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## Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Appoints Kenneth Mendez as CEO

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 25, 2018) – The [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America](#) (AAFA) has appointed Kenneth Mendez as its president and chief executive officer, effective January 22, 2018. Mendez has built his career in senior leadership by successfully growing the reach of numerous non-profit organizations, a track record he now brings to AAFA in support of its mission to improve the health and quality of life for more than 60 million Americans with asthma and allergies.

Mendez comes to AAFA from [AdvaMed](#), the world's largest medical technology association, where he served as senior executive vice president and chief revenue officer overseeing revenue, strategic planning and business opportunities for the organization since 2006.

“My experience in health care, working extensively in the medical device industry, gives me a perspective on how important innovation is in serving patients and addressing problems in our health care system,” said Mendez. “I have seen many promising technologies, especially in the start-up and digital health sectors, and my goal is to work collaboratively with these companies, researchers, regulators and payors to accelerate the development of solutions that benefit people with asthma and allergies.”

“We are pleased to welcome Kenny to AAFA and believe his unique background and extensive experience in business as well as non-profit sectors, make him very well-suited to lead our organization,” said Heidi Bayer, chairman of AAFA's board of directors. “Kenny is skilled in generating new growth opportunities for organizations and, along with his other strengths, we are particularly excited at the potential growth of AAFA under his new leadership.”

Mendez has a personal stake in improving the health of those with asthma and allergies, as he and two of his children manage both conditions. “My family and I are acutely aware of the issues facing people with asthma and allergic diseases,” said Mendez. “I'm proud to lead an organization with such a dedicated history of improving our collective health and quality of life.”

Prior to his time at AdvaMed, Mendez served as the executive vice president and chief operating officer for the fisheries conservation non-profit organization, Trout Unlimited (TU). His involvement with TU's extensive network of chapters led to an increase in membership from 57,000 to 157,000 during his tenure, broadly expanding the non-profit's reach and influence.

Mendez connects his successful history of growing the organizations he has led to the impact it has had on its members. “When an organization thrives, so does the community it serves,” said Mendez. “In joining AAFA, I'm committed to growing this organization by prioritizing the needs of our asthma and allergy community.”

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“On behalf of our board and AAFA leadership, I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our COO Lynda Mitchell for her willingness to serve as acting CEO for the past nine months,” said Bayer. “Her flexibility and dedication are emblematic of exactly who and what AAFA represents.”

Mendez earned a bachelor’s degree from Harvard College and an MBA from Columbia Business School. His previous experience includes finance and marketing, having worked for First Boston, Merrill Lynch and The Walt Disney Company. He serves as a director of the Potomac Conservancy and a director of the Trout and Salmon Foundation.

## About AAFA

Founded in 1953 and celebrating 65 years of service, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA provides practical information and community-based services through its digital communities and national network of local chapters and educational support groups. Through its [Kids With Food Allergies](#) division, AAFA offers the most extensive online support community for families raising children with food allergies. AAFA also helps consumers identify products suitable for those with asthma and allergies through the [asthma & allergy friendly® Certification Program](#). For more information, visit [aafa.org](http://aafa.org).

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