

WisconSibs to Celebrate 25 Years and a Leadership Change

This August begins the 25th year for WisconSibs, Inc. As we look forward to celebrating this milestone, it's only natural to think about how we started, how far we've come, and how we are planning for the future.

Our work started when a handful of volunteers across the Fox Valley connected around a critical, yet overlooked need: providing support to children who were siblings of kids with disabilities. One of those volunteers was Harriet Redman. She and others began offering **Sibshops®**—workshops for children ages 6-12 designed by Don Meyer of the Sibling Support Project.

Under Harriet's leadership, the Fox Valley Sibling Support Network was chartered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit on July 28, 1998. As we know today, it was the first of its kind in the United States. In 2014 we renamed the organization WisconSibs, Inc to reflect our broader statewide impact. We've now grown into a nationally recognized model for supporting siblings of people with disabilities throughout their life-long Sib journey.

Over the years, Harriet has pioneered the development of many unique programs and services for siblings, including:



- **SibDays of Summer** for children/teens
- **Sib Camps** in a collaboration with the Team Leadership Center

- **Teen Sib Leadership Awards and training**
- **Journey Forward Future planning**
- Variety of social and fundraising events like **Celebrate Sisterhood**, **Big Fling Disc Golf**, and casino nights.
- **Sibling's Choice Awards** honoring caregivers
- **Adult Sib Conferences, Sib Suppers, and Sib advisors**
- **Sibling Leadership training**
- **Consulting, Coaching, and Collaborating**
- **Sib Issue Presentations and Workshops**
- **Sibs Are My Peeps** photo challenge to celebrate National Siblings Day
- **Sibling Summer Internships** for college-age Sibs
- **Sibsacks** for siblings ages 3-5



Sib Camp 2006 (Youngest Sibs now 24 yrs old)

The goal? To offer Sibs effective programs supporting their needs throughout each stage of their lives. Just as the first participants have moved well into the adult stages, the organization has matured into an important resource, and Harriet, too, is ready for her next life stage.

A leadership change

As the Board of Directors started its strategic planning in 2020 to develop the next stage of WisconSibs, Inc., Harriet announced



Harriet Redman received the Don Meyer award honoring her deep commitment to supporting siblings of people with disabilities and her innovative sibling programs and solutions. The award itself was created by artists with developmental disabilities and presented at the national Sibling Leadership Network conference this past summer.

that it was time to find the next leader for the organization.

She plans to retire as Executive Director in August, but will continue in an emeritus role to help orient a new director and to cheer on WisconSibs as a loyal supporter to help it reach its full potential.

"I really think of this transition as a celebration of all that has been done, and of all that will come next. The organization has never been stronger and is ready for someone to take it to the next level. I'm looking forward to being helpful in whatever way I can," says Harriet.

What's Next?

The WisconSibs Board of Directors has been hard at work developing a succession plan and is prepared to help the organization evolve and transition with a new Executive Director.

A few important notes about the transition:

Programming will continue for summer and fall programs. Watch the WisconSibs website, Facebook page, and other announcements.

The Board of Directors will provide consistency and stability. Our Board members have committed to their ongoing terms. In other words, they remain committed to governing the organization into the future.

Harriet has promised to assist with the transition. She wants her legacy to thrive and grow for years beyond her leadership.

Harriet will continue to advocate with and for siblings, both locally and as part of the national *Sibling Leadership Network* she helped establish in 2007.



SibDays of Summer 2021

Watch for opportunities to join us in celebrating our 25th anniversary and all that Harriet has contributed to our success and growth.

In the meantime, pass along the news that we’re looking for our next Executive Director to lead us into the future.

- WisconSibs Board of Directors
- Daniel Dibble, *President* (2018-2024)
 - Chris Howard, *Vice President* (2019-2024)
 - Karie Mindock, *Secretary* (2016-2022)
 - John Manke, *Treasurer* (2020-2026)
 - Sarah Huston (2021-2027)
 - Sean Drury (2021-2027)
 - Jeremy Gundlach (2021-2027)
 - Jean Haznar (2021-2027)
 - Melissa Jacobs (2022-2028)

- WisconSibs Staff
- Harriet Redman, *Executive Director*
 - Stephenie Mlodzik, *Fund Development Coord*
 - Tessa Lewis, *Database Manager*
 - Angela NeSmith, *Financial Administrator*
 - Katie Petersen, *Program Dev. Assistant*

The Executive Director of WisconSibs, Inc is the primary leader for the organization with responsibility for overseeing the organization, managing staff, and leading WisconSibs strategies. This position reports to the board of directors.

Key roles and responsibilities include:

- ⇒ Provide strategic direction and planning
- ⇒ Secure financial resources necessary to effectively support programming, operations, and growth
- ⇒ Engage with community leaders to advocate for Sibs and promote WisconSibs’ mission
- ⇒ Oversee development, evaluation, and accessibility of WisconSibs programs
- ⇒ Hire/direct paid and volunteer staff
- ⇒ Develop strategic alliances, collaborations, and funder/donor relationships throughout Wisconsin and beyond

Requirements for this position:

- 5 years+ in nonprofit leadership
- Bachelor’s degree
- Excellent communication skills
- Passing a background check

For full job description or to apply, email apply@WisconSibs.org.