

## For Immediate Release

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### **Kevin L. Unger, FACHE, Receives ACHE's Robert S. Hudgens Award**

**CHICAGO, January 14, 2009**—Kevin L. Unger, FACHE, president and CEO of Poudre Valley Hospital, Fort Collins, Colo., has won the American College of Healthcare Executives 2009 Robert S. Hudgens Memorial Award for young healthcare executive of the year. Unger will receive the award on Monday, March 23, 2009, at the Parker B. Francis Distinguished Lecture during ACHE's 52nd Congress on Healthcare Leadership in Chicago.

The Hudgens Award is presented annually to an exceptional healthcare executive who is less than 40 years old and who is the chief executive officer or chief operating officer of a health services organization. The award was established in 1969 by the Alumni/ae Association of the Department of Health Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, in tribute to its former course director and ACHE's first vice president, Robert S. Hudgens, FACHE.

Unger began his career in healthcare management in 1996 when he served a one-year administrative internship and then a one-year stint as an analyst in the business development division at University Hospital in Denver, Colo. Following a brief time in 1998 at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, Unger was hired in 1999 as a consultant for First Consulting Group, also in Denver.

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In 2001, he was selected to serve as vice president, planning and strategic development, at Poudre Valley Health System in Fort Collins. After two years, he was named vice president, operations and ambulatory services, at Poudre Valley Hospital, and in 2005 he was promoted to president and CEO.

Unger's passion for excellence and his outstanding communication abilities, leadership qualities, motivational management style and compassionate, friendly personality place him in the top tier of young healthcare executives.

Poudre Valley Hospital's clinical outcomes have improved significantly under Mr. Unger's leadership. Patient satisfaction has improved with scores increasing to 80 percent by the end of 2008 from 72 percent in 2002. Hospital-acquired infections have decreased by 8.5 percent, with the hospital experiencing no critical medication errors for more than twelve months.

Unger has fostered the philosophy that healthcare professionals have the duty to provide ongoing education, training and assistance to others in the profession and to those just entering the field. He supports a one-year paid administrative residency for advanced degree students who work alongside him and other hospital senior leaders.

During Unger's tenure, Poudre Valley Hospital has received numerous awards and accolades. The most recent honor was the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, given to Poudre Valley Hospital's parent organization, Poudre Valley Health System. Mr. Unger served as a national examiner for the National Malcolm Baldrige program for two years. Poudre Valley Hospital also has annually been named by Thomson Reuters Healthcare as one of America's 100 Top Hospitals for superior clinical outcomes, patient safety and operational performance.

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Unger is affiliated with a number of professional organizations. He is a board member of the Colorado Health and Hospital Association's healthcare reform task force, a board member of VHA's Mountain States and a member of Healthcare Financial Management Association.

He serves on the boards of the Orthopaedic Center of the Rockies Surgery Center and the Surgery Center of Fort Collins. In addition, Unger serves on ACHE's Programs, Products and Services Committee.

Unger is currently completing his PhD in Organizational Development and Change from Colorado State University. Unger received his master's in business administration and master's of science in health administration from the University of Colorado at Denver, and he earned his bachelor's degree in sociology from Colorado State University.

### **American College of Healthcare Executives**

The American College of Healthcare Executives is an international professional society of more than 30,000 healthcare executives who lead hospitals, healthcare systems and other healthcare organizations. ACHE is known for its prestigious credentialing and educational programs and its annual Congress on Healthcare Leadership, which draws more than 4,500 participants each year. ACHE's established network of more than 80 chapters provides access to networking, education and career development at the local level. In addition, ACHE is known for its magazine, *Healthcare Executive*, and its journals, the *Journal of Healthcare Management* and *Frontiers of Health Services Management*, as well as groundbreaking research and career development and public policy programs. ACHE's publishing division, Health Administration Press, is one of the largest publishers of books and journals on all aspects of health services management in addition to textbooks for use in college and university courses. Through such efforts, ACHE works toward its goal of being the premier professional society for healthcare leaders by providing exceptional value to its members.

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