



CRS COMMUNITY
RESOURCE
SERVICES

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DIRECTOR LEAVES COMMUNITY RESOURCE SERVICES

By **KAREN UTHE-SEMANCIK, The Press**

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Community Resource Services, whose mission is to diminish the effects of poverty in Avon and Avon Lake, is looking for a new leader. Longtime executive director Susan Poole has left the nonprofit to accept a position with the Community Foundation of Lorain County, serving as the foundation's development officer.

Poole, who led CRS for the last eight years, said it's hard to pinpoint one or two things she's most proud of during her tenure at the responsive, community organization, but she leans toward some of the administrative upgrades she's put into place, including a content data management system.

She's also proud of the many new relationships that have been built during her tenure, including working with outside organizations and their fundraising events such as Hooks for Hunger and Empty Bowls by the Lake.

During Poole's tenure, CRS was awarded new grants, and its own fundraising efforts have increased dramatically, she said.

"All of these successes combined have helped us take steps in securing our future," Poole said.

For 30 years, CRS has assisted Avon and Avon Lake families, and Poole said helping community members through a rough patch never gets old.

"There's no better validation than getting a note from a client that says thanks for keeping the lights on this winter or running into someone at the store that says you helped me a few years ago," Poole said. "Those little stories make it worthwhile...helping people through tough times in my own little way."

One of those notes of gratitude is from "Angela," whose identity is withheld to protect her privacy.

"The help and generosity that Susan and CRS have showed my family has been nothing short of a blessing," Angela said. "We have been hit with multiple, unfortunate situations and when all the doors closed, she opened theirs."



Longtime Community Resource Services Executive Director Susan Poole - back row, second from right - says one of her favorite parts of the job was showing students around the nonprofit's food pantry, sharing the importance of helping others. Below: Susan Poole doing outreach for CRS.



Besides clients, Poole's team of five part-time staffers and more than 200 volunteers will also miss her warm ways.

"Susan is so much more than a great leader who inspired the staff to do our best work," said Pam Ohradzansky, client services & special events coordinator, who will serve as interim director until Poole's successor is named. "She was incredibly supportive and led us with integrity, honesty and passion."

John Alten, president of the CRS board of directors, agrees.

"Susan's steady leadership and good cheer have kept CRS in good hands for eight years," said Alten. "She has been both a steward of and an advocate for the mission of CRS. She will be sorely missed."

Poole is no stranger to the Community Foundation of Lorain County. The foundation provides CRS with a senior programming grant, Charity Ball sponsorship and professional development, and maintains CRS' endowment.

"I've worked collaboratively with them for several years," Poole said. "I've admired their work for so long and felt supported by them for so long."

In her new role, Poole will be responsible for the foundation's business development activities, including donor relations and increasing the foundation's endowment. She started her new job this week.

Cindy Andrews, president and CEO of the Community Foundation of Lorain County, said Poole brings dedication, compassion and community knowledge to her new role.

"She will be able to leverage her experiences of Avon and Avon Lake to work with our Lorain County community and matching people who care with causes that matter," Andrews said. "Susan is very familiar with the nonprofit world and the collaborative opportunities across our Lorain County community. We are delighted she is joining our team of dedicated staff and professionals."

The Avon Lake resident hopes to continue to support CRS by serving on a committee once she gets settled in at her new role with the foundation.

"I can't imagine ever not being a part of CRS," Poole said. "The kindest people work there, from the staff to the board and the volunteers. I'm thrilled the communities (Avon and Avon Lake) have trusted me to lead this organization."

Community Resource Services provides basic needs assistance to residents of Avon and Avon Lake through a variety of ongoing programs, including an on-site food pantry and emergency financial assistance to cover expenses like rent, utilities, medical costs, car repairs and school supplies.

Alten said CRS is starting the search process for a new director, and interested individuals can find out more by visiting aalcrs.org or emailing board@aalcrs.org.

Contact this reporter at kusemancik@2presspapers.com or 440-871-5797.

Job Opening Executive Director, Community Resource Services

Interested candidates should send a letter of interest and resume to the attention of Board of Directors at CRS, 33479 Lake Road - Suite C, Avon Lake, OH 44012 or email to board@aalcrs.org. Go to the News/Announcement tab at www.aalcrs.org for a detailed job description.

Avon/Avon Lake Community Resource Services

Our Mission: Community Resource Services is a responsive, community-based organization whose mission is to diminish the effects of poverty in Avon and Avon Lake. We provide basic needs assistance and individualized

resource and referral services in a compassionate and confidential manner.

[CRS Website](#)