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COALITION

SUZANNE BIRCH

MEMBER PROFILE



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BIRCH COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.

Suzanne and Barry Birch's journey with BCS began in 1992 when Union Gospel Mission offered them extra bread that was going to waste. It was an easy decision to pass on the bread to others in need, ultimately resulting in Birch Community Services. The Birch's personal commitment to a no-debt lifestyle is reflected in the focus on financial literacy counseling and education offered at BCS, teaching families how to get out of debt and live within their income. Barry semi-retired in 2004, and Suzanne has been the Executive Director since then.

Stepping into the Director role, Suzanne found her biggest challenge was learning the continual growth processes of a non-profit. Key wisdom was offered through her mentor and board members

("Wise (wo)men seek wise counsel,") and she endeavors to surround herself with people who know things she doesn't. The resulting strong leadership team is creative and cohesive in decision-making.

When the BCS mantle was passed to Suzanne after Barry's retirement, and then his death in 2015, she became the face of the Birch Community, affirming her ability to lead an organization with assurance.

When asked for advice, Suzanne stresses listening well, don't take yourself too seriously, and embracing change. BCS has adapted and evolved with the needs of the community, encompassing new ideas and services and experiencing phenomenal growth.

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