

**2025 Administrator of the Year
Over 100 Beds**



**LaDonna Johnston
Unity Health
Searcy, Arkansas
North Central District**

LaDonna Johnston, Present and CEO of Unity Health, exemplifies servant leadership, compassion, and unwavering dedication to healthcare. With over 35 years of service to Unity Health, Johnston has grown through the ranks, serving as Vice President of Nursing Services, Vice President of Patient Services, and Administrator of Unity Health – Newport. Her leadership is rooted in deep institutional knowledge, professional excellence, and her genuine love for people.

From her very first week as CEO, LaDonna set the tone for her tenure – one defined by visibility, humility, and personal connection. She walks the halls of all Unity Health campuses, not for show, but to connect. When she encountered volunteers, she didn't simply greet them – she stopped to ask, "What do the volunteers need from me? How can I make serving here easier for them?" This moment encapsulates her leadership: grounded in empathy and action.

Her consistent involvement with the auxiliary is more than symbolic – it's heartfelt. She attends meetings, gives updates on the hospitals and clinics, and regularly visits volunteers at their posts. These aren't obligatory visits; they're filled with genuine interest, warm conversations, and often, a bit of playful banter. The volunteers know her – not just her name, but her presence, her voice, and her laughter. They know they are seen, heard, and appreciated.

LaDonna makes it a point to express gratitude every time she addresses the auxiliary. Her message is always clear: volunteers are not just helpers; they are vital to the mission of

Unity Health. Her words affirm their value, and her actions prove it. Under her leadership, the culture of appreciation has only deepened.

But her influence extends beyond the volunteer program. Her decades of clinical and administrative experience inform every decision, and her collaborative approach ensures Unity Health continues to thrive. She leads with clarity, listens with intent, and acts with heart. Her leadership style fosters trust across departments and inspires those around her to lead with purpose.

LaDonna Johnston is not only an administrator, she is also a mentor, a cheerleader, and a servant leader. Her authenticity is her strength. She doesn't lead from a distance; she leads from among her people. Her dedication to Unity Health is evident in everything she does, from strategic planning to a simple conversation in a hallway.

For these reasons and many more, LaDonna Johnston is a shining example of what healthcare leadership should be. Her legacy is not only in policies or achievements but in people – in the volunteers she uplifts, the staff she supports, and the community she serves.