



Kristin Byrnes
Chief Executive Officer & President, Project Access

Kristin Byrnes is Chief Executive Officer and President of Project Access, one of the country's most successful providers of vital on-site health, education, and employment services, resulting in over 80 thriving affordable housing communities in 13 states nationwide and growing. She joined Project Access in 2004 to oversee, build, expand, and improve the service model, business development strategy, HR policies and procedures, in addition to developing and meticulously tracking the positive social impact to showcase the value of services offered. In 2010 she was elevated to CEO and President of Project Access.

Ms. Byrnes' nearly two decades at Project Access have been marked by growth and transformation. With an impressive history of visionary leadership, she has championed cultivating strong communities, making positive changes, and creating hopeful futures for at-risk families by using emerging best practices to drive expansion and improve the resident and client experience. These efforts have happened concurrently while Byrnes has led her team to developing and successfully implementing innovative business models leading to new revenue streams to achieve business objectives and sustain long-term growth.

Before becoming Project Access CEO, Ms. Byrnes successfully developed and implemented a unique service roadmap of new programs and service offerings for Project Access based on the needs of residents and prospects from a broad range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds living in affordable housing communities throughout California. Today Project Access teams and communities stretch to every compass point in the U.S. In 2022 it is estimated that Project Access will serve over 27,500 individuals across the country.

During the tenure of Ms. Byrnes, Project Access has seen the largest investment and expansion in its history, as she has skillfully grown the business into a national platform including year-after-year success achieving revenue targets exceeding \$10M revenue; growing the number of resource centers by over 600%; raising more than \$1.5 million in grants and donations; growing staff to more than 115; and increasing the operating budget to over \$10 million. In just 20 years, Project Access has become a leading provider of on-site health, education, and employment services to families, children, and seniors.

Throughout 2020 Byrnes' stewardship successfully navigated Project Access through its greatest time of peril and the enormous challenges posed by the COVID pandemic; pivoting the organization to directly address critical needs of residents including food security, distribution of additional resources, and targeted wellness calls. She and her team served more than 22,500 individuals and helped ensure families remained together, stabilized, and supported.

Throughout the years, Ms. Byrnes has led the organization from a struggling start-up to an established national leader in the field by enhancing the resident and employee experience while driving initiatives and programs related to education, healthcare, childcare, diversity, inclusion, skill-building, workforce training, and financial education. Ms. Byrnes has also earned the confidence of key stakeholders establishing positive relationships with developers and with individual and corporate donors and consistently honing the skills needed to lead a non-profit organization.

Prior to joining Project Access, Ms. Byrnes worked for nearly ten years at Mercy Behavioral Health in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She worked in residential programs, case management, advocacy, and within six months landed management and oversight of several programs, working with the severe and persistent mentally ill population.

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At Mercy Behavioral Health, Byrnes leadership focused on case management services, acting as an advocate for mental health services in the jail system and state hospitals; provided community support to ensure stabilization in the community and oversaw 24/7 Supportive Housing Residential programs that were designed to help mentally challenged persons maintain their own residence in the community (offering support and skill lessons needed to maximize their independence). She also had oversight of the case management dual diagnosis program where she was responsible for ensuring the persistent mentally ill were stabilized and had the necessary supports to live in their communities and was responsible for program evaluation as it related to consumer satisfaction in addition to working closely with the CEO to assist with succession planning.

Ms. Byrnes serves on the Board of Directors of Affordable Housing Access, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. AHA and its developer partners have constructed, or acquired and rehabilitated more than 20,000 affordable housing apartments and homes throughout the West. She is a fierce advocate for families, children, and seniors living in affordable housing communities and has spoken at developer roundtables, panels, and trade conferences about the value of resident services and its positive social impact.

In 2021 Byrnes was recognized as among the “Top Women in Business” by *Orange County Business Journal*. The *Orange County Register* named her one of the county’s “100 Most Influential People” (citing the year’s top game changers, innovators, and newsmakers in 2014). In 2013, she was named *OC Metro* magazine’s CEO Centerfold feature story and interview in a philanthropy-focused issue.

Additionally, Ms. Byrnes was honored at the Emerging Leaders Forum, The Fieldstone Foundation, Newport Beach, California, in 2006 and at the Emerging Leader Seminar, Bank of America Recipient of Neighborhood Builder Award for 2007/2008. She was honored with a Woman Making a Difference Award from State Senator Lou Correa (D-Orange County) and was recognized by Women Helping Women/Men2Work as one of its Women Helping Women Employment Leaders.

She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Services with a Minor in Gerontology from La Roche University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and a Master of Science Degree in Professional Leadership, Non-Profit Management from Carlow University, in Pittsburgh, PA.

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More information about Project Access is available at www.project-access.org.

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