

Two top executives leave Facebook PR team (Update)

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Facebook's top communications officer is leaving following a tumultuous year for the leading social network

Two of Facebook's top executives in its public relations team are leaving the company, stepping away after the most tumultuous period in the

history of the social networking giant.

Caryn Marooney put out word on Wednesday that she is quitting her job as leader of Facebook's communications group after eight years at the social network and is working with chief executive Mark Zuckerberg on finding a replacement.

Marooney wrote on her Facebook page that "it's time to get back to my roots" but also noted that "I have more faith in Facebook than ever."

Meanwhile, vice president of global communications and public affairs Debbie Frost confirmed that she told the company a while ago she was resigning, with plans to leave Facebook in March after nearly 11 years on the team.

The departures come with Facebook, following a period of extraordinary growth, under fire in many parts of the world over privacy and data security and for failing to curb manipulation of the platform.

Marooney wrote however: "There is so much good happening on Facebook and the entire family of apps every day. And for our challenges—we have plans in place and the right people working on them."

Zuckerberg marked the 15th anniversary of Facebook this week with message saying he sees the social network largely as a "positive" force for society.

Zuckerberg has acknowledged that Facebook needs to do more to restore trust, and ferret out misinformation and abuse, and on Monday repeated his pledge to spend more "on safety and security."

Late last year, outgoing head of Facebook's communications team Elliot

Schrage took responsibility for the controversial hiring of a conservative consulting firm accused of using "black ops" style techniques, acknowledging critics including investor George Soros were targeted.

Facebook stumbled from one mess to another last year as it grappled with continuing fallout from Russia's use of the platform to interfere in the 2016 US presidential election, the Cambridge Analytica scandal in which user data was harnessed in a bid to help candidate Donald Trump, and a huge security breach involving millions of accounts.

British former deputy prime minister Nick Clegg, a leading anti-Brexit advocate, was hired as the new head of global affairs and communications at the California-based company.

"With Nick Clegg settled in at Facebook, this felt like the right time to start the transition," Marooney said of timing her departure.

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