



## Press Release

August 25, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Bon Secours Partners with United Ministries to Transform Lives**

GREENVILLE, S.C. (August 25, 2016) – According to Dr. Alex Garvey, the Senior VP of Mission for Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Catholic health care has always viewed hospitals as a reflection of the communities they serve. “We believe that the all-encompassing ministry of healing doesn’t stop at the hospital walls,” he says. The call to serve God’s people in the community is part of the inspiration behind Bon Secours’ title sponsorship of United Ministries’ Transformation Walk.

United Ministries’ signature event, the Transformation Walk, invites participants to walk three miles in the shoes of someone less fortunate. Beginning and ending at Fluor Field, the Transformation Walk route passes service agencies in downtown Greenville who are helping people to leave poverty behind. Volunteers along the route hold signs with sometimes startling local poverty statistics. In a city as beautiful and thriving as Greenville, it is often easy to forget those among us who are struggling to make ends meet. United Ministries’ Transformation Walk provides participants with what Dr. Garvey describes as “a ministerial and sensory understanding of the sometimes marginalized and forgotten community.”

Bon Secours St. Francis Health System recently completed a health needs assessment to determine community needs. One of the top three identifiers in the community was homelessness due to mental health issues. Bon Secours will now begin a clinical matrix to address the needs identified. Not wishing to duplicate services or re-invent the wheel, Dr. Garvey says that they are excited to work in tandem with United Ministries and other local agencies that are doing a phenomenal job of addressing community needs.

The principles behind United Ministries’ Transformation Walk fit well with Bon Secours’ hands-on approach to ministry. Dr. Garvey keeps the guiding image of Jesus as he bent down, scooped up the dirt, spat in it, and rubbed it in the eyes of the blind man. He explains, “At Bon Secours we don’t say, ‘Oh, we open our door to all people.’ We go out into the community and bring people in. We don’t say, ‘We’re a welcoming institution.’ That’s not good enough. You have to go out to where the people

are. And that's what the Transformation Walk does. You're walking; you're physically taking people through the footsteps of the community. There's no more hands-on than that."

**(MORE)**

The Transformation Walk raises awareness about poverty in Greenville and helps to provide solutions by providing funds for job skills training, adult education, financial stability programs, emergency assistance, shelter for homeless families, homeless day shelter services, and much more.

United Ministries' 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Transformation Walk, presented by Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, will begin at Fluor Field on Sunday, October 23, 2016, with the Transformation Celebration beginning at noon and the walk kicking-off just before 2:00 p.m. For more information and to register, please visit [www.TransformationWalk.kintera.org](http://www.TransformationWalk.kintera.org).

Major supporters include Stride Sponsors Batteries Plus Bulbs, Bostik, Carolina Power, Don Pilzer Law Firm, Engenius, PNC Bank, and South Carolina Tel-Con. Media sponsors include GSA *Business* and HIS Radio.

### **About United Ministries**

Located in downtown Greenville's West End, United Ministries has been working for 46 years to give every member of our community the opportunity to participate in the prosperity of our community. Originally established by local congregations to meet the crisis needs of people living in poverty, the agency has evolved to focus on developing the potential each family possesses to become self-sufficient – and even to thrive. The agency's integrated service model discourages dependency on charity and promotes the dignity of work. For more information on United Ministries please visit [www.united-ministries.org](http://www.united-ministries.org) or call 864-335-2614.

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