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**Contact: Jan Luongo, APR**  
**(813) 335-7625**

## **Directions for Mental Health Welcomes New CEO**

**CLEARWATER, FL; February 27, 2009** – Directions for Mental Health, Inc., a private non-profit health organization in Clearwater, welcomes David Lomaka, as the organization's new CEO. Lomaka is taking over the post as R. Thomas Riggs, who was CEO of the organization for 22 years, retires.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to help Directions continue to grow and make an impact in the community," said Lomaka. "I'm looking forward to helping enhance the overall community awareness and perception of Directions, strengthening our financial position to allow us to grow our programs, and establishing partnerships as we integrate with primary healthcare."

Directions for Mental Health offers state-of-the-art clinical services for adults and children coping with mental illness, along with prevention programs for children. Directions is one of the only organizations in Florida serving as a member of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Their designation as such partners them with leading experts from across the country, enabling Directions' staff to provide expertise to improve treatment and systems of care for children and youths who have been victims of violence, witnesses to violence or suffered a traumatic loss.

The organization has been recognized for its role in developing innovative and state-of-the-art programs. Like his predecessor, Lomaka will continue to lead Directions in developing and expanding these programs. Riggs was named CEO in 1987 and has helped grow the non-profit to assisting over 80,000 persons in the community, nearly half children.

"I am excited about the overall dedication and competency of our staff, as well as working with a Board of Directors that is eager to move the organization ahead," said Lomaka.

Lomaka holds a Bachelors degree in Psychology from Central Michigan University, and a Masters in Guidance and Counseling from Wayne State University in Detroit. Most recently, he served as CEO of Porter Starke Services, where he implemented profitable changes, increased quality and the number of consumers served, and received national recognition in many areas including quality and primary care integration.

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## **About Directions for Mental Health, Inc.**

Directions for Mental Health, Inc., established in 1982, is a non-profit organization committed to helping heal the hurt in the lives of thousands of Pinellas County residents suffering from—or at risk of—mental illness. With nationally accredited programs, Directions sets the standard for best practices in mental health treatment, while making mental health care affordable and accessible to individuals and families, and building a safer, healthier community. Serving more than 8,000 people per year, Directions is dedicated to developing innovative programs that change lives, while reducing crime, homelessness, drug abuse and child abuse.

For questions about mental illness and programs, visit Directions for Mental Health's website at [www.HealTheHurt.org](http://www.HealTheHurt.org) or call (727) 524-4464 extension 1700.

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<http://www.HealtheHurt.org/CEO.jpg>