

Carole Peters BIO

Born and raised in Northern Illinois, Carole Peters has a heart for serving her community. Her passion is connecting people to resources to positively impact their lives. After graduating from college, Carole's entrepreneurial spirit led her to a real estate career where she developed a personal brand as "The Singing Realtor". During this time, Carole accepted the invitation to join the Marengo Area Schools Education Foundation Board of Directors where her fundraising talents were put to good use. Carole's creativity and innovation helped develop the inaugural "Funding the Future" event that raised thousands of dollars for the newly formed endowment fund. This inspirational volunteer experience caused her to realize that service above self can make a lasting impact on the community. Later, Carole moved to northern Wisconsin where she owned a bar, restaurant and resort. After two successful business ventures, she found her way into banking, which provided her opportunities to develop her skills in marketing, management and understanding financials. In 2010, while obtaining her MBA at Aurora University, Carole took a chance on a new career adventure transitioning into higher education where she served adult learners. Her strategic vision, genuine approach to leading teams, and drive for results caused a ripple effect on the enrollment growth, which inspired her to want to do something bigger to impact even more people. In February 2017, Carole was prepared for the next leadership opportunity, which allowed to accept the CEO and President role serving her local United Way.

Serving the United Way of Greater McHenry County provided Carole so many opportunities to unite people and resources to build a stronger community. Under her leadership, Carole and her team raised more than \$7.5M for McHenry County, which was invested in health and human service programs that touched countless local residents. Carole was invited to serve on the United Way of Illinois State Association Board of Directors in 2017 and is now wrapping up a three-year term on the UW Illinois Executive Committee as outgoing chair. Through her volunteer work with UW Illinois, Carole has helped develop a CEO onboarding program and educational series to support local United Way's leaders and staff across the state. Over the past several years, Carole also served as guest faculty at the United Way Great Rivers conference where she enjoyed meeting countless peers across the region. Carole retired from the United Way of Greater McHenry County in July 2021.

Carole is grateful to her parents for instilling in her at a young age a strong work ethic, passion for giving back and being kind to others. Carole holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech and Theater with a minor in Psychology from Concordia University in River Forest, IL and a Master of Business Administration from Aurora University in Aurora, IL.

Forward thinking, with a passion for serving the rich network of experienced experts who make up our members, Carole is thrilled to serve as the new President and CEO of United Way NEXT.

