



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE

# President & Chief Executive Officer Baptist Community Ministries New Orleans, LA

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"In response to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ and in keeping with our Baptist heritage, Baptist Community Ministries is committed to improving the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people and communities in the five-parish Greater New Orleans area."

*– the mission of Baptist Community Ministries*

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# Executive Summary

Baptist Community Ministries (BCM) has supported good people and their good works for over a quarter century. Formed in 1995 following the sale of Baptist + Mercy Hospital to Tenet Healthcare, Baptist Community Ministries has evolved over the years, but its mission has remained constant:

*In response to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ and in keeping with our Baptist heritage, Baptist Community Ministries is committed to improving the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people and communities in the five-parish Greater New Orleans area.*

BCM now seeks a CEO who can build on past successes while guiding the organization to an even more impactful future for the communities and people it serves.

## The Organization

[Baptist Community Ministries](#), one of the largest private foundations in all of Louisiana, is a Baptist-oriented Christian institution of ministry. Since its founding, BCM has been a leading funder of some of the most high-impact organizations in the Greater New Orleans region—organizations that are aligned with BCM's values and its interest in health, education and public safety. More recently, there has been a greater focus on faith-based organizations, many of which share a connection with the Baptist tradition.

The foundation's very name reinforces its operational ethos:

- **Baptist:** BCM honors its Baptist heritage through its work;
- **Community:** BCM's impact occurs in community, often at the most immediate and personal levels; and



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- **Ministries:** BCM approaches philanthropy itself as *ministry*.

Baptist Community Ministries is a faith-based organization that seeks to embody five core values, values which its people embrace and its work reflects:

- **Faithfulness:** Honor God in all that we do.
- **Compassion:** Exhibit unconditional love and acceptance to our community members.
- **Respect:** Demonstrate reverence for the dignity and cultural diversity of each person in our community.
- **Sustainability:** Demand responsible stewardship of our charitable assets.
- **Transparency:** Commit to being an accountable and trustworthy community partner.

Programmatically, BCM has three fundamental components: *Grants*, *Chaplaincy Services* and *Congregational Wellness*.

- BCM's **Grants** focus on several broad zones of interest, specifically health, education (especially early childhood education) and public safety.<sup>1</sup>
- **Chaplaincy Services** provides spiritual support to individuals and groups without regard to religious affiliation.<sup>2</sup>
- **Congregational Wellness** leverages the talents of scores of volunteers among a network of 145 partner congregations of all faiths to provide

<sup>1</sup> BCM's post-Katrina investments in Teach for America were instrumental in the charter school system that replaced New Orleans failed public schools. More recently, BCM has pledged \$5 million over five years to support early childhood education.

<sup>2</sup> For example, BCM's chaplains are based in five hospitals and all eight New Orleans police precincts.

registered nurses and lay people with tools to support healthy behaviors and wellness activities. A separate program, Behavioral Health Initiative for Pastors, supports the particular needs of pastors and their families.

The staff of Baptist Community Ministries numbers about 30. It is an eclectic group, encompassing seasoned veterans part of BCM's evolution since the beginning as well as newer colleagues in their first professional roles. To a person, however, they share a passion for the work, respect for one another, and a commitment to an aspirational future for BCM and the people and communities it serves.

While there are very real challenges about the pace of change and missed opportunities for even greater impact, there is a sense of urgency about the work and a collective commitment to a stronger, healthier community.

The organization is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, presently numbering fourteen, drawn from leadership roles across Greater New Orleans. By founding documents, a majority of trustees are adherents to the Baptist faith. The board is solidly aligned behind strategic aspirations for a meaningful, positive impact on the community's quality of life, but how best to achieve such impact is the topic of ongoing discussions.

BCM's grants for FY 2021 exceeded \$12 million, and the operating budget for all programs and staff is about \$18 million. Per the audited financials, BCM's assets at the end of fiscal 2020 were just over \$318 million, up about 3% from 2019. Given 2021's robust financial markets, year-end 2021 assets will be considerably higher.<sup>3</sup>

Despite its size, history and focus, Baptist Community Ministries remains a bit of "a secret gem," as one informed admirer put it. BCM's

<sup>3</sup> BCM's fiscal year ends September 30, and thus the cited numbers for 2021 are year-end estimates, not audited figures.



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I can name 20 things that would not exist but for BCM.

—BCM staff member

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We work from shared values, even within our different ways of walking with Christ.

—BCM board member

historically low profile results in part from its orientation—philanthropy as ministry—and the understandable desire to keep the focus on the work of grantees and program partners rather than on BCM itself.

In part, however, the low profile stems from the hesitancy of some of BCM’s boards and CEOs to assume more visible leadership in the larger community. Whether born of institutional humility or personal reticence, this approach worked well for the most part, but it has likely contributed to missed opportunities for BCM to build new collaborations, create new partnerships, attract new funding for its initiatives and leverage deeper influence around the very issues BCM holds most dear.<sup>4</sup>

Baptist Community Ministries has been without a full-time CEO since August 2020. That would have been a disruptive development in normal times; in a time of social distancing and remote working, it was especially problematic.

To be sure, all the basics were covered: Grants were decided and funded on time, programs flourished, and board and staff members took on expanded responsibilities. Inevitably, however, the leadership void contributed to disruptions in strategy, staffing and momentum that otherwise would have been addressed in the ordinary course of business. Boundaries between governance and management became fuzzier, and internal communications suffered.

A faith-based entity has reserves to call upon that other organizations do not, and Baptist Community Ministries remains solid at its core. The staff and board are energized by the CEO search now underway, and both groups are ambitious for the mission and the opportunities for enhanced impact ahead.

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<sup>4</sup> BCM’s recent purchase and planned repurposing of a signature building for its downtown headquarters derives in part from a desire for greater and more visible community engagement.

More information on the history and operations of Baptist Community Ministries is available [here](#). The [2020 Annual Report](#) provides additional detail on the impact of BCM's programs as well as a list of 2020 grantees.



## The Mandate

Having spent all of 2021 without a CEO in place, both board and staff members at BCM are freshly aware of just how important a compelling leader is to an organization's current momentum, let alone to the strategic aspirations for impact over time.

Accordingly, the next CEO of Baptist Community Ministries can expect to inherit several overlapping and interconnected priorities. Some of these are immediate, and some will continue throughout the new CEO's tenure. All must be managed in ways that honor BCM's legacy and support its future:

- Restore an atmosphere of transparency and respect between staff and the board by clarifying expectations, enforcing best practices and promoting transparency and accountability in service to BCM's strategic goals and core values.

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BCM remains committed to its faith-based Vision of improving the physical, mental and spiritual health of the individuals we serve in our five-parish region.

- Strengthen engagement with BCM’s core constituencies while being open to new ways to support BCM’s unwavering commitment to “improving the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people and communities in the five-parish Greater New Orleans area.”
- Under the board’s guidance and with input from staff and stakeholders, develop a cohesive view of BCM’s future, fully leveraging appropriate opportunities for leadership and engagement.
- Ensure BCM has the resources, staff and operational infrastructure necessary to optimize its impact.

In addition, of course, are the questions any such organization must continue to address:

- Where might our support have the most impact and over what period?
- In a context of limited resources but unlimited need, are we consistent in what we support and why?
- Our grants and programs represent a mix of philanthropy and charity. Is the current balance the right balance?
- What is BCM’s proper role in the community at large? Within our niche and consistent with our mission, how can we add the most value?
- What messages do our actions convey to the larger community? How well do they align with our mission and values?
- How can we best support development opportunities for our staff? Our board? Our community?

# The Relationships

<p><b>BCM's CEO reports to</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Trustees, Baptist Community Ministries</li> </ul>
<p><b>And manages a staff of about 30 through four direct reports</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SVP &amp; CFO</li> <li>• SVP, Grants (open)</li> <li>• VP, Chaplaincy Services</li> <li>• VP, Congregational Wellness</li> <li>• Director, Fund Development &amp; Communications</li> </ul>
<p><b>While stewarding such other important relationships as</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees and program partners</li> <li>• A variety of Baptist interests</li> <li>• Other faith-based leaders and institutions</li> <li>• BCM supporters and co-funders</li> <li>• Peer foundations</li> <li>• The region's leadership, including those from corporations, academia, governmental bodies, neighborhoods, philanthropies, the professions, operating nonprofits and the media</li> </ul>

## The Candidate

The next CEO of Baptist Community Ministries will be an experienced, nuanced leader, a strong, self-confident person of faith accustomed to leading multifaceted organizations with aspirational missions executed on behalf of specific communities and constituencies.

We seek a CEO with the passion to inspire, the experience to lead *and* manage, the confidence to tackle tough issues, the vision to sense the possible, and the commitment to the Greater New Orleans community that has informed BCM's work from the very beginning.

### **Culture—BCM's CEO should exemplify...**

- Christian faith in action; a candidate should be a person whose faith is compatible with Baptist traditions
- An inviting management style, characterized by respect, openness, clarity of expectations, timely feedback and a commitment to professional development
- The future to which we aspire: A leader engaged in the fabric of the region, supportive of collective progress, attentive to BCM's interests while promoting opportunities for collaboration and support.

# THANK YOU

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Baptist Community Ministries

25<sup>th</sup> BCM  
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BCM expects to appoint a CEO who is a proven steward of relationships, finances, reputation, and influence.

## Competence: BCM expects to appoint a CEO who is...

- Accustomed to leading organizations at least as complex and as multifaceted as Baptist Community Ministries
- Ambitious for the community and its people, not for oneself
- A true servant-leader who has demonstrated real impact in relevant contexts
- A board-savvy executive who understands, respects and, with a deft hand, reinforces the proper roles of governance and management; a leader who knows how to work with BCM's most passionate advocates in delivering lasting value for the enterprise
- Experienced in the grantmaker/grantee dynamic, especially one characterized by clear expectations, appropriate feedback loops and accountability for impact
- Comfortable being the public face for BCM, championing not just BCM's mission but also the community to which it is committed
- A strategic thinker who respects processes and data while understanding some of the most impactful outcomes may not lend themselves to measurement
- A proven steward of relationships, finances, reputation, and influence
- A nimble leader, at ease in all sorts of settings and with all sorts of people
- A proponent for empowered staff
- A proven collaborator who can also make decisions
- An innovator and motivator whom others want to work with and learn from.

# The Location

Baptist Community Ministries is housed in downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, on the 29th floor of a major office tower. Consistent with the intention to be more present in community, BCM has acquired a stately two-story building nearby that it intends to repurpose and occupy as soon as late 2022.

New Orleans and its five parishes are legendary. Some observers highlight the culture, others the challenges, all of which contribute to a complex urban setting in which issues facing most big cities are magnified by the environment. For a variety of perspectives, visit these and other websites: [Visit New Orleans](#); [Wikipedia](#), [City of New Orleans](#), [TripAdvisor](#), [Greater New Orleans Foundation](#), [Nonprofits in New Orleans](#), and [New Orleans Baptist Association](#).



For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email  
[BCM@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:BCM@BoardWalkConsulting.com)  
or call **Sam Pettway** or **Michelle Hall** at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

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