

A New Chapter for Bluebonnet Trails Community Services: A Message from Mike Maples, Incoming CEO



As we bid a fond farewell to Andrea Richardson after nearly 20 years of service, I am both humbled and honored to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer at Bluebonnet Trails Community Services. On January 1, 2025, it became my privilege to begin leading an organization full of dedicated staff who have a heart for meeting needs across our communities.

Honoring Andrea Richardson's Legacy

Andrea's leadership has shaped Bluebonnet Trails into the respected organization it is today. Her dedication to service, compassionate care, and unwavering commitment to the individuals and communities we serve will not be forgotten. As I take on this role, I do so with deep respect for the foundation that has already been built, and I look forward to continuing the great work our staff and community partners carry out *together* each day.

My Journey to Bluebonnet Trails

I have been with Bluebonnet Trails for the past three years, overseeing our agency's health programs, and it has been a deeply rewarding experience. My background spans nearly three decades of service with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), where I managed various divisions including Behavioral Health Community Services and Facilities. After retiring in June 2021 from HHSC, I transitioned to Bluebonnet Trails, bringing my experience in mental healthcare, substance use treatment, disability services, and crisis response to our local communities.

At the national level, I had the honor of serving as President of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) for two terms, which provided a broader perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing our nation's mental health and substance use services.

As a Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, I have always been passionate about mental health, well-being, and helping individuals lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Our Vision for the Future

At Bluebonnet Trails, our **vision** remains clear: *Healthy and Fulfilled Lives*. This is at the heart of everything we do. We are here to shape and invest in a system of care that is valued by our communities, one that continuously improves the health and independence of the people we serve.

While we continue to offer a full spectrum of services—from mental health and substance use care to primary health services, autism interventions, intellectual and developmental disability services, early intervention, and crisis services—we have our sights set on four key priorities:

- **Retaining and Recruiting an Excellent Staff**
- **Supporting Youth** in Achieving Life Goals
- **Responding to Homelessness** in our Communities
- **Advancing Our Response Serving an Aging Population**

Our Immediate Goals

Looking ahead, we have several immediate goals that will guide our work:

1. **Improving Access:** We are committed to ensuring that all community members, especially those with the greatest need, have access to timely and effective care.
2. **Delivering High-Quality Care:** We will continue to hold ourselves to the highest standard of care, focusing on outcomes that truly make a difference in the lives of those we serve.
3. **Being a Strong Community Partner and Employer:** Building upon strong, collaborative relationships with partners and creating a supportive, positive work environment for our staff will remain top priorities.

I am excited about the opportunities before us and am committed to ensuring that Bluebonnet Trails continues to be a beacon of support for our communities. The team we've built, the work we're doing, and the relationships we're cultivating all point toward an even brighter future.

If you have any questions or just want to chat, feel free to reach out to me directly:

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Together, let's continue building a healthier, more fulfilled community for everyone.