

Media Release

United Way Simcoe Muskoka
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2022

United Way Simcoe Muskoka's Chief Executive & Philanthropy Officer Announces Plans to Retire

Midhurst, ON, March 25, 2022 – After eleven years with United Way Simcoe Muskoka (UWSM), Dale Biddell has announced her retirement from her role as Chief Executive & Philanthropy Officer, effective March 31, 2022.

"I want to thank Dale for the vision and leadership she has provided to our community and the United Way," said David Mayers, Board Chair. "Since becoming CEO in 2014, Dale has focused on revitalizing and modernizing the organization through the establishment of a social enterprise call centre, federal contracts administration and shifting to a year-round fundraising model. These multiple revenue sources have allowed the organization to expand its investments across our communities."

Dale began her journey with the United Way South Georgian Bay and worked with the Board and Executive at United Way Greater Simcoe County through the union of the two organizations in 2013. After becoming CEO, she also oversaw the inclusion of the District of Muskoka.

In a time that has been unprecedented, under Dale's leadership the organization has seen considerable progress. They have distributed added funding through government programs including more than \$1.7 million in COVID relief through the Emergency Community Support Fund, have grown the front-line service administering the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP), and touched the lives of residents through the initiation of the Urgent Needs Fund, many of whom would not have received support otherwise.

Under a new community investment strategy, six regional projects supported by donor contributions are now operating to address issues defined by poverty through the collaborative work of local organizations. Four initiatives supported by earned revenue from UWSM have now become permanent: walk-in mental health services, a youth centre, a mobile mental health response unit, and a medical assistive device exchange. Dale also championed a Women United chapter that focuses on the needs of women and their children.

She helped propel the organization forward by adopting new technologies that would enhance the internal operating capability and improve communication with the public through digital platforms.

"I have had the extraordinary opportunity of collaborating with members of our Board that recognized the value in reshaping our organization for the time we live in and what's ahead," said Dale. "While change has been a constant during the past seven years, I could not have asked more of the members of our staff team whose efforts have transformed the way that we work. But nothing happens without the support of our generous donors and partners, many of whom have grown their support for UWSM during this time. Regardless of the type of contribution, whether it is volunteering, collaborating, donating, or sharing expertise, UWSM is an organization that thrives on being part of the community, for the benefit of community."

With the help of Palmer and Associates, UWSM initiated a national search to identify a new Chief Executive & Philanthropy Officer. The announcement of the individual that will lead the organization forward will be made in the coming weeks.

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About United Way Simcoe Muskoka

Poverty touches most aspects of a person's life from food, shelter, and employment, to mental and physical well-being. United Way Simcoe Muskoka seeks to improve lives and build communities by leveraging collective resources and mobilizing collective action to achieve the greatest impact. Through services such as the Urgent Needs Fund and by funding critical services throughout our communities, United Way Simcoe Muskoka is ensuring that residents have the resources and assistance they need to unlock their full potential.

A headshot of Dale can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WDObnNPKjchpwdMBsleJbeztForLOc1j?usp=sharing>

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