

NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2012

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Rawland retires; Thomas appointed DBH Director

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday bade farewell to retiring County Behavioral Health Director Allan Rawland and appointed Assistant Director CaSonya Thomas as his successor.

Mr. Rawland, who has been with the county since September 2005, is concluding his 46-year career in human services on April 7. He has served the public in six different counties in roles ranging from juvenile hall counselor, social worker, community organizer and activist, executive administrator in human and behavioral health departments, and as a faculty member with the California State University System.

Mr. Rawland mentored Ms. Thomas hoping the Board of Supervisors would select her as his successor. "Ms. Thomas has my utmost support and I am confident that DBH is in excellent hands," Mr. Rawland said.

During Tuesday's Board meeting, Chair and Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales told Rawland, "You have brought about such a beautiful change in the department. We have nothing but productivity, wholesomeness, and progression taking place and it is you we have to thank for that. ... You have created a position of leadership that I have no doubt CaSonya will fill and embrace."

Ms. Thomas is a true County of San Bernardino success story who began her career with the County in 1991 as an Eligibility Worker with the Department of Public Social Services, now known as the Transitional Assistance Department.

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She gained extensive managerial experience through several successive positions in human services during the past 20 years. Most notable has been her six-year career with the Department of Behavioral Health, where she has held multiple leadership positions, including Behavioral Health Chief Compliance Officer, Deputy Director, and Assistant Director.

"Being appointed the Director of Behavioral Health is a great responsibility and the Board of Supervisors can rest assured that I will continue the tenets of inclusiveness and collaboration that have contributed so much to the department's success," Ms. Thomas said.

Ms. Thomas has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and a post-graduate degree in Public Administration, both from Cal State San Bernardino. Ms. Thomas is also certified in healthcare compliance by the national Health Care Compliance Board.

Ms. Thomas is a graduate of the County's Management Leadership Academy and continues to participate in the program as a mentor. Additionally, she provides support and mentorship to the Human Services Leaders in Action program and is the current president of the San Bernardino County Association of African American Employees, a professional development organization.

The County of San Bernardino Department of Behavioral Health employs 860 people and has an annual budget of \$292 million. More information on the department can be found at www.sbcounty.gov/dbh.

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CaSonya Thomas