 New CEO Jackson shares her vision for Jordan Health

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Genae Shields Genae Shields

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Jordan Health recently announced the appointment of Natasha Jackson as its new president and CEO.

Jackson told the Democrat and Chronicle in an exclusive interview her vision is to ensure Jordan Health is seen by community residents “as that partner that they can count on and that they can begin to trust and count on throughout their lives as patients.”

For over100 years, Jordan Health has provided community-based health care for underserved and uninsured residents in Rochester and Canandaigua. Earlier this year, Jordan Health began the search for a new CEO.

Fredrick Johnson, a member of the organization’s board, had been appointed interim president and CEO following the departure of Dr. Linda Clark in March 2026.

Natasha Jackson, new Jordan Health leader, is Rochester native Natasha Jackson, new Jordan Health leader, is Rochester native

Jackson is a Rochester native and registered professional nurse with over 20 years of health-care experience from clinical care to workforce development.

Jackson has a master of science in nursing administration from SUNY Empire State University and has served in faculty roles at Bryant & Stratton College, Monroe Community College and Rochester General College of Health Careers. She has previously served on the Jordan Health Center Board from 2024 to 2026, and later worked with Jordan Health as a health care executive consultant, partnering with the interim CEO and leadership team.

“It has been a privilege to serve Jordan Health during this transition period, and I could not be more pleased to hand the reins to Natasha Jackson,” Johnson said in a statement. “Having worked alongside her on stabilization and operational priorities, I have seen



Jackson Jackson

her commitment to our workforce, her focus on results, and her genuine care for the community [rsthand. Our team is ready to support her, and I look forward to ensuring a smooth transition.”

The following is a question-and-answer interview with Jackson. Answers have been edited for clarity and length.

What was it like growing up in Rochester? What was it like growing up in Rochester?
Jackson: It was fun. My friends and I, we didn't come from an abundance of resources, but we came from an abundance of love. I think back to double Dutch, the Julep Lady, you know, we talked about that a bunch, a few of my friends and I, recently about how it was (to) walk...to the Julep Lady and get a julep. They were frozen Kool-Aid in cups, and you could go and purchase them for 10 cents.

Went to No. 9 school. My friends and I, our mothers would get us ready in the morning, and then they would walk us and then be outside to pick us up and walk us home. I have very, very, very fond memories of growing up on the northeast side in Rochester.

What inspired you to pursue a career in health care? What inspired you to pursue a career in health care?

Jackson: Unfortunately, my mother sustained a burn injury, and I learned early on how important it was to advocate and to ensure that she had the things that she need. This happened maybe my senior year in high school. My siblings and I, we were patients at Jordan, and our pediatrician was Dr. Denny.

Dr. Denny would see all four of us and we were busy, we were bad. I remember saying to Dr. Denny — I probably was about 12-13 years of age, and he would ask us, 'What do you wanna be when you grow up?' while he was doing his evaluation to keep us focused. I said, 'I wanna be a nurse, you know, when I grow up.'

And my mother and father, they had jobs, so they would take of the day and get us over to Jordan. My father worked, but the mothers really made sure that they worked together to keep those children safe. And there were times where all of us were patients of Jordan.

Families and the mothers stuck together to make sure the children got to their appointments, and that was huge for families back then who were limited (in) resources. They had to walk to Jordan. That was huge to be able to take your child to a place where they were going to receive quality care and get all of their needs met.

I remember that as well in my childhood growing up.

What does being a nurse and caretaker of people in the community mean to you? What does being a nurse and caretaker of people in the community mean to you?

Jackson: It's my everything. It's my life, it's my passion. I believe in advocacy and making sure everybody receives high-quality access to care no matter their payer source. So my role I take seriously in making sure, as a nurse, that people are educated, that they know about preventative care, that they're represented and their voice is heard.

Because so ogen I know coming from the northeast side of Rochester that those social challenges can get in the way and impact access to high-quality care. So making sure that, as a nurse, I'm also advocating with those community partners to ensure that we're providing those wraparound services to make sure that our people, especially in our marginalized communities, are receiving that quality care.

What are some things you notice the community needs most? What are some things you notice the community needs most?

Jackson: Dependable access to compassionate, high-quality care and the con[dence that someone is

listening. People should feel respected, understood and supported when they seek care, regardless of their payer source, income, insurance status and circumstances.

That means that we ensure that it's making it easier for them to get to their appointments and connecting physical and behavioral services, coordinating those things, helping people to navigate those social barriers, transportation, language — if English isn't their [rst primary language — and competing family responsibilities. As a Rochester native, I know the importance of building that

trust and it begins when you establish those relationships, listening and following through.

I want our community ... to see Jordan Health as that partner that they can count on and that they can begin to trust and count on throughout their lives as patients.

And are there any community partnerships that you look forward to as you transition into And are there any community partnerships that you look forward to as you transition into this new position? this new position?

Jackson: I look forward to strengthening ... our relationships with ... the local health systems, the accountable health partners, community organizations, our faith leaders and public health partners.

I also, see meaningful opportunities to work with our nursing schools and other educational institutions to build a strong pipeline for our health care professionals because we need nurses, we need doctors, we need nurse practitioners, PAs. Those excite me most. They will make a practical diference for our patients.

What are some things that you hope to prioritize within your [rst year as president and What are some things that you hope to prioritize within your [rst year as president and CEO?

Jackson: On building a strong foundation for Jordan Health. I've already started listening tours with our employees. It will be with our patients, our board, our community partners to understand what's working well, what we need, the opportunities, and areas that we need to improve.

Other priorities include strengthening our leadership team, supporting our workforce, improving access to the patient experience and establishing clear expectations for quality and performance. By the end of the [rst year, I want patients to experience greater reliability, for employees to feel supported, and (be) clear about the direction and the vision of Jordan. I want our community to see meaningful progress.

Financial sustainability will also be at the central focus. We've talked about ... partnering with our community and helping to expand upon this legacy and support that philanthropy to help ensure that Jordan is around for generations to come.

* Jackson will begin her role as CEO on Nov. 2.

— Genae Shields is the Business and Development Impact Reporter, working on mobility stories that focus on how people get around Rochester. As a member of the local community, Genae enjoys learning about emerging businesses and changes that impact Rochester's BIPOC and LGBTQ neighborhoods. She also enjoys supporting local artists and nonpro[t organizations. Reach out at gshields@usatodayco.com or on Instagram: @genaebriphoto for questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you for your continued support!

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