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## **IHA Presents First Annual Ruth Colby Excellence in Leadership Award**

*Mary Lou Mastro Recognized for Her Distinguished Service to Healthcare in Illinois*

**NAPERVILLE** – In recognition of Mary Lou Mastro’s distinguished service to the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) and the Illinois hospital community, IHA President and CEO, A.J. Wilhelmi presented Mastro the inaugural Ruth Colby Excellence in Leadership Award during IHA’s 2024 Leadership Summit in Oak Brook last week.

Mastro served as System CEO for Edward Elmhurst Health (EEH), during which time she served on the IHA Board and IHA’s Executive Committee. She was instrumental in the merger with NorthShore University Health System, now Endeavor Health, and rounded out her career as CEO of Endeavor Health’s South Region.

Before serving as System CEO of EEH, Mastro was President and CEO of Elmhurst Hospital. During that time, she led record volume growth and financial stability. Earlier in her career, she was CEO of Linden Oaks Hospital, a behavioral health hospital. Mastro has been a passionate voice for greater awareness of mental illness – and enhanced access to behavioral healthcare services.

“No one is more deserving to receive the inaugural Ruth Colby Excellence in Leadership Award than Mary Lou Mastro. For over 40 years working in hospitals and health systems, Lou made it her mission to transform the healthcare experience by making it safe, seamless and personal,” said Wilhelmi. “I had the pleasure of working with Lou during her time on the IHA Board of Trustees. She provided valuable guidance and unwavering support – and she was a fierce and compassionate advocate for the Illinois hospital community. I cannot think of a more worthy recipient of the first annual IHA Ruth Colby Excellence in Leadership Award.”

Ruth Colby, late Silver Cross Hospital President and CEO, was a visionary and respected healthcare leader who made significant contributions to the hospital community with conviction and compassion. Ruth took pride in mentoring women leaders in healthcare throughout her career. Her dedication to healthcare also extended to her service with IHA, where she most recently served as Chair-Elect of the Board of Trustees.

In honor of Ruth Colby’s tremendous legacy within the Illinois hospital community, IHA established the Ruth Colby Excellence in Leadership Award. This award recognizes women hospital leaders for distinguished contributions to healthcare leadership in Illinois, exemplary

leadership in healthcare delivery and hospital administration, a passion for improving community health, and a commitment to mentoring and developing aspiring female leaders in healthcare.

IHA's 2024 Leadership Summit, which was held on Sept. 26-27, unites healthcare leaders, visionaries and thought leaders to address today's historic convergence of challenges and opportunities.

### **About IHA**

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association, with offices in Chicago, Naperville, Springfield, and Washington, D.C., advocates for Illinois' more than 200 hospitals and nearly 40 health systems as they serve their patients and communities. IHA members provide a broad range of services—not just within their walls, but across the continuum of healthcare and in their communities. Reflecting the diversity of the state, IHA members consist of nonprofit, investor-owned and public hospitals in the following categories: community, safety net, rural, critical access, specialty, and teaching hospitals, including academic medical centers. For more information, see [www.team-iha.org](http://www.team-iha.org). Like IHA on [Facebook](#). Follow IHA on [X](#) (formally known as Twitter).

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