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EMPIRE HEALTH FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT, ZEKE SMITH

SPOKANE, Wash. – July 29, 2020 – Empire Health Foundation’s (EHF) Board of Directors today announced that Zeke Smith has been named its new president. Smith will assume his new role on October 1, 2020. A Portland, Oregon native, Smith has more than 25 years of senior management and leadership experience in strategic planning, community engagement and social justice, supported by a strong commitment to equity.

Most recently, Smith was Vice President of Programs for FoodCorps, a national nonprofit dedicated to connecting kids to healthy food in schools. Prior to FoodCorps, he served as Chief Impact Officer of the United Way of the Columbia Willamette, leading the effort to address childhood poverty and systemic inequities across the Portland Metropolitan region. In this role he brought diverse community partners together through increased funding, volunteerism and shared expertise to better the lives of children and families. Smith’s career also includes tenure as Chief of Staff of Portland Public Schools, a district of almost 50,000 students, where he supported PK-12 strategic planning that led to an increase in graduation rates and a decrease in achievement gaps for students of color. Smith has been a Governor-appointed member of the Oregon Health Policy Board since 2013 and serves on the boards of the Native American Youth & Family Center and the Lowenstein Trust.

“Zeke is the leader Empire Health Foundation wants as we grow into our second decade,” said Mary Selecky, Empire Health Foundation’s Board Chair. “He is a strong, thoughtful, engaging leader who knows how to listen to the community, hear the issues, and develop a shared vision for better health. His life work and community engagement will advance Empire Health Foundation’s belief that health is a fundamental right.”

“EHF’s mission to improve health equity across the region through a track record of bold and innovative approaches to the work is incredibly important now more than ever,” said Smith. “I am excited to work together with partners and communities across the region to continue to make real progress toward better health for everyone.”

As president and in collaboration with a mission-driven board and a network of community and government leaders, Smith will lead the stewardship of EHF’s \$80 million endowment focused

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on advancing health equity across the foundation's seven county service region in eastern Washington. He will also lead EHF's partner organization, the Empire Health Community Advocacy Fund (EHCAF), a \$20 million 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to advancing health policy efforts.

Empire Health Foundation is a private health foundation based in Spokane, Washington with philanthropic assets totaling approximately \$80 million. Through partnerships with key community leaders, government agencies and nonprofit organizations, EHF seeks to advance health equity across eastern Washington by measurably and sustainably moving the dial on health by investing in improvements in health outcomes, strengthening health systems, growing physician supply and building nonprofit capacity. For more information, visit www.empirehealthfoundation.org.

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