

In anticipation of WE Charity's 25th anniversary, the organization determined in the fall of 2019 to launch a strategic review of the Board of Directors to help plan for the organization's future. The Canadian WE Charity Board of Directors and US WE Charity Board of Directors govern each two separate legal entities; however, both boards meet together in meetings and engage in collective conversations and we refer to it as the North American Board of Directors.

A number of Board members had served for durations of more than five and even ten years. The goal of that process was to address renewal, sharpen the focus on future priorities and address issues such as diversity, inclusion and range of competencies all while continuing to provide strong oversight and guidance to the organization.

External advisors and the existing board members were engaged to facilitate the process, develop the skills matrix, and identify potential board candidates. The original timetable of Summer 2020 as a transition date was moved earlier in order to best position the organization to respond to a predicted multi-year global pandemic.

Among the key results of the strategic review:

- Confirmation of term limits established in 2017 that would restrict board members to no more than two consecutive terms of two years
- The adoption of a clearer board mandate
- Creating space for new ideas and a wider skills matrix
- Maintaining a measure of continuity even through a period of transformation
- Moving to a slightly smaller board composition of a total of 9 positions, down from the original 12, between the USA and Canadian entities.
- An emphasis on diversity

With these objectives in mind, a number of Board positions were refreshed. In total, six of nine new Board positions were filled with newcomers, including the appointment of a new Chair. As well, a majority of Board spots are now filled by persons of colour, including the US Chair.

Any transformation of this kind naturally invites some challenge. Overall, we believe the renewal process has strengthened the two Boards and will help to guide the organization moving forward.

Greg Rogers, Chair, WE Charity (Canada)

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