

## **Contra Costa County**

County Administrator's Office • 651 Pine Street • Martinez, CA 94553 • www.contracosta.ca.gov

## **NEWS RELEASE**

December 4, 2012 PIO

Betsy.Burkhart@contracostatv.org; 925-313-

Contact: Betsy Burkhart,

1180

## Contra Costa County Appoints New Social Services Director

Kathy Gallagher to Lead Employment and Human Services Department

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors approved the selection today of a new leader for the Employment and Human Services Department. Administrator David Twa recommended the appointment of Kathy Gallagher to fill the position; Gallagher has led the Department of Social Services in Santa Barbara County for the past nine years.

Twa noted that she will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to Contra Costa County. "Kathy's credentials in the social service field are excellent," he said, "and she will join us at a time when the Department is facing significant challenges from the State relative to proposed realignment of health and human services programs, and from the Federal government as it deals with the 'Fiscal Cliff' and a likely reduction in federal funding."

For Gallagher, this represents a bay area homecoming. A native Californian, she received her Bachelor's degree from San Jose State University in Behavioral Science and Political Science, and holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco. Prio r to joining Santa Barbara County, Gallagher worked her way up the ranks to Assistant Director of Santa Clara County's Social Service Agency. Gallagher is looking forward to returning to the bay area. "Contra Costa County's Employment and Human Services Department is well-respected across the state for cutting edge innovations and a commitment to excellence," she noted. "I look forward to returning to an area I called home for many years."

Gallagher's dedication to the field of human services began as a Peace Corps volunteer in Columbia, leading to a lifelong advocacy for those in poverty, and victims of abuse and neglect. "My commitment to service in support of low-income and vulnerable children and adults has never been more needed than during these trying times," Gallagher stated.

In Contra Costa, she will also be engaged in legislative activities at the state and federal level on behalf of social service programs. Gallagher will join Contra Costa County on January 7, 2013. She replaces Joe Valentine, who left the County in April for a position out of state. Chief Deputy County Administrator Theresa Speiker has served as the Interim Director since April.