



Sunnyvale

News Release

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SUNNYVALE SELECTS NEW DIRECTOR OF NOVAworks

SUNNYVALE, Calif. – City Manager Kent Steffens announced today that Marlena Sessions will become the new Director of NOVAworks, the regional workforce development agency based in Sunnyvale. The City conducted a nationwide recruitment to replace Kris Stadelman who is retiring after 12 years as the Director. Sessions' appointment becomes effective November 15.

“We’re grateful to have had Kris’ leadership over the years, especially most recently as NOVA navigated the employment challenges brought about by the pandemic,” says NOVA Board Co-Chair Jennifer Morrill. “While Kris leaves big shoes to fill, I’m confident that Marlena’s passion and deep experience will guide NOVA through our region’s economic recovery and beyond.”

Sessions is currently San Bernardino County’s Director of Workforce Development. She also held roles with the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County – serving as Chief Executive Officer from 2009 to 2017 and Chief Operations Officer for nine years before that. Prior to her role with San Bernardino County, Sessions was Senior Vice President for Grant Associates, a privately held company that provides workforce development and human resources support to businesses and agencies across the country.

“Marlena has a collaborative leadership style and a wealth of experience in the workforce arena,” says Steffens. “Her commitment to service and dedication to meeting the needs of both job seekers and businesses will be a tremendous asset to the organization.”

Throughout her career, Sessions has been an active community leader. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Workforce Boards; the Executive Committees for both the California Workforce Association and the Inland Empire Growth

Opportunity; and the National Board of Advisors for the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University.

“I have long observed and admired NOVA as one of the premiere workforce boards and services in the country,” says Sessions. “I am thrilled to join the community and team and continue with the high level of customer service and innovations in meeting local industry talent needs.”

Sessions holds a Bachelor of Arts from Whitworth University and a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University.

About NOVAworks

NOVAworks is a nonprofit, federally funded employment and training agency that provides customer-focused workforce development services. NOVAworks' purpose is to support workforce mobility by easing workers' transitions from opportunity to opportunity throughout their career cycles. NOVAworks is directed by the NOVAworks Workforce Board, which works on behalf of a consortium of eight jurisdictions, composed of the County of San Mateo, and the Santa Clara County cities of Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale.

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