



BAY AREA LEGAL AID

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

Genevieve Richardson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Media Contact: Kenneth Theisen
media@baylegal.org

BAY AREA LEGAL AID NAMES GENEVIEVE RICHARDSON AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Managing Attorney who oversaw firm's work in Contra Costa, Marin, and Napa counties elected by Board of Directors to top post.

Oakland, CA – Bay Area Legal Aid (BayLegal) has appointed its first female Executive Director, Genevieve Richardson. The appointment was made official on International Women's Day. BayLegal is the largest non-profit, public interest law firm in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Richardson takes over the leadership of an \$18 million non-profit law firm that impacts the lives of approximately 60,000 Bay Area residents annually. "I am thrilled and humbled by the opportunity to lead BayLegal's next chapter and to ensure that we remain a national, statewide, and regional leader in the movement for social equality and poverty elimination," she said. "I am steadfast in my commitment to protecting clients' rights, challenging systemic failures, and keeping our communities thriving."

Richardson, a seasoned social justice advocate, most recently served as the Managing Attorney of BayLegal's Contra Costa, Marin, and Napa county offices, supervising 20 attorneys, legal advocates, and support staff. A BayLegal veteran of 17 years, Richardson joined the firm in 2001 as a staff attorney focusing on family law, domestic violence prevention, and immigration. In the nine years prior to her 2014 appointment as Managing Attorney, Richardson founded and led the firm's regional Pro Bono program, expanding access to civil legal aid by recruiting and training attorneys in the private bar to provide free services to low-income families across the Bay Area. A native of Bellingham, Washington, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy: law and society at the University of Colorado Boulder, and Juris Doctor from the University of Colorado School of Law.

"The Board is highly confident that Genevieve will provide superb leadership for our organization," said Rob Goodin, Board Chair and founding partner of San Francisco law firm Goodin, MacBride, Squeri & Day, LLP. "We look forward to working with her, and with all of our staff, to fulfill Bay Area Legal Aid's essential mission of providing the highest quality services to our clients, for which BayLegal is so justly celebrated."

As Executive Director, Richardson leads one of the most experienced poverty firms in the country, employing 150 attorneys and advocates, many of whom are nationally recognized experts in their field of law. The firm was formed in 2000 from the merger of San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation, Community Legal Services of Santa Clara County, and Contra Costa Legal Services Foundation, making it the region's largest nonprofit law firm.



"From the very early days of Bay Area Legal Aid, to her selection as Executive Director, Genevieve has distinguished herself as an exemplary lawyer and leader. Now more than ever, our clients need us to uphold the rule of law and make it clear that justice can never be beyond the reach of people in poverty. It is that simple idea that guides Genevieve in everything she does and earned her the respect of clients, our Board of Directors, and staff," said BayLegal's founding Executive Director Ramón Arias, who retired in 2013 and returned to the firm last fall on an interim basis to oversee the leadership transition.

Richardson succeeds Alex Gulotta, the previous Executive Director who departed this past October. During Gulotta's tenure, BayLegal grew significantly, increasing its staff of legal advocates by 50%, expanding its services in Napa Valley, and intensifying its impact litigation and policy advocacy to advance holistic solutions to deep-rooted systemic problems.

Genevieve Richardson, Executive Director

Genevieve Richardson is a social justice attorney who has been committed to advancing the civil legal rights of low-income families throughout the San Francisco Bay Area for over 17 years. Prior to becoming Executive Director, Richardson served as Managing Attorney of BayLegal's regional offices in Contra Costa, Marin, and Napa Counties. As Managing Attorney, she supervised a team of 20 staff attorneys, legal advocates, and volunteers who represent clients in matters involving housing, social safety-net benefits, healthcare access, domestic violence and sexual assault prevention, and consumer protection, as well as wrap-around legal help to low-income immigrants, veterans, seniors, formerly incarcerated individuals, and youth in foster care.

Richardson joined Bay Area Legal Aid in 2001 as a staff attorney in Contra Costa County representing survivors of interpersonal violence. In 2005, Genevieve became BayLegal's first Director of Pro Bono Activities establishing and overseeing the firm's regional pro bono program. As Director of Pro Bono Activities, she coordinated pro bono activities across seven counties by recruiting and training private attorneys and volunteers to provide much-needed pro bono assistance to expand access to the civil justice system for low-income families. Richardson also works on a regional and statewide basis to address systemic poverty and inequality issues, and is a former Board member of the Legal Aid Association of California. She received her Juris Doctor from the University of Colorado School of Law in 2000 after graduating *magna cum laude* from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Bay Area Legal Aid (BayLegal)

From Napa Valley to Silicon Valley, Bay Area Legal Aid (BayLegal) ensures fairness in the civil justice system for the most vulnerable members of our community. The organization's mission is to provide meaningful access to the civil justice system through high quality legal assistance regardless of a client's location, language, or disability. BayLegal is committed to providing equal access to justice and high quality legal assistance in six areas of law that most significantly affect the independence and stability of low-income people: economic security, homelessness prevention, domestic violence prevention, re-entry, health care access, and consumer law. The region's largest provider of free civil legal aid, BayLegal serves low-income communities spread across seven counties, with headquarters in Oakland and local offices in Richmond, Napa, San Francisco, Redwood City, and San José. Dedicated to helping clients protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families, the firm's attorneys and advocates are on the front lines fighting for clients' rights. When all other hope is lost, BayLegal brings justice within reach for the more than 1.2 million Bay Area residents living in poverty.

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