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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Jeffrey Thurman Acknowledged with Special Economic Development Designation**

### ***Hamilton, OH Leader Recognized for Serving as a Source of Inspiration in the Advancement of Economic Development***

Jeffrey Thurman, President and CEO, Community First Solutions, was awarded the Citizen Leadership Award by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), for a lasting commitment to the field of economic development.

The honor was presented at an awards ceremony on Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup> during the IEDC Annual Conference, in Anchorage, Alaska.

"The Citizen Leadership Award celebrates an individual who is not an economic development specialist, yet has displayed an in-depth understanding of the profession and has made successful attempts to create a community that fosters growth and sustainability," explains JoAnn Crary, CECD, Chair of the International Economic Development Council and President of Saginaw Future Inc. "Mr. Thurman is an excellent example of such an individual."

This award recognizes a community or business leader, or an individual who is not an economic development practitioner, but who plays a key leadership role. Nominees for the award should have shown support for or been involved in a broad range of activities for at least 10 years and have been involved in economic development, primarily in the private sector, for the last 5 years. Nominees must have demonstrated sustained and effective efforts to mobilize leadership in the development of programs and projects, played a key role in the planning and designing of new and creative economic development activities and be deeply committed as a leader and advocate for economic development.

For the past 36 years, Jeffrey Thurman has shown unwavering commitment and extraordinary civic leadership to the City of Hamilton, OH. As the president and CEO of Community First Solutions, Mr. Thurman is the leading advocate for ensuring quality of life for aging adults, and, the overall well-being for Ohio residents.

After spending the first 28 years of his career at Colonial, an organization dedicated to providing quality care for older adults, Mr. Thurman led the consolidation of that entity and three others to form Community First Solutions in 2010. The organization now proudly supports a four-county area in Ohio, serving 46,000 individuals annually, and, is the city of Hamilton's second largest private employer with 700 employees.

Together, the network assists the elderly with proper care and housing, supports mental health assistance and outreach to the four counties, and offers enrichment programs that fulfill the needs of families, children, and adults. Community First Solutions also encompasses its own pharmacy, the

second non-profit pharmacy in the nation, increasing the accessibility and affordability of its services for insured and uninsured clients in the area.

Mr. Thurman believes that Community First Solutions has the responsibility not only to strengthen Hamilton through its services, but also to make valuable investments in the future of the city. In 2014, Community First Solutions announced its largest capital project in 20 years: the construction of a \$12 million, 42,000 square foot rehabilitation center. Mr. Thurman also made the strategic decision to move Community First Solutions' headquarters to downtown Hamilton, making it the first major company to shift its offices to the revitalized area. The company's \$5.88 million investment serves as an example for other companies to do the same.

Beyond his important role as a business leader, Mr. Thurman founded Leadership Hamilton in 1992 in an effort to sustain his city's vitality. The nine month program educates emerging leaders on relevant issues including economic development and health care, expands their networks, and mobilizes leadership. The program has evolved and grown, boasting more than 600 graduates to date, many of whom hold esteemed positions in the community today. Mr. Thurman is also a key participant in city projects such as Hamilton's Downtown Developer Day and the We Are Hamilton video. He actively serves on many boards in Ohio, and remains Hamilton's biggest supporter.

Mr. Thurman is a selfless leader, one whose constant advocacy for the community is reflected in his daily work. The International Economic Development Council is proud to present the 2015 Citizen Leadership Award to Mr. Jeffrey Thurman.

Because of his life-long dedication to economic development the International Economic Development Council is proud to present Jeffrey Thurman with the Leadership Award for Public Service.

#### **About the International Economic Development Council**

The [International Economic Development Council](http://www.iedcouncil.org) (IEDC) is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,600 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. When we succeed, our members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions. [www.iedconline.org](http://www.iedconline.org).

#### **About Community First Solutions**

The goal of [Community First Solutions](http://www.communityfirstsolutions.org) is to be THE non-profit resource for meeting the needs of our neighbors throughout Butler County. We seek to build collaborative relationships with partners who share our drive; working together to sustain programs that keep our community well. Community First Solutions is the non-profit parent company of Colonial, Community Behavioral Health, Community First Pharmacy, and Partners in Prime.

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