best-selling book: *Compassionomics: The Revolutionary Scientific Evidence that Caring Makes a Difference*, which has been featured in numerous media outlets.

Then leadership Expert Neen James will discuss her Intentional Attention model and how it helps individuals and organizations be more deliberate about the choices we make and the actions we take. Join us to discover what makes attention valuable and why paying attention in very specific ways drives profitability, productivity, and accountability.

Don't miss out on this great agenda, and some much-deserved down time to relax and reconnect. Make plans now to join us. If you are planning to attend in-person, you can make reservations in our room blocks at the Opal Sands Resort (conference hotel) or Sandpearl Resort (sister hotel about 1 mile up the beach) through February 5, 2021. More details are available at [mhca.com](http://mhca.com). ■

**mhca**insider Fall 2020

bit pessimistic) – CFOs should serve as a balance against the occasional blind optimism of their CEOs and help them find realistic ways forward

- Business-minded - CFOs need to be able to think strategically and see the big picture as opposed to primarily managing finances and reporting results
- Trustworthy – insist on someone with absolute integrity and uncompromising courage who can help manage the business, not someone who will always “fall in line” without question
- Resilient – these are challenging times and CFO turnover now rivals that of CEOs; look for someone who can handle the pressure gracefully

Like all relationships, the CEO-CFO relationship needs time to evolve and grow. Once you’ve found the right candidate, help them grow into the role by:

- Providing opportunities for the CFO to work directly with the Board, while ensuring the CFO and the Board understand that the CFO reports directly to the CEO
- Allow CFOs the time and authority for research and creativity so they can stay ahead of industry trends
- Clearly define deliverables and benchmarks so there is no confusion
- Encourage the CFO to attend **mhca** conferences to learn alongside you so they can help you share innovative ideas with the rest of your team
- For their part, CFOs can develop trust and strengthen the CFO-CEO relationship by:
  - Understanding the organization’s strategic priorities and the CEO’s vision and demonstrating support for the same



- Being willing to challenge the CEO’s thinking – but only in private
- Being a creative/dependable problem solver
- Accepting responsibility for errors
- Demonstrating general financial expertise and the ability to understand and work with the nuances of the healthcare/behavioral healthcare industry

Strong CEO-CFO relationships foster the open communication critical for organizations to thrive. In 2016, Russell Reynolds surveyed more than 100 CFOs at leading U.S. companies and found:

- 70% of CFOs rating their CEO relationship as “very strong” say they provide their boards with exposure and access to their direct reports
- 98% of CFOs with “very strong” CEO relationships say they are comfortable bringing difficult issues to their chiefs, while only 29% of CFOs who reported weak relationships said they are comfortable tackling tough topics with their bosses
- Less than half of the respondents gave CEOs a high score when it came to their ability to coach and develop the CFO (all the more reason to bring your CFO to **mhca** where they can develop their leadership skills)

No relationship is perfect, and conflict is not an inherently negative

thing.

Executives are typically opinionated, outspoken, and confident – so butting heads from time to time is inevitable. A CFO is not expect-

ed to be the CEO’s best friend; in fact, some tension between the two can be productive. When there is a foundation of mutual trust and respect, the CFO will stand up to a CEO’s less viable ideas while also appreciating the need to take some risks. Over time, as the two face challenges together, a mutual understanding should develop.

However, if a CFO doesn’t feel respected or trust the CEO to respond without recrimination, they might hide or delay the issues to the detriment of the organization. Conflict avoided rarely goes away. Dealing with conflict is healthy – avoiding it isn’t. If the CFO avoids or delays bringing bad news to the CEO, it can lead to the interruption of day-to-day business operations and costly losses in strategic positioning and staff productivity, morale and retention.

If a CEO and CFO are struggling to establish a strong working relationship – it might be time to bring in a third party, such as an executive coach or peer mentor. Like with marriage counselors, an outsider who can help identify underlying issues can help leaders work out their differences to move forward in a productive, unified way.

**mhca** is considering offering a future conference presentation on this topic of the CEO-CFO relationship. If you would be interested in being a presenter and/or have thoughts on how to make this presentation effective -please let us know! ■



*Leaders in Community Health Solutions*

1876 Eider Court, Suite A

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We're looking forward to seeing you in the new year! Don't miss out - make plans now to join us for each of our 2021 quarterly conferences. Save the dates and keep an eye out for information on registration, room blocks and fun group activities about 90 days prior to each conference. Questions? Just give us a call at 850-942-4900. See you soon!

*Save the Dates!*

**February 23-25, 2021**

The Opal Sands Resort  
Clearwater Beach, Florida  
Room blocks and online registration are now open!

**Group Block Code:**  
MHCA022021

**Opal Sands reservations at:**  
1-855-335-1087

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**More details at [mhca.com](http://mhca.com).**

**May 11-13, 2021**

Belmond Charleston Place  
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**August 3-5, 2021**

Westin Copley Place  
Boston, Massachusetts

**October 19-21, 2021**

The Memphis Peabody  
Memphis, Tennessee