

Georgia Mountains Health honors retired CEO

BY MOLLIE MORROW
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Steven Miracle has retired after 23 years as chief executive officer (CEO) of Georgia Mountains Health (GMH), and his legacy will be remembered as a new building has been named after him.

Stewart makes a few remarks following the reveal of the Steven Miracle Behavioral Health and Administrative Office Building June 25.

Georgia Mountains Health retired CEO Steven Miracle, left, was without words after board President Marvin Chance revealed their new building was named after Miracle.

The Fannin County Chamber of Commerce celebrated Georgia Mountains Health for the completion of their new Administrative Office with a ribbon cutting June 25. Cutting the ribbon are CEO Andrew Stewart and recently retired CEO Steven Miracle.



News Observer photo/Mollie Morrow



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The new building, which houses their administrative personnel, is officially called the Steven Miracle Behavioral Health and Administrative Office Building.

The Fannin County Chamber of Commerce celebrated Georgia Mountains Health for the completion of their new Administrative Office with a ribbon cutting June 25.

Stewart and Miracle, second from left, are embraced by his wife, Kit, as it's revealed the new Administrative building has been named in his honor.

In the background are Donna Sanford, accounting manager, and Randy Westbrook, chief financial officer.

Supporters gathered at the building, located at 79 Blue Ridge Overlook in Blue Ridge, for a ribbon cutting with the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce June 25.

"We currently have offices in five counties in North Georgia," Miracle told those in attendance. "Last year, we saw something around 45,000 visits, that's primary care, dental services and behavioral health services."

GMH board President Marvin Chance said, "Since June of 2003, Steven has brought our organization from a small double-wide trailer in Morganton ... to where we are today."

GMH is a nonprofit providing affordable healthcare to the medically underserved. Anyone who'd like to donate to the care fund, can call 706-946-4647. GMH's Blue Ridge health center is located at 165 Blue Ridge Overlook.

Stewart said he hopes to continue building on Miracle's legacy.

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During the event, it was also announced that a Community Care Fund has been started. Last year, over 5,000 patients without insurance received care, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, new CEO Andrew Stewart said.

Chamber President Christine Gribble told the crowd that GMH has been a chamber member for over 25 years and was a prior Community Service Award recipient. She added that Miracle is a Leadership Fannin alumni.

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BOE renews charter, bullying policy, SRO contract

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The Fannin County Board of Education (BOE) approved a five-year contract renewing their charter school system status during their regular meeting June 11.

Shannon Dillard said this accreditation validates the work of students, making their diplomas recognizable by colleges and universities.

Regarding the bullying policy, Roof explained that the state has redefined the word.

They have added "substantially infringing upon the rights of a student" to the definition and adds extracurricular activities to the list of school-related functions in which the act may occur.

The law also takes effect.

SEE BOE/PAGE A3

Chief Academic Officer Dr. Lucas Roof said the charter might not have been renewed had it not been for "all the work that our teachers

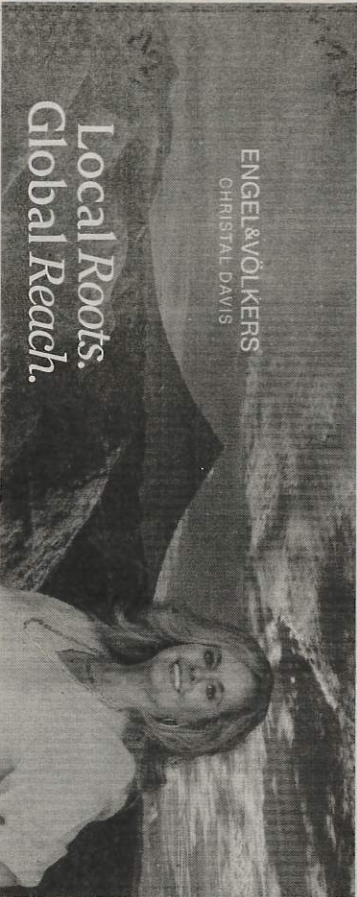
are doing and our students are doing over the years ... and without all the improvements that we've seen academically over the years recently."

As a charter system, the BOE is able to implement educational models based on individual student needs, continue to improve and expand Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics curriculum, and expand post-secondary pathways.

Each school was recognized for receiving Cognia Accreditation. Superintendent

SEE BOE/PAGE A3

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