

# Candace Vanderwater Named President & CEO of Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas

*Veteran leader to steer VOACC into the future with bold Vision 2030 plan and expanded whole-person care initiatives*

LANHAM, MD, UNITED STATES, July 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas (VOACC) proudly announces the appointment of Candace Vanderwater, MS Ed, MNA, LMFT as its new President & Chief Executive Officer, effective July 1, 2025. A licensed marriage and family

therapist and commissioned minister, Vanderwater brings more than 30 years of leadership in health and human services, including over a decade of dedicated service to VOACC. With a deep understanding of nonprofit operations, a passion for organizational growth, and a proven ability to build strong community and institutional partnerships, she is uniquely positioned to guide

VOACC into its next era.

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*Candace Vanderwater, MS Ed,  
MNA, LMFT, Incoming  
President & CEO*

Her appointment comes at a pivotal moment as the organization embarks on its bold Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, focused on expanding access to integrated care, advancing housing solutions, and strengthening its impact across Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and the Carolinas.

“I am deeply honored to serve as the next President & CEO of VOACC—a place that has shaped my calling and purpose for nearly 15 years. VOACC is a place where faith meets

action, and where compassion drives innovation.

As we step into this next chapter with our Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, I am inspired by the opportunity to deepen our impact—expanding access to quality care, advancing housing



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solutions, and building healthier, more equitable communities. I look forward to working alongside our dedicated team and community partners to ensure that every person we serve is met with dignity, hope, and the support they need to thrive.” — Candace Vanderwater, MS Ed, MNA, LMFT, Incoming President & CEO

Candace has been a vital part of VOACC since 2011, serving in numerous leadership roles including Director of Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Services, Vice President of Strategy & Organizational Development, and most recently as Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer. Her leadership has been instrumental in advancing our mission to deliver whole-person care and build healthy communities for all.

Under her guidance, we significantly expanded our evidence-based practices, grew our clinical and credentialed workforce, and extended our national accreditations, including Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and American Correctional Association (ACA). In 2021, we were proud to be recognized by our national office with Evergreen Charter status—the highest standing available.

A forward-thinking strategist, Candace has led the development and expansion of critical programs aligned with VOACC's 2030 goals. These include:

- The VOA Hope Center, one of only five Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHC) in Maryland, which now also operates in Washington, DC, delivering integrated mental health, substance use recovery, and primary care services.
- The Hope Has A Home™ medical respite program for individuals experiencing homelessness, which began in 2019 for men and expanded to include women in 2024. A third site in Prince George's County is planned for 2027.
- Our first Family Focused Recovery (FFR) program, launching in Guilford County, NC in 2026, with a second site planned in Norfolk, VA. These programs provide holistic substance use treatment to pregnant mothers and mothers with children while keeping families together.

Candace also served on the Board of Representatives for the American Network for Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), representing Virginia and advocating for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

“In selecting our next President & CEO, it was critical to identify someone who not only understands the complexity of our programs and operations but who could lead us through these uncertain times as a nonprofit that is funded through government contracts and programs. Candace's strategic vision, deep programmatic expertise, and strong track record of innovation make her the ideal leader to guide VOACC into the future.” – J. Walter Tejada, Chair of the VOACC Board of Directors

As President & CEO, Candace will lead our nearly 900-person team in advancing its mission to empower individuals and strengthen communities through housing, health, and human services rooted in compassion and faith.

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## About Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas

Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas ("VOACC") is a faith-based, nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire self-reliance, dignity, and hope through housing, health and human services.

At VOACC, we have been helping to create Healthy Communities for All for over 129 years by aligning housing, health, and human services. We actively pursue health equity by filling the gap in housing and care for underserved populations, including those who are experiencing homelessness, low-income, underinsured or uninsured, justice-involved, and veterans. By offering integrated housing and care, we address the social determinants that impact the long-term stability of those in need.

Through a dedicated team of management, staff, and volunteers who are guided by our Core Values – Visionary, One Body, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence, and Faith – we are the safety net for thousands of men, women, and children each year across Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, and the Carolinas. We operate over 37 programs focused on 8 areas of service: homeless services, affordable housing, mental health, substance use recovery, intellectual/developmental disabilities services, community re-entry, veteran services, and workforce development.

VOACC has over 800 staff members and more than 2,000 volunteers. The organization helps nearly 9,800 individuals and families every year from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and the Carolinas. For more information on VOACC, please visit [www.voachesapeake.org](http://www.voachesapeake.org).

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Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas

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