

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Executive Director E.J. Barklage retires after 22 years at Karis Community

Denver, CO, March 17, 2021 -- E.J. Barklage has served as Karis Community's Executive Director for over 22 years and will retire on July 31st. E.J.'s devotion to the organization and his clients is rooted in respect for every human being's inherent worth. He has considered it an honor to walk alongside those navigating mental illness, seeing value and purpose they may not yet see and holding hope until they can embrace it for themselves.

E.J. has an M.A. in Counseling Psychology and a B.A. in Business Administration. During his tenure at Karis Community, he was awarded the Denver Business Journal's Champion in Health Care Innovator Award and The Denver Foundation's Swanee Hunt Individual Leadership Award. He has led several projects that will ensure Karis's ongoing mission. In 2012, he raised funds for and oversaw a \$1.1 million renovation of its main facility. In 2015, he oversaw the \$925,000 purchase and development of the Stepping Stone Cottage, the organization's second location.

Karis Community is incredibly grateful for E.J.'s transformative leadership. They wish him the best as he retires and reinvents his dedication to advocacy for the marginalized in our community while enjoying the journey with his wife, Joy, and dog, Jovi.

On Wednesday, May 12 at 6 pm, Karis will hold a virtual fundraising event honoring E.J. before his retirement and celebrate Karis' 45th Birthday! Visit www.kariscommunity.org for more information.

"Over the two decades that I have known E. J. Barklage, he has been the definition of Karis Community. Karis means grace or courteous goodwill. Community means a feeling of fellowship with others. E.J. shows this every day as the leader and core foundation of Karis. The consistency, growth, and success of Karis is attributed to him. E.J. will be missed, but his mark on Karis Community and others will be felt by many for years." – John Hancock, President, Board of Directors at Karis Community

About Karis Community

Karis Community is a community-model residential program serving individuals managing serious and persistent mental illness since 1976. Following WWII, Great Britain discovered that veterans experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder could find significant recovery in communal environments. This approach helped shape the Empowerment Program. At Karis, work lies at the intersections of mental illness, trauma, and substance use. Recovery goals typically include reducing symptoms, learning coping strategies, developing life skills, and restoring the capacity to engage in healthy relationships with others.

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