



STARR COMMONWEALTH PRESIDENT DR. MARTIN MITCHELL ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT AFTER 45 YEARS OF SERVICE, SUCCESSOR TO BE NAMED IN THE SPRING

Dr. Martin Mitchell has announced that he will retire at the end of 2015 after 45 years of service as a human service industry leader at Starr Commonwealth, including the last 11 years as president and CEO.

During his tenure, Dr. Mitchell has led the expansion of the organization into significant new areas of service, including the training of professionals across the world through the Starr Global Learning Network, behavioral health programs that serve thousands of families every year in Michigan, and education through Starr's record breaking launch into charter schools.

In the last year, Mitchell and his executive team have taken Starr through a historic transition, with the organization's longstanding residential program in Albion now being managed by Sequel Youth and Family Services, a national human service agency. The partnership aims to expand the reach of Starr's residential services, with Sequel bringing young people from across the country to the campus.

With a new operating model in place at Starr's Albion campus, and through its diverse range of other programs, the organization aims to significantly expand the number of children and families it serves. The goal is to increase those served directly from around 3000 in the last year to over 8000 per year by 2019, as well as expanding Starr's training programs to reach more than 20,000 professionals a year from the current 17,000.

Announcing his retirement plan, Dr. Mitchell said: "It has been an honor to serve children and families with Starr for 45 years. It is a special thing to know that the organization you work for is improving the lives of young people and families every day. We exist to provide support to those who need it most, and we're now able to reach more families and communities than ever before."

"My wife, Shirlee, and I are so grateful to have served at Starr for so many years. Through helping thousands of children and watching them transform into caring, responsible adults, our family has personally received far more than it could ever give. It has truly been the highest honor to be a part of the strength-based, helping process pioneered at Starr."

"I have had the honor to witness the strengths of thousands of young people blossom by simply giving them the opportunity to access their own resilience and to grow. That's what Starr does, and to be a part of an organization that has a great board, great staff and great donors serving wonderful children, families and communities has been a privilege which words cannot describe," he added.

Starr's chairman, Hon. John Hallacy, said: "Starr's board of trustees has known of Dr. Mitchell's intention to retire at 65 for some time, and is united in its deep respect for the remarkable contribution he has

made to the cause of improving the lives of young people, families and communities. In addition to demonstrating great leadership at an organizational level, Dr. Mitchell has long been recognized nationally for his commitment to standing up for the interests of society's most vulnerable young people. We are truly thankful for his impact on the expansion of Starr into communities around the world."

On the succession plan, Hon. John Hallacy added: "We are conducting a national search to identify the very best candidate to succeed Dr. Mitchell and the board is committed to appointing an individual who cannot only expand the reach of Starr's services but who lives and breathes the values that have defined Starr for over a century. We expect to make an announcement on Starr's new leader in April."

Over the course of Dr. Mitchell's 45 years at Starr, the organization has transformed from a single service agency to being a respected leader in several service areas, including professional training, community-based youth services, managed care, foster care, behavioral health, and education, in addition to its longstanding residential program. Since becoming president and CEO in 2004, Dr. Mitchell has led some of Starr's most significant program launches.

In 2009, Starr launched its Global Learning Network, composed of Reclaiming Youth International, the National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children and Glasswing. To date, these programs have reached professionals in over 60 countries with training in positive youth development, trauma-informed practice and racial healing. These programs reach over 17,000 professionals each year currently and are expected to exceed 20,000 within the next five years.

In 2012, Starr opened its first charter school on the east side of Detroit with 525 students K-5, a record breaking launch for a school authorized by Central Michigan University. Starr Detroit Academy now serves over 850 students K-7, making it one of Michigan's largest and fastest growing elementary schools. Additional academies are set to open in the next few years.

In community based services, Starr has become one of the Michigan's largest providers of in-home behavioral health services. Having acquired Psychsystems, a behavioral health agency, in 2013, Starr now provides in-home services across the state, including a significant program in Battle Creek that serves hundreds of families each year.

Dr. Mitchell has co-authored numerous publications, including a book entitled *Deep Brain Learning: Pathways to Potential with Challenging Youth*, and is a senior editor for the international journal *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, with Dr. Larry Brendtro, Starr's second president, and Dr. Nicholas Long.

In 2013, Dr. Mitchell received the Samuel Gerson Nordlinger Child Welfare Leadership Award, a national honor from the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities recognizing his exceptional contributions to the advancement of quality services for children and families.

A wide range of leaders, as well as Dr. Mitchell's colleagues, have paid tribute to his achievements at Starr, and in the human service sectors as a whole:

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow said: “Dr. Mitchell has been a respected advocate for Michigan children and families, dedicating nearly 50 years to Starr Commonwealth's mission to help every child succeed. He will be greatly missed, and I wish him well as he begins this exciting new chapter in his life.”

Joe Stewart, former Kellogg Co. executive and former chair of the Kellogg Foundation, said: "Through his deep commitment to Mr. Floyd Starr's vision and values, as set forth in Starr's mission, Dr. Mitchell has demonstrated why Starr Commonwealth has continued to play a vital role in pursuit of the 'oneness of humankind' - the principle of equality and respect for all members of our human family. Through Marty's leadership, he has earned the respect of human service professionals across the nation."

Former Member of Congress, Mark Schauer, said: “As a nonprofit director serving young children and later as legislator and member of Congress, I've been honored to partner with Marty in the service of children and families for nearly 30 years. Among his own Starr team or with local, state, or national leaders, Marty always demonstrated grace and humility in responding to change and pioneering new ways to help children reach their full potential.

I have never met a person more rooted in values and core principles than Marty Mitchell. For 45 years, Marty made Floyd Starr's words live. He has set a high standard and a clear path for Starr's future, one that will reach thousands of children around the globe during Starr's second century.”

Susan Dreyfus, president and CEO of the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, said: “The National Alliance for Strong Families and Communities is a more focused organization with a stronger network because of the strategic influence of Marty Mitchell. Marty has served in many roles over the years, including on our Board of Directors and recently on our first CEO Council of Advisors. He always reminds us that our power is our network and our calling is to ultimately improve the lives of children and families and strengthen their communities through the excellence and influence of our great network.”