

STEPHANIE FEHR

Lifelong Learner

Stephanie Fehr is executive vice president and chief people officer for UnitedHealthcare. With more than 20 years of experience in human resources and talent development, she is passionate about leadership, building diverse teams, helping people develop fulfilling careers, and cultivating the next generation of leaders.

In her formative years, Fehr was influenced by two strong role models: her grandmother, a business owner and a single parent; and her mother, a nurse. Both of these women helped shape Fehr's core values of love of family, integrity, hard work, and self-reliance.

Various other women throughout her career have also served as mentors. All of these individuals gave Fehr what she calls "a visual for what's possible and how to contribute to the world."

The most profound attribute of great leaders? Fehr quickly points to their being lifelong learners. "They have enough humility to be open to learning from others while creating environments in which individuals are also encouraged to learn and take risks."

With a longtime interest in history, Fehr was honored to join the Minnesota Historical Society's Executive Council in 2019. Her involvement on the board has reaffirmed her belief that everyone can learn from history. "MNHS brings history to life in powerful ways by taking historical events and facts and demonstrating how they are relevant today."

When asked for examples, Fehr mentioned how MNHS is sharing Native American history in contemporary ways while honoring Indigenous customs and traditions, all within the context of Minnesota and regional history. She also referenced the new Split Rock Lighthouse Visitor Center's permanent exhibit in the Radzak Family Gallery, which "brings to life not only the history of the lighthouse but [also] its importance to the local community and mariners."

Fehr believes that the study of history, and using compelling lessons of the past, can serve as a means to engage and inspire the next generation of leaders. That's why she's so excited about the upcoming *Girlhood (It's Complicated)* exhibit opening at the Minnesota History Center in early September.

The exhibit explores the diversity of girls' experiences over more than 200 years and will feature more than 100 rarely seen objects and new acquisitions from the National Museum of American History. MNHS is supplementing the traveling exhibit with a smaller exhibit on the history of girls' basketball in Minnesota.

The exhibit's Wellness section is of special interest to Fehr because it aligns with her passion for women's health and UnitedHealthcare's ongoing efforts to collect data and study trends to better address key health care issues for women. Fehr sees the exhibit as being a "great equalizer because it normalizes girls' health experiences and the words that describe



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a woman's journey, like menopause. This is empowering for girls and for women and helps them navigate their journey with more knowledge and confidence."

Developed by the National Museum of American History and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, *Girlhood (It's Complicated)* won the Smithsonian Award for Excellence in Exhibitions for 2021-22.

For further information, please contact Jennifer Pogatchnik at jennifer.pogatchnik@mnhs.org.



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