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Denise Mayotte Retires as Executive Director of Sheltering Arms Foundation

MINNEAPOLIS, April 26, 2023 — Denise Mayotte, executive director of the Sheltering Arms Foundation, will retire on June 30 after 20 years of guiding the growth and impact of this foundation. The new executive director will be announced shortly and will take the helm on July 1.

“This year, as I approach my 20th anniversary with Sheltering Arms and as the foundation celebrates its 40th anniversary, I decided the time had come for me to retire and pass the baton to give someone else the dream opportunity to lead this small but mighty foundation,” said Denise Mayotte. “I came to Sheltering Arms as a community organizer at heart, focusing on creating relationships and partnerships so that many of us together could magnify our impact on behalf of Minnesota’s children.

“I’ve had the honor of working with the foundation to build its advocacy work, establishing events like the early childhood legislative briefing and our own internal grantee convening, and helping grantees connect with policy efforts. This year at the legislature we are looking at possible enormous gains in early childhood and out-of-school-time funding – it could be amazing for families and children, and I feel like I am going out on a high note.

“We are currently wrapping up our 2023 grant round,” continued Mayotte, “and this is the first time since the pandemic that we have been able to be in-person in community spaces with the people doing the work all across Minnesota. I am very proud that together, my colleague Diane Grossman and I figured out how to support our grantees during the past 3 years of difficult times.

“This has been an incredibly fulfilling role for me, and I will take my passions for children, anti-racism, social justice, and the arts forward to keep working for a better and more just world for the future of Minnesota’s kids and my own grandkids. I am excited to see what comes next!”

“It is with deep gratitude that we reflect on Denise’s work with the Foundation,” said board president Cecily Cutshall. “Over two decades, she has been a part of creating long-lasting durable coalitions within Minnesota, bringing strength to the growing focus on advocacy work on behalf of our state’s children. Throughout her tenure, she has led with a focus on building relationships; this has placed Sheltering Arms in the heart of the grant-making community.”

Prior to her position at Sheltering Arms, Mayotte was at the McKnight Foundation as a program officer in the arts. Before that, she was general manager of KFAI community radio in Minneapolis, and executive director of the Neighborhood Resource Center also in Minneapolis. Mayotte earned her B.A. in art history from the University of Minnesota and completed graduate

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studies at the U of MN in American Studies with a focus on women and Native American studies.

After retiring from Sheltering Arms, Mayotte plans to continue as a children's advocate and continue her volunteer work serving on the boards of Voqal, a social justice funder, and of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, an anti-racism training institute. She is looking forward to traveling, improving her conversational Spanish, and spending more time with her family and community.

The Sheltering Arms Inclusion Statement

The Sheltering Arms Foundation celebrates the diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, class, religion and geographic location of the children and families it serves across Minnesota. We seek to create equal access to resources in order to build a just society in which all children may reach their full potential.

About the Sheltering Arms Foundation

The mission of the Sheltering Arms Foundation is to invest in the lives of children and help them reach their full potential. Based in Minneapolis, the foundation funds nonprofit organizations and supports policies that benefit Minnesota children and their families who have the least access to resources. Since its inception as a grantmaking foundation in 1983, the foundation has provided more than 1,390 grants totaling just over \$17.25 million. The next deadline for grant applications is in January 2024. For information about submitting a grant request, volunteering, or donating to the foundation, visit <https://sheltering-arms.org/> or call 612-871-9210 (toll-free: 866-871-9210).

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