
Santa Clara County Housing Authority Commissioner Espinoza-Howard Retires After Serving 16 Years

Agency renames scholarship program in Espinoza-Howard's honor

SAN JOSE, Calif. – June 28, 2022 – The Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA) today announces the retirement of Commissioner Kathy Espinoza-Howard. Appointed to SCCHA's Board of Commissioners in 2006, Espinoza-Howard has championed building community partnerships while working tirelessly to expand housing opportunities and resident programs for low-income families in Santa Clara County. In honor of her commitment to growing the agency's scholarship fund to support as many students as possible, the program will henceforth be known as the Kathy Espinoza-Howard Scholarship program.

During her 16 year tenure, Espinoza-Howard drew on her extensive public sector management experience and expertise in developing public-private partnerships as well as homelessness program policy at the local, state and federal level. She served as SCCHA's board chair for six years, and her professionalism and experience led SCCHA to develop its first Strategic Plan. In addition to helping develop and implement the first countywide homelessness plan, Espinoza-Howard served as the city of Palo Alto's management representative in the development and construction of the Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula, the county's first permanent supportive housing facility for homeless families, which opened the year she joined SCCHA's board.

Some of SCCHA's notable achievements during Espinoza-Howard's 16 years of service include:

- Being among the original 39 of approximately 3,200 public housing authorities granted Moving to Work status by Congress in 2008, a designation that allows SCCHA to make strategic program and policy changes to best address Silicon Valley's critical shortage of affordable housing.
- Expanding resident programs and improving outcomes for families and entire neighborhoods in the areas of health, wealth and education. Toward this end, since the inception of SCCHA's scholarship program in 2015, SCCHA has grown its fund and provided \$349,050 to help support 406 scholars on their educational journeys.
- Partnering with the county and city of Palo Alto to prevent the displacement of 400 residents with the purchase in 2017 of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park following a two-year, communitywide effort to preserve the property for affordable housing.
- Expanding the number of permanent supportive housing units countywide by allocating more than 2,180 project-based vouchers, many of which are connected to developments funded by the county's 2016 Measure A affordable housing bond.

Kathy is a tireless advocate for equity with many ties to community organizations that advocate for justice, women, children, farm workers and the Mexican American community. In recognition of her service to the Housing Authority and the community, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors presented Espinoza-Howard with a commendation at its June 28 meeting.

"It has been a privilege to have served alongside Kathy Espinoza-Howard over the years," said Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian. "I commend her for her 16 years of service as a Santa Clara County Housing Authority commissioner, where she's contributed mightily to improving the lives of vulnerable populations through her lifelong

commitment to providing more affordable housing opportunities. Her leadership was a driving force behind the 2006 opening of The Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula, showing what can be done when a community and local governments work in partnership to solve a local problem such as homelessness. During her tenure on the board, SCCHA has expanded its role as an active, innovative developer of affordable housing, having since 2006 rehabilitated 1,031 units, constructed 184 new units and committed to building or renovating 1,179 units in its development pipeline. I thank Ms. Espinoza-Howard for her years of dedicated service to Silicon Valley."

"Throughout her career Kathy Espinoza-Howard has remained a staunch advocate on behalf of low-income and vulnerable people," said SCCHA Commissioner and Vice Chair Denis O'Neal. "She helped the agency through tumultuous years of congressional budget gridlock, cuts to Section 8 funding and even a government shutdown. Through it all Kathy remained laser focused on keeping families housed and easing their rent burdens. At the same time she stressed the importance of growing SCCHA's landlord program and providing landlords with excellent customer service to sustain the mutual partnership that makes our countywide housing safety net possible. Her legacy will live on as we continue creating even more housing opportunities for our lowest income residents."

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About SCCHA

SCCHA is the largest provider of affordable housing assistance in Santa Clara County, helping make rental housing safe and affordable for low-income families. Designated a Moving to Work agency by Congress, it currently assists more than 19,000 households. In addition to providing housing assistance through Section 8 voucher programs and affordable rental properties, SCCHA develops affordable housing and provides asset management services for the more than 2,500 units in its housing portfolio. SCCHA also supports low-income residents through a variety of programs focused on educational attainment, health and wellness as well as wage progression for families. SCCHA frequently partners with local nonprofits serving low-income families and supports local community and neighborhood development organizations as they build capacity to serve more residents and families. For more information, visit www.scchousingauthority.org.

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