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For Immediate Release

PACTT Learning Center is pleased to announce the appointment of Alexander Brown as PACTT's new Executive Director, effective February 1, 2012.

As a student, Alexander Brown thought he would one day change the world with his paintings. More than 25 years later, he's learned to change the world, by helping one individual at a time, one day at a time.

Brown is the newly appointed Executive Director of the Chicago area's PACTT Learning Center.

PACTT Learning Center supports individuals with autism in becoming as independent as possible with the ability to integrate effectively into their homes and community. PACTT offers a school and transition program, group homes for children and young adults with autism, job training and placement for teenagers and young adults with autism, and consultation and training services to schools and districts. PACTT is nationally accredited by The Council on Quality and Leadership.

"I'm just in awe of the incredible connections between the staff and board members and parents and kids and young adults in the program," Brown said.

For more than 20 years, his primary interest has been supporting the work of organizations that serve people with disabilities and those who have been marginalized by society.

"At the end of the day, I may be very tired, but it's good thing to feel you've really accomplished something," Brown said.

Prior to joining the PACTT team, Brown served as the Clinical Director of Metropolitan Family Services, a nonprofit that provides a wide range of social services to over 40,000 people annually in Cook and DuPage Counties.

He has also managed community-based programs that serve older adults and hospital-based crisis intervention, outpatient therapy, and employee assistance programs. Brown also has served on the board of directors of several nonprofit organizations, including the National Association of Social Workers' Illinois Chapter, where he currently serves as Chicago District Chairperson. He teaches graduate-level courses in Human Resources and Nonprofit Marketing at DePaul University's School of Public Service.

Brown found his path to helping others while attending his final year of college at the Art Institute of Chicago, 25 years ago. Like many college seniors, the Boston native was contemplating life after graduation. It was at that time, he also began to think about the disparities of life in his Wicker Park neighborhood.

Brown holds a Master's Degree from Simmons College School of Social Work in Boston, a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the Lake Forest Graduate School of Management, and a Doctoral Degree in Clinical Social Work from the Institute for Clinical Social Work in Chicago.

As he familiarizes himself with PACTT, he brings expertise in strategic planning, public and private fund raising development, program development, board development, and governance, as well as a strong knowledge of finance.

PACTT's leadership team is excited to work with Brown, and knows the agency will benefit from his extensive experience in the social service field.

"We are fortunate to have Alexander on board," Terry Herbstritt, PACTT Development Director, said.

"His professionalism and understanding of the nonprofit realm certainly will enhance our ability to advocate for the people we serve – with everyone from government officials to private donors."

Fundraising for the PACTT School and Group Homes will be among Brown's top challenges as executive director. Helping keep Brown's focus are the clients, children and young adults with autism whose lives benefit from PACTT programs.

"Even though my work now doesn't have direct connection with the clients, through my work supporting staff, supporting volunteers, all goes straight to the clients," Brown said. "I feel grateful for the opportunity to be a part of their lives."

While his role as executive director falls outside of the classroom and residential environments, the husband and father of two said he's looking forward to opportunities to be with the participants as much as possible, which includes joining them on a field trip to a special theater workshop later this month.

For an opportunity to interview Brown contact: Terry Herbstritt, PACTT Development Director, at 708-386-3904, therbstritt@pactt.org

More information on PACTT can be found at www.pactt.org

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