

MARINSCOPE

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With plans for future taking root, Whistlestop's CEO looks to retire

Marinscope

After more than a decade of helping to guide key services for seniors, Whistlestop CEO Joe O'Hehir has announced his plans for his own retirement.

"Whistlestop's long-term stability and success, coupled with strong forward momentum in its growth opportunities, make this the right time for me to transition from the organization and pursue a range of personal interests," said O'Hehir, who is scheduled to retire on Feb. 26, 2021 after serving 12 years as Whistlestop CEO.

"It's the vision and dedication of our board, the compassion and devotion of our wonderful staff and volunteers, the outstanding generosity from our donors, and the strong collaboration with our partner community-based organizations that have helped make Whistlestop what it is today. I've loved every minute of my role and will always be a proud member of the Whistlestop family. I am humbled to have had the opportunity to serve."

The San Rafael-based nonprofit's mission is to promote independence, well-being and quality of life for older adults and people living with disabilities.

Whistlestop provides special needs transportation services through both the Golden Gate Regional Center and Marin Access, a partnership of Whistlestop, Marin Transit and Golden Gate Transit. Whistlestop provides medical and grocery transportation through its CarePool program and operates Marin's Meals on Wheels and Whistlestop Nourish programs, serving meals to over 315 homebound older adults and people with chronic illness each week in the Marin community.

Whistlestop also helps strengthen community bonds with seniors through special programs.

During holidays, elementary students create cards for seniors. Whistlestop's Active Aging Center offers



Whistlestop CEO Joe O'Hehir

nourishing meals and education and exercise classes.

During O'Hehir's tenure, Whistlestop has grown into a leading \$12 million nonprofit organization serving over 14,000 older adults and individuals with disabilities or chronic health conditions, and with a workforce of 400 employees and volunteers serving Marin, San Francisco, and Sonoma counties.

In March of this year, Whistlestop and its nonprofit partner Eden Housing received entitlement approvals to begin building the new state of the art Healthy Aging Campus. The campus will include 67 units of 100 percent affordable senior housing along with a new Healthy Aging and Integrated Care Center in downtown San Rafael. The new campus is scheduled to open in 2022.

"On behalf of the entire Whistlestop board, I want to express our gratitude for Joe's strong leadership, forward-thinking vision, and the value-based programs and services he has created and led with his team," said Denis Ryan, Whistlestop's Board of Directors president. "The impact of Joe's

many years of service has had a positive effect on Marin County's vulnerable older adult population."

O'Hehir, who joined Whistlestop in 2008, has also served on the governing board of the In-home Supportive Services Public Authority of Marin for the past 16 years. He received the Center for Nonprofit Leadership's "Heart of Marin" award for excellence in board leadership in 2006.

Dr. Tom Peters, President & CEO of Marin Community Foundation, weighed in: "Marin County has been one very lucky community in having Joe O'Hehir as a calm yet forceful voice for developing services to older adults and people with chronic challenges. Joe has shared with all of us the twin themes that are so apparent in his work: how to reach out to those most in need, and how to do so with utmost humanity, care and skill. Add to that his leadership style of creativity, encouragement and perseverance, and it's clear, Marin is a markedly better and stronger community because of Joe O'Hehir."