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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LSS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WELCOMES NEW CEO LASHARND A BECKWITH, PhD.

Veteran Executive Becomes First African American CEO to Lead Venerable Institution

FULLERTON, Calif. – The Board of Directors of Lutheran Social Services Southern California (LSSSC), today announced the appointment of Dr. LaSharnda Beckwith as President and CEO of LSS Southern California. Dr. Beckwith becomes the first African American CEO in the agency's 75-year history.

Beckwith joins the organization from California Southern University where she most recently served as Provost and Chief Academic Officer. She offers a wealth of fiscal and executive management to the position following a 27- year career with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) retiring as the Vice President of Eastern Region, responsible for profit and loss for operations.

"With nearly 90 programs in 18 offices encompassing eight counties, we are grateful to God that Dr. Beckwith has accepted the position as CEO of LSSSC," remarked Bishop Andrew Taylor on behalf of the organization's governing bodies. "She brings a wealth of talent to this role, and we look forward to seeing how her God-given gifts and abilities will support and enhance the important work we do in caring for the most vulnerable in our midst."

Supported by the work Dr. Beckwith's done through the Professional Christian Women in Service organization she established in 2005, and other leadership and empowerment programs she created over her professional career, it is clear her heart is truly aligned with the values of Lutheran Social Services.

"My personal mission statement is to *enable, encourage, empower, and energize others to be all that God has called them to be*. This mission statement has driven my over three decades of personal and professional growth and development" stated Beckwith. "Everything I do is informed by what I believe to be my purpose and calling in the Body of Christ. Ultimately, my desire is to live out Proverbs 31:8-9 *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*"



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Dr. Beckwith holds lifetime professional certifications in the area of strategy from the University of Michigan and in leadership from both the Center of Creative Leadership and the Wharton School of Business. She is a graduate of Capella University, with a Doctor of Philosophy in Organization & Management with a Leadership specialization, an MBA with Distinction from Embry-Riddle University, Master of Arts in Business Management from Webster University and is finishing up a second Doctorate of Business Administration in Strategic Leadership from California Southern.

About Lutheran Social Services Southern California

Lutheran Social Services of Southern California has a legacy of meeting the needs of the vulnerable in our communities since 1946. Governed by the Pacifica and Southwest California Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) we unite with individuals, churches, businesses, civic leaders, government agencies and other stakeholders for one goal; breaking the cycle of poverty one family at a time. Ignited by faith, we live out God's love by embracing, equipping and empowering vulnerable people in Southern California.

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