

MEDIA RELEASE



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Respected CEO hands over the reins

One of the Toowoomba region's leading voices for social inclusion and community services will say an emotional farewell to her staff today (Monday 16 November).

YellowBridge QLD chief executive officer Penny Hamilton will retire after nearly six years in the top job.

During that time, Ms Hamilton has transformed the not-for-profit organisation into a \$12.1 million service organisation with 133 staff who assist more than 6000 people every year across disability support, community housing, home services for seniors, and residential accommodation and support for youth experiencing homelessness.

Ms Hamilton has led the organisation through significant reforms and challenges in the industry including the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the launch of Home Care Packages for seniors, and most recently, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her passion for inclusion and collaboration inspired many important initiatives including the Yellow Bucket Christmas Appeal, boutique op shop Collectables, Posey of Kindness, merger with youth homelessness facility The Haven, and partnerships with major local businesses.

The popular leader received many video tribute messages from staff, industry colleagues and community leaders, which were played at YellowBridge's annual general meeting recently.

"I retire from YellowBridge QLD with immense pride, some sadness but no regrets," Ms Hamilton said.

"I feel extremely privileged to have had the opportunity to work with an organisation and staff that gives so much back to our community, every minute of every day," she said.

"It was an honour to take the organisation on the YellowBridge journey and I am enormously proud of what we do for others and what we have achieved together.

"There is so much I love about YellowBridge and our awesome staff."

YellowBridge Board Chair Carolyn Brown said it would not be easy to say goodbye to Ms Hamilton.

"Penny's contribution to YellowBridge has been immense," Ms Brown said.

"She has expertly steered us on a transformational journey with cheer, charisma and compassion for our staff, clients and partners," she said.

"It will be hard to say goodbye but we are determined to carry on her legacy and embrace the future and the opportunities with her indelible spirit of positivity, collaboration and joy."

Ms Hamilton is determined to maintain her advocacy and community work during retirement, particularly in the area of youth homelessness.

She is also looking forward to spending more time in her expansive native garden at Cabarlah and enjoying babysitting her eight-week-old twin grandsons.

YellowBridge's chief financial officer Adrian Bonica will replace Ms Hamilton as the chief executive officer from 16 November.

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