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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Erik Johnston named next President and CEO of Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP)

Richmond, VA – Virginia Community Action Partnership Board of Directors has named Erik Johnston as the next President and Chief Executive Officer of the non-profit association.

Johnston previously served as Director of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). He grew DHCD’s budget from \$150 million annually to \$350 million annually and secured an additional \$2 billion in pandemic relief programs. Johnston advocated for and secured effective delivery of programs in housing, workforce training, eviction prevention, access to capital, economic development, community development, broadband deployment, building codes, and service to vulnerable populations and people experiencing homelessness. He also served as Chief Deputy of DHCD and as Deputy Policy Director in the Office of the Governor during his more than six years of appointed public service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In addition to the above, Johnston served as Director of Government Affairs for the Virginia Association of Counties, and as Associate Legislative Director with the National Association of Counties. In those roles, he worked with county leaders on the delivery of grant programs and advocacy at the federal and state level.

Johnston will begin leadership at VACAP following the retirement of its current President and Chief Operating Officer, Jim Schuyler. “When searching for a leader to replace Jim, who has faithfully served VACAP for 16 years as a progressive and innovative President, we wanted to make sure that the next leader would be as motivated and innovative to lead VACAP in expanding opportunities to address the needs of the Commonwealth’s most vulnerable citizens. We are certain that Erik is that person,” said VACAP board chair, Annette Lewis. “His background and experiences in leading efforts that address the needs of struggling families and communities relate well to the work of VACAP’s 31 community action agencies.”

Johnston will join VACAP on April 15. He appreciates Jim Schuyler’s years of dedicated service to VACAP and will overlap with Schuyler for several weeks before Jim begins his retirement.



"I am honored and excited to join VACAP's amazing members, staff and partners in the critical mission of creating economic opportunities and facilitating mobility from poverty," said incoming VACAP President and CEO Erik Johnston. Johnston added, "The work of non-profit private and public community action agencies is more important than ever as VACAP members work with public and private partners at the local, regional, state and federal level to create and deliver innovative solutions that meet the pressing needs of pandemic emergency response and long-term recovery for people and places."

Johnston earned his B.A. in Political Science and International Affairs from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia in 2003. He also earned a Certificate in Local Government Management from Virginia Tech in 2013 and completed his Masters in Public Administration from Virginia Tech's Center for Public Administration and Policy in 2014.

As President and CEO of VACAP, Johnston will be based in Richmond, but will frequently travel across the Commonwealth and to Washington, DC to represent the VACAP membership.

About Virginia Community Action Partnership

Virginia Community Action Partnership is the statewide membership association for Virginia's thirty-one non-profit private and public community action agencies. VACAP's mission is to build capacity and competencies of Virginia's community action agencies to achieve their mission of creating economic opportunities and facilitating mobility from poverty for the people of Virginia. At VACAP, we are committed to a future in which all of Virginia's community action agencies are high impact and people and places across Virginia are thriving.

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