

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY CENTER

**VMC**

*Opening Doors for a Better Tomorrow*

511 North Broadway  
Knoxville, TN 37917-7408

P.O. Box 27406  
Knoxville, TN 37927

(865) 524-3926

[www.vmcinc.org](http://www.vmcinc.org)

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**Bruce W. Spangler**  
Chief Executive Officer



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 20, 2022**

**Spangler Retiring from VMC**

**Knoxville, Tenn.** – Dr. Bruce Spangler today announced he is retiring from his position as Chief Executive Officer of the Volunteer Ministry Center effective July 1, 2023.

He joined VMC in 2006 as the Chief Operating Officer and served as the CEO from 2015 to the present.

“This has been my dream job,” Spangler said. “I can’t think of any other way to have the opportunity to meet my calling to work with the disenfranchised and impoverished in our community. All the accomplishments of VMC under my tenure as CEO are a result of the collaborative effort of the VMC’s professional staff, a host of dedicated volunteers and the many faithful members of the VMC board.”

Spangler lists being part of the implementation of the Housing First approach to assisting individuals experiencing homelessness as one of the agency’s most important accomplishments during his time at VMC. “More than 1,200 people have moved from the streets to a place of their own applying the Housing First philosophy. More than 93 percent of those people who have moved into their own place have remained housed for a year or longer.”

“VMC’s Minvilla Manor has housed more than 200 people since it opened in 2010, with an average length of stay of more than five years. These two examples show how the Housing First model can have a meaningful impact on our neighbors’ lives and benefit to our community as well,” Spangler added.

Other notable accomplishments during Spangler’s time at VMC include:

- The opening in 2019 of the Foyer, a low-barrier shelter that is housing focused
- The expansion of the street out-reach program to help individuals access available services, including portable shower trailers
- Growth in the VMC staff and budget providing additional funding for more case managers: rapid rehousing programs; and CHAMP assessments in the Refuge
- The opening of Caswell Manor, a new 48-unit permanent supportive housing facility, scheduled to come online in the fall of 2022

“While I am proud of the many improvements in our services to those experiencing homelessness, one of the things I will miss most after retirement is my interactions with those served by VMC and my relationships with staff and volunteers,” Spangler said.

“Each of them has taught me much about a service filled with gracious hospitality which can be incredibly empowering. Such hospitality has real power with authentic effects,” Spangler added.

“One of the more touching moments that I recall is a woman who had experienced homelessness for many, many years coupled with severe mental illness. She was

homeless because she had no home and she needed services to complement her life. I cried on the day she moved into Minvilla Manor. I cried again the following year when she gave me a tie for Father's Day. Hospitality begets hospitality, I am sure," Spangler said.

Nancy Friedrich, Chair of the VMC Board, said that Bruce provided extraordinary leadership for the agency in some very difficult periods.

"Throughout the pandemic, Bruce led VMC with compassion and integrity," Friedrich said. "His emphasis on Housing First has kept VMC focused on its mission to end and prevent homelessness through compassion, accountability and results.

"The Board of Directors, along with the VMC staff and volunteers, are committed to maintaining all of the VMC services throughout this time of transition," Friedrich added.

Friedrich said that the VMC Board has established a search committee to begin the process of selecting a new CEO. The search committee has retained Elle Benson, who has experience in management searches in the not-for-profit sector, to help in the selection process for a new CEO. Friedrich said the search committee will open the CEO search by posting the job description in September, 2022. For more information on the job search, contact Benson at [hiringforleadership@gmail.com](mailto:hiringforleadership@gmail.com).

"The next leader will have the great opportunity to continue the incredible work of Spangler and take the organization into its next phase," Friedrich said. "We intend to find someone with robust passion for the homeless, expertise in best practices, and values that align with VMC."

VMC is a nonprofit agency with the mission of ending and preventing homelessness through compassion, accountability and results.

Programs operated by VMC include Street Outreach, the Bush Family Refuge, the Resource Center, the Foyer low-barrier shelter, the VMC Dental Clinic, Minvilla Manor (permanent supportive housing facility) and Caswell Manor (permanent supportive housing facility opening in Fall of 2022).

For more details on VMC's mission and programs, please go to [www.vmcinc.org](http://www.vmcinc.org)

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For questions or additional information:

Nancy Friedrich, VMC Board Chair: 865-659-0161, [nancy.o.friedrich@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.o.friedrich@gmail.com)

Craig Griffith, Search Committee Chair: 865-258-6566, [clgriffith27@gmail.com](mailto:clgriffith27@gmail.com)