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**AREA AGENCY ON AGING FOR SOUTHWEST FLORIDA’S**

**BOARD APPOINTS NEW CEO**

**FORT MYERS, Fla.** — **January 31, 2023** — The board of directors of the Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida (AAASWFL), a nonprofit serving older adults and adults with disabilities, has named Maricela Morado as President and CEO. Morado has been with AAASWFL since 2020 and served as the organization’s Director of Programs and Planning and Interim Director of Client Services. She took on the role of interim CEO in June 2022.

“I’m honored to have been named CEO to lead the Agency and serve our community,” said Morado. “The work being done to strengthen partnerships in the community as well as foster new ones is vital so that more residents are aware of the many important resources available to them in Southwest Florida.”

As CEO, Morado will be responsible for the leadership, development and strategic planning in support of AAASWFL’s mission, vision and values. She will continue to oversee all Agency programs including Health and Wellness, Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE), Elder Abuse Prevention and Veterans Directed Home and Community Based Services (VDHCBS), as well as Client Services, the Elder Helpline, and the Long-Term Care departments.

“Maricela has provided exemplary leadership as interim CEO,” said Wendy Hayes RN, CMC, Chair of the Board of Directors. “Her experience in being able to connect vulnerable residents in Southwest Florida with the appropriate resources, such as during the recent aftermath of Hurricane Ian, makes her the right choice for President and CEO.”

Morado, who is bilingual, has more than a decade of experience serving the community and has worked in different roles at not-for-profit organizations across Southwest Florida. Before joining AAASWFL, she worked as a Partnership Specialist for the United States Department of Commerce’s Census Bureau.

She was also the Residential Supervisor and Economic Empowerment supervisor for the nonprofit organization Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc (ACT). While at ACT, she led, supervised, coordinated, and trained staff and volunteers. An expert on handling child welfare, domestic violence and sexual assault cases, she helped augment the organization’s team of caseworkers through staffing, training and consultations. Prior to that, Morado was an Advisor and Community Liaison for Healthy Start Coalition of Southwest Florida. She coordinated local outreach efforts in support of pregnant women eligible for Medicaid.

She is a member of the LatinX Graduate Student Association and Collier Dementia Care & Cure Initiative Steering Committee. She serves as a board member of the Transportation Disadvantaged Programs for Charlotte, Hendry, Glades and Collier counties. She also enjoys volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House of Southwest Florida.

Morado holds a Bachelor of Science in management from Hodges University in Fort Myers and is currently working on obtaining a Master of Science in leadership and human resources development from Louisiana State University.

**About Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida:**

Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida is a nonprofit organization serving Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Lee, and Sarasota Counties.  AAASWFL is the state's designated Aging and Disability Resource Center for Southwest Florida.  The organization is committed to connecting older adults and adults with disabilities to resources and assistance for living safely with independence and dignity.  More information is available at [https://www.aaaswfl.org](https://www.aaaswfl.org/) or by calling the toll-free Helpline at 866-41-ELDER.