

After more than 20 years of being the face of the Watertown Area Community Foundation, Executive Director Jan DeBerg will be starting a new chapter. DeBerg and her colleague Julianne Endres, who started as her assistant 14 years ago, will both be retiring from the Foundation February 28, 2023.

DeBerg ran the Foundation single-handedly from 2000 to 2008 and is widely known for not only her work with the Foundation specifically, but also for her leadership in the community, including community visioning processes like H2O-20, and mentoring many of the area's nonprofits.

"It has been so fulfilling to be a part of the Foundation's good works and growth these past 22 years," DeBerg said. "I'm thankful for the Foundation, this community and our donors every day."

DeBerg received her certificate of Fund-Raising Management in 2009. She is a past board member of several local and state organizations. She has worked with many donors over the years to fulfill their charitable goals and in doing so, has been an integral part of the Foundation's growth to more than \$30 million in assets. She was instrumental in establishing many of the Foundation's programs, including Women & Giving, the Christmas Tree Fundraiser for nonprofits and the Youth Council.

DeBerg's leadership has extended far past the Watertown area and South Dakota. Her passion for philanthropy and commitment to high professional and ethical standards has landed her national recognition and a seat on the CF Leads National Standards Assessment Review Committee, which reviews the assessment process for community foundation accreditation standards.

Endres, who has a journalism and clerical background, went from assistant to a marketing/donor services role at the Foundation in 2014. She loves to tell the Foundation's story, whether from the donor's or grant recipient's view, and helped establish the Giving Back 365 program at the Foundation which continues to grow and make a difference in our area.

"My work at the Foundation and with Jan, certainly was never a job," Endres said. "It's been a joy to share what the Foundation is all about and to meet so many inspirational, giving and kind people along the way. The truth is there's no way I can count the number of times I've gotten teary eyed writing a story during my time at the Foundation. There are so many stories, both about grantees and our donors, that have put a lump in my throat and still have a special place in my heart."

DeBerg and Endres knew the time was right for stepping down from their positions when they got to know two other professionals whose passions for the Watertown area were similar to their own. "While we will never be strangers to the Watertown Area Community Foundation, it's easy to hand the leadership reins to these two individuals because we know they will bring the Foundation to even greater heights," said DeBerg.

Cammie Mengwasser, WACF Development Director, will become the new Executive Director and Kristen Henderson, WACF board member since 2018, will become the Communications Director effective March 1.

"We wish Jan and Julianne the very best. There is no doubt we will miss them and all they brought to the Foundation," Danielsén said on behalf of the Board. "However, we know, also without a doubt, that the Foundation's future is in good hands."

After exchanging a glance with DeBerg, Endres stated with teary eyes, "the Foundation isn't about donations and grants. It's about people helping people. Jan and I have talked about that reality many times and we are so thankful that we have had the opportunity to be a part of it."