

Philadelphia nonprofit names first woman CEO in its 140-year history

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Inglis, a Philadelphia nonprofit that supports people with disabilities, has named the first woman president and CEO in the organization's 140-year history.

Dyann M. Roth will take over as chief executive of Inglis effective Aug. 21. She is succeeding Gavin Kerr, who joined the organization in 2008 and is retiring.



Dyann Roth is taking over as CEO of Inglis in August.

Roth now serves as CEO of Resources for Human Development, a diversified human services nonprofit based in Philadelphia that operates 160 programs across 15 states geared toward people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations. The nonprofit has grown to more than 6,000 employees with a \$268 million annual operating budget. Roth first started working at Resources for Human Development part-time when she was a high school student, and she continued to work there while attending college.

Inglis serves nearly 1,000 people daily throughout the Philadelphia region providing services that support independent, community living through day programming, adapted technology, and employment services. It is also a provider of wheelchair-accessible, safe and affordable housing. The organization has 630 full- and part-time employees and a \$51.2 million annual operating budget.

"I am incredibly excited to have the opportunity to join the Inglis community and to learn from, and work with, the people Inglis supports each day to live as independently and fully as possible," Roth said.

Roth said she wasn't looking to leave Resources for Human Development when she received a call from a recruiter asking for recommendations for the CEO post. "I knew about Inglis, but I thought if I was going to be helpful with a recommendation I should know a little more," Roth said. "So, I did some web research and thought, 'Wow, this is really cool.'"

When the recruiter called back, Roth gave some recommendations. The recruiter then asked if she'd be interested in the job. Roth at first declined, but over the next few weeks her curiosity grew. So, she became a candidate for the job.

"This was not something I was seeking," said Roth, a Penn State and University of Pennsylvania graduate who grew up in Drexel Hill, "but the more I learned, the more it seemed the right thing for me, my family and my career. I feel very honored to be selected."

James Logue, who served as chairman of the selection committee and is vice chairman of Inglis' board of directors, said Roth will bring a wealth of experience to the CEO role, and "her passion for Inglis and its mission was palpable" throughout the selection process.

"[Roth] is a skilled leader and an entrepreneurial thinker," added Lauren DeBruicker, chairwoman of Inglis' board of directors. "Annie Inglis, and the many women who made the organization what it is today, would be proud to know Dyann will be leading Inglis into its next generation."

Under Kerr's leadership, Inglis has focused on enhancing its support of people with disabilities who choose to live independently through projects including the development of more than 230 new affordable, wheelchair-accessible apartment units — some completed and others in its pipeline. He also led the transition of Inglis House, the organization's long-term care community, to a "person-centered care" environment that provides more opportunities for people with complex physical disabilities to "articulate their choices, maximize their abilities and achieve their goals." That effort has included renovating outdated nursing units into thriving "neighborhoods" — each with input from their respective residents.

Roth said her first job when she takes over as CEO of Inglis will be to learn what the people served by the organization need and want.

"We want to keep Inglis on the course that's been set," she said, "and keep innovating."

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