

## **Irwin County Hospital Announces Interim Leadership Team to Guide Stability and Growth**

The Irwin County Hospital Authority has announced the appointment of James A. Nixon, FACHE, principal of CAVUstrategies, as Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and Mary Demian as Chief Operating Officer (COO). This leadership structure is designed to strengthen both the hospital's strategic direction and daily operations during an important period of transition and renewal.

The interim leadership plan focuses on stabilizing the organization, improving efficiency, and positioning the hospital for long-term growth. Under the plan, Mr. Nixon will concentrate on strategic planning and overall organizational direction, while Ms. Demian will oversee daily operations, staffing, and process improvements. Together, they will ensure that immediate needs are met while also laying a foundation for sustainable success.

"This is a short-term step with a long-term vision," said Chris Paulk, Chairman Irwin County Hospital Authority. "Our goal is to create stability now and set the stage for a stronger, more efficient future. This leadership model allows for both the day-to-day focus our hospital needs and the forward-thinking strategy essential for growth."

James A. Nixon brings a wealth of experience in healthcare operations, growth strategy, and organizational transformation. Residing in Tifton, Georgia, Nixon is an accomplished operations executive and brand strategist who has led hospitals and health systems through periods of major change. His career spans hospital and system-level management, mergers and acquisitions, crisis recovery, and business development. He is known for his ability to build strong teams and organizational systems that promote accountability and innovation. "Securing access to healthcare is vital to rural communities. I am glad to work with the hospital authority to develop a sustainable plan to provide healthcare to the local community," says Nixon.

Nixon holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from Mercer University and a Master of Science in Health Administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He is also a Board-Certified Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) and has been recognized by Georgia Trend's "Forty Under 40" and Legacy Magazine's Most Powerful and Influential Black Business Leaders of 2024.

Mary Demian joins the team as COO with more than 15 years of leadership experience in healthcare management, operations, and innovation. Her background includes executive roles in redevelopment authorities, technology integration, and workforce development. She is known for her collaborative approach to operational excellence and her success in aligning community partnerships to strengthen financial and workforce sustainability.

Demian holds an MBA in Healthcare Management, a BS in Healthcare Management, and is pursuing her Doctor of Health Administration. She is an active member of ACHE Georgia, NAHSE, and a co-founder of NAHLE.

Together, Nixon and Demian bring a balanced blend of strategic insight and operational expertise. The interim approach allows the hospital to move forward deliberately ensuring continuity of care, staff engagement, and financial stability while refining the structure for long-term leadership.

“This leadership team reflects our commitment to progress,” said Chris Paulk. “It’s about positioning Irwin County Hospital to continue serving our community with strength and stability for years to come.”