

March 18, 2026

To my dearest friends and most valued colleagues:

Yesterday afternoon, I informed United Way of Missoula County's board of directors and my wonderful staff colleagues that I'll be leaving United Way at the end of the year. After 20 years as CEO, this choice feels right for me.

I have loved this job – what a joy and privilege to have had the opportunity to serve Missoula and western Montana in this capacity for so long! My heart is full of gratitude for the legions of supporters who have made United Way's work possible for 95 years, and to all of you for your belief in our mission, and your support for United Way (and me!). I'm very proud of our work; of our transition from a "pass-through" United Way to a true model of collective impact, recognized as such by United Way Worldwide; of how we bring together so many diverse partners and stakeholders to build a better community in our focus areas of youth opportunity, financial stability, health, and community resilience. That community-building, relationship-centered approach is my north star, one I've been dedicated to following throughout my 45-year career in nonprofit leadership, and one that I will continue to follow in my future endeavors. (I'm not done yet!)

Over the next several months, our exceptional board will form a search committee, recruit and screen candidates, and hire my successor. If for some reason the board has not identified and hired a new CEO to start by January 1, our talented management team (led by Deputy Director Gabe Sather-Olson; with Director of Impact Eric Legvold and Senior Director of Development Erin Wilkins) will "run the show" until a new CEO is in place. United Way will be in good hands, and I expect this to be a seamless transition.

My grateful heart is full. Thank you all for your support and friendship. I am one lucky CEO.

With appreciation and affection,

Susan Hay Patrick

**PS! Please mark your calendars for the evening of Saturday, October 24, when we will celebrate United Way's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday at a gala event – and send me on my way!**