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PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Allegany Franciscan Ministries Selects Connect For More as Lead Collaborative Partner for Groundbreaking Nonprofit Executive Leadership Sabbatical Program

Florida — August 20, 2025 — Allegany Franciscan Ministries is proud to announce the selection of **Connect For More** as the lead collaborative partner for its **inaugural Nonprofit Executive Leadership Sabbatical Program**, a groundbreaking initiative designed to foster renewal, resilience, and long-term sustainability for nonprofit leaders and their organizations across Florida.



"Nonprofit leaders are continually called to do more with less as they navigate operational budget cuts, economic crises, and growing services demands in our communities. Our inaugural program - both timely and necessary - honors and invests in the change agents of the nonprofit sector who deserve rest and renewal." said Brittney Frazier, Director of Leadership, DEI & Capacity Initiatives.

The program—part of Allegany Franciscan Ministries' Nonprofit Capacity and Leadership Initiative—will provide nonprofit executive leaders with a three-month sabbatical in 2026, allowing them to rest, reflect, and return to their work with renewed purpose. During their absence, participating organizations will benefit from targeted capacity-building, leadership coaching, and operational support to strengthen internal systems and foster sustainable leadership structures.

"This is more than a sabbatical—it's a strategic investment in the health and future of Florida's nonprofit sector," said Liz Wooten, President & CEO of Connect For More. **"We're honored to serve as thought partners in a program that not only supports individual leaders but also catalyzes organizational growth and sector-wide change."**

As lead collaborative partner, Connect For More will coordinate a team of highly respected consultants—each bringing decades of experience in nonprofit leadership, coaching, and organizational capacity building.

The Connect For More team will provide executive and wellness coaching, capacity-building consultations, and succession planning support for both sabbatical participants and interim leaders. Through this collaborative partnership, the program aims to spark critical conversations in the philanthropic sector, shift funding norms toward sustainability, and elevate the visibility of nonprofit leaders across the state.

The team includes:



Liz Wooten, MPA, RYT – Founder of Connect For More, specializing in strategic planning, board governance, executive and wellness coaching, and leadership development.

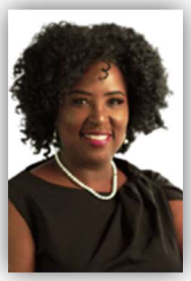
Margarita Sarmiento – International trainer and diversity expert, with over 40 years of experience in executive coaching, capacity building, and creating inclusive workplace cultures.





Merrill Stewart, CFRE – Fundraising strategist and capacity-building consultant with expertise in capital campaigns, strategic planning, and nonprofit marketing.

Dr. Phildra Swagger, PCC – Transformational coach, educator, and consultant specializing in leadership development, purpose-driven service, and equity-focused strategies.



"We believe this initiative will spark radical change in Florida's nonprofit and philanthropic landscape," said Frazier. **"By centering the wellbeing of nonprofit professionals while also strengthening the pipeline of future leadership and challenging the nonprofit workforce to address systemic issues that lead to burnout and high turnover among leaders who feel unsupported and undervalued."**

"We believe in the power of this collaborative partnership," said Wooten. **"By aligning Allegany Franciscan Ministries' vision with our team's collective expertise, we can help transform the way nonprofit leadership renewal is understood and practiced."**

About Allegany Franciscan Ministries
Allegany Franciscan Ministries is a nonprofit Catholic organization serving as a compassionate healing presence and catalyst for systemic change. Allegany purposefully commits financial and human resources to create more just, equitable, and caring communities.

About Connect For More
Founded in 2009, Connect For More helps nonprofits achieve their missions through connection, collaboration, and community-building. Serving over 250 nonprofit organizations and more than 6,000 nonprofit leaders, CFM offers coaching, strategic planning, and capacity-building services grounded in equity, inclusion, and sustainable change.

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