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LEADERSHIP TEAM CHOSEN FOR REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM

(Lafayette, LA) –Vicki Romero Briggs, FACHE and Kathy J. Bobbs, FACHE have been named to the leadership team for the recently announced regional health system in Acadiana. The system represents a group of complementary and affiliated health care facilities, each associated with HCA Inc. (Hospital Corporation of America), including Women's & Children's Hospital and Southwest Medical Center. Briggs will serve as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Bobbs will serve as Senior Vice President - Strategy and Business Development. Bobbs will also continue in her present role as CEO of Women's & Children's Hospital.

"I am both pleased and excited about the formation of this leadership team and what it means for the future of our efforts in Acadiana," said Dr. Donald Mickal, Chief of Medical Staff for Women's & Children's Hospital. "Both Vicki and Kathy bring the experience necessary to ensure that our medical staffs as well as our patients receive the focus necessary to ensure quality delivery of healthcare."

In addition, Kyle J. Viator, CEO of Southwest Medical Center will retire June 1, 2009 after 30 years with HCA Inc. in various leadership roles including CEO of Dauterive Hospital in New Iberia. Among the many achievements during Viator's tenure, Southwest Medical Center advanced its top-rated cardiovascular program by achieving Cycle II Chest pain Accreditation from the Society of Chest Pain Centers, has had nationally recognized vascular outcomes over several consecutive years and received several Louisiana Quality Awards in cardiovascular care from the Louisiana Health Care Review, Inc., all of which have positioned Southwest as not only a leading provider of acute care services but also as one of the region's leaders in cardiovascular services. Upon Viator's retirement from Southwest Medical Center, Briggs will assume the CEO duties in addition to her role with the system, and Viator will serve in a consulting role during the transition period.

"First, on behalf of the entire team at Southwest, I want to both commend and thank Kyle for extraordinary leadership during his years at the helm," stated Mike Barras, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Southwest Medical Center. "His sense of duty and commitment to excellence never wavered and his presence will be greatly missed."

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Barras continued, "In addition, I am very excited about the level of experience and focus that the team of Vicki Briggs and Kathy Bobbs bring to our efforts in the market. Vicki's proven history in leading integrated healthcare systems combined with Kathy's regional leadership role in building Women's & Children's Hospital to become the leading facility of its kind in Acadiana further solidifies our position in the region as a leader in the delivery of healthcare services for children and adults."

Briggs, an American College of Healthcare Executives Fellow (FACHE), has more than three decades in leadership roles in healthcare. She most recently served as Vice President of Operations for Health Management Associates, Inc. (Division 1), Birmingham, Alabama, responsible for 12 hospitals in Alabama, North and South Carolina and Pennsylvania. Prior to this role, Briggs served as CEO of Affinity Health System, which is a partnership between Baptist Health System and Triad Hospitals, Inc. Her experience in healthcare also includes serving as CEO of Longview Regional Medical Center, Longview, Texas. She was President of the Baton Rouge Market for Columbia Healthcare Systems of Louisiana, responsible for two hospitals, three surgery centers, a physician hospital organization and statewide physician management services. Prior to this, Briggs served in the capacity of President and CEO of Baton Rouge-based Woman's Hospital Foundation, a 225-bed OB/GYN specialty hospital which included a 56 bed Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), with 1,200 employees and 400 physicians. Prior to this role, she served as Chief Financial Officer/Controller. Briggs earned her B.S. from Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, Louisiana and did graduate work at Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama. Active in various Louisiana healthcare initiatives, Briggs served as Chair of the Louisiana Commission on Perinatal Care and Infant Mortality from 1990 to 1997. Briggs is also a graduate of the 1994 class of Leadership Louisiana, sponsored by the Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL).

Kathy J. Bobbs, FACHE, has been CEO of Women's & Children's Hospital since 2000, spearheading the growth of the hospital as it has become the region's leader in pediatrics and women's services. Prior to joining Women's & Children's, Bobbs was CEO for Riverview Medical Center, located in Gonzales, Louisiana. She came to Louisiana in 1997 after serving in several leadership roles at Doctors Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas. A long-time volunteer in the Lafayette community, Bobbs has been a board member of the United Way of Acadiana since 2003 and was the Board Chair for 2008-2009. During her tenure in Gonzales, Bobbs was named the 1999 Ascension Parish Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year. She also served on the board of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce from 2004 -2006. Bobbs is a very active member in the healthcare industry, serving as a Delegate to the American Hospital Association since 2006.

In addition, she has been on the board of the Louisiana Hospital Association since 2005 and has participated on a number of key task forces and committees.

Bobbs is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), a member of the Louisiana Maternal/Child Health Coalition, and was appointed this year to serve on the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council. Bobbs attended the University of Arkansas where she earned an Associate Degree in Nursing, a B.S. in Psychology and a Master of Health Services Administration.

The creation of the regional health system also includes consolidating Women's & Children's Hospital and Southwest Medical Center, creating one hospital with two complementary campuses and a total of 252 licensed beds, 51 NICU beds and 45 bassinets. With the consolidation, each campus retains the same services that patients have come to rely upon. The affiliated health care facilities in the regional health system also include New Iberia-based Dauterive Hospital with 103 licensed beds. (Dauterive Hospital is not part of the consolidation of Women's & Children's Hospital and Southwest Medical Center). In addition, two Lafayette-area outpatient facilities are affiliated with the system: the Elaine M. Junca Women's Imaging Centre and Lafayette Surgicare. The system also contains 16 medical office buildings with over 400,000 square feet of space and 37 employed multi-specialty physicians in eight (8) practices.

Over the next several weeks, the name of the regional health system and the renaming Southwest Medical Center to reflect the new system name will be announced along with further additions to the system's leadership team. The consolidation of the two hospitals should be effective by the third quarter of 2009.

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