

Raquel Hatter  
Bio



Dr. Hatter has dedicated more than 25 years of her life to serving adults, children, and families. Her work has focused on resilient individuals and families living in vulnerable circumstances and facing various challenges. Throughout her journey she has served in many roles including frontline practitioner, therapist, outreach worker, program director, VP/Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer. In 2011 she was appointed as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services by Governor Haslam. DHS serves more than 2 million Tennesseans, has a budget of 3 billion and more than 4,000 staff.

She is actively engaged on a national level on efforts focused on transforming the Human Service Sector. She is a fellow in the Ascend at the Aspen Institute and serves as president of the American Public Human Service Association. She has done this work across systems including Juvenile Justice, Child Welfare, Mental Health, and Human Services. She has done extensive work in supporting positive and effective public-private partnerships on behalf of adults, children, and families at a state and national level. Some of this work has included chairing statewide committees focused on these efforts, partnering with state government to revise licensing and contractual rules, and partnering with state government to revise mental health rules concerning youth with mental illness.

As a clinician her areas of specialty include: mental health, trauma, crisis intervention, sexual abuse, attachment issues, emotional impairment, family systems, families impacted by abuse, neglect, and poverty. As an administrator and executive, her areas of focus include: transformational organizational change, fiscal stewardship, strategic management, staff development, accountability, positive outcomes, cultural sensitivity, public policy, and continuous learning.

She has played an integral role in the Systems of Care efforts across the nation in partnership with families, youth, SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), public and private providers, and other key stakeholders. She has co-presented on panels with several families and youth from across the country that have interfaced with various systems of care. The focus of this work has been on creating real partnerships with families and youth served by public and private providers with emphasis on true empowerment, respect, cultural and linguistic competence, and results.

Dr. Hatter is a frequent presenter at state, national, and international conferences. In 2004, 2005, and 2011 she spent time doing work focused on indigenous economically disadvantaged communities in the Northern Territory of Australia and throughout. Her emphasis with this work has been on empowering families through supporting Australian organizations in their efforts with the Parliament, workforce development, education, and partnership with families. She has also served as an adjunct instructor for the University of Michigan, Nashville State, and Tennessee State University. Dr. Hatter is also very involved in advocacy for children, youth, and families on a state and national level. She has

published articles in international journals on Transformational Organizational Change and Family Resilience.

She has served on countless boards, committees, and task forces focused on human services. Dr. Hatter has received various awards and honors including: Middle Tennessee Advocate of the Year Award from the Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare (TCSW); Advocate of the Year Award from the Women's Business Council; and Pan Hellenic Outstanding Business Leader Award. The Dr. Raquel Hatter Scholarship Fund was established in honor of her service to children and youth in Michigan. In addition, she received a letter of recognition from the Governor of Michigan and a Mayoral Proclamation for her service to children and families. Most recently she received the Spirit of Crazy Horse Award from Reclaiming Youth International.

Educationally, Dr. Hatter holds a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Community Psychology from the University of Michigan, a Masters in Social Work from Eastern Michigan University and a Doctorate of Education in Child, Youth, and Family Studies with a specialization in Management of Programs from Nova Southeastern University.

Personally, Dr. Hatter is a wife and mother. She has overcome life challenges including thyroid cancer as a teen, child sexual abuse and intimate partner violence. She is also a woman of faith and currently serves in a support and leadership role in the ministry. She is a Head Start graduate. She has a long history of volunteering in human and social services agencies such as Big Brothers- Big Sisters and YWCA.

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