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Nichols Named CEO/Executive Director

Fort Atkinson, WI – Rock River Community Clinic (RRCC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Olivia Nichols as CEO/Executive Director.

A Fort Atkinson Graduate (2010), Nichols (Hartwick) returns to Wisconsin after 8 years in Alabama where she received her Master of Science and is currently finishing her Doctorate in Human Development and Family Studies at Auburn University. Her research and teaching centers around identifying early contexts of support that improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities.

She has presented her research at academic conferences throughout the US and published numerous articles in academic journals including Sleep Medicine, Social Development, American Journal of Epidemiology, Cultural and Attachment & Human Development.

Before attending Auburn University, Nichols received her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in At-Risk Child Youth Care from UW-La Crosse.

According to Carol Quest, Rock River Community Clinic Board Chair, “Olivia stood out because of her training and interest in the social determinants of health, which is part of the clinic’s mission. She also has a passion for health equity and making sure all of our residents have access to the health care they need.” Quest said that the hiring committee was focused on finding someone who could successfully establish RRCC as a Federally Qualified Health Center, a move that would create long-term stability for the clinic and provide more services for the clinic’s patients. “We agreed that Olivia has the skills and commitment to bring our staff, our stakeholders and our patients together toward that end,” said Quest.

Nichols said she is excited to be back in Wisconsin and using her education to bring new federal resources to the community. “As we work to become a Federally Qualified Health Center, I am eager to improve the quality of our care and increase community access to our

care through expanded services that bring us closer to health equity as a community. I greatly look forward to working with our leadership team, our community partners, and the families we serve to remove barriers to health and become a healthier, more equitable community.”

About Rock River Community Clinic

RRCC was formed in January 2020, merging the former Community Dental Clinic, the Rock River Free Medical Clinic, the Watertown Area Cares Clinic and including a new medical clinic site in Whitewater. RRCC provides quality health care services, including medical, dental, and behavioral, to those who have decreased access to care due to financial limitations. In addition, RRCC assists patients in finding community resources that reduce barriers to care and helps them navigate the local health care system.

About Federally Qualified Health Centers

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) are community-based health centers that receive funds from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Center Program to provide primary care services in underserved areas. They must meet a stringent set of requirements, including providing care on a sliding fee scale based on ability to pay and operating under a governing board that includes patient representation. By becoming an FQHC, RRCC will receive federal funding, allowing the clinic to provide more services and increase access to health care in the community.