

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Daytime Homeless Shelter turns over a new leaf**

**KALAMAZOO, MI** –*Ministry with Community* (“*MwC*”), Kalamazoo’s daytime shelter and resource center for people struggling with homelessness, poverty, and mental illness, is pleased to unveil publicly its succession plan for the Executive Director position. The Board of Directors unanimously approved Rob Oakleaf, current Deputy Director in charge of finance and technology, as Incoming Executive Director to replace Kendra Stetser Rowe, current Executive Director, when she steps down from the position to pursue other interests. The formal changing of the guard is expected to take place in June at the organization’s Annual Meeting.

“We are so lucky to have a succession plan that makes this much sense,” says Stetser Rowe. “*MwC* is a special place and our members, who face daily uncertainty and lives fraught with chaos and devastation, deserve to know that we have a solid plan in place.” “Everyone already loves Rob so the transition will be optimal and, frankly, uneventful – you can’t ask for anything better than that,” she adds.

Mr. Oakleaf is a native of Kalamazoo and a graduate of Kalamazoo College. He received his B.A. in computer science after receiving the prestigious Heyl Scholarship. He has worked with inner-city youth as a high school teacher in the Detroit area, has run his own successful web & graphic design business and has been credited with helping get *MwC* to as strong a place organizationally as it currently is.

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Rob is hailed by many as one of the community's "up-and-coming new leaders." He has been an active member of *Community First*, and a volunteer for the *Committee to Re-elect Bobby Hopewell*, *ONE Kalamazoo* and *Smartshop*.

Interestingly enough, Rob also studied at the University of Nairobi, has traveled extensively throughout Africa and was even once chased by a hippo. He worked during the summers of 2002 and 2003 for MSU and was second author on an entomological paper published in *Behaviour*.

Rob and his partner, Joel, are committed to helping make Kalamazoo the great community that it is and are proud to be affiliated with *MwC*. "It's a privilege to serve in an atmosphere of acceptance, respect and hope. I am grateful for this opportunity and hope to continue the excellent work of my colleagues and my predecessor [Stetser Rowe]." The Oakleaf-Murr family lives in the Westnedge Hill neighborhood with their two dogs. They enjoy gardening, remodeling and community enhancement.

For questions about *Ministry with Community*, please visit the website at [www.ministrywithcommunity.org](http://www.ministrywithcommunity.org), become a fan on Facebook and/or call either Kendra Stetser Rowe at 269.343.6073 x12 or Rob Oakleaf at x11.

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