

Dane County Exec Parisi: Announces Tessmann as new Human Service Director

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Contact: Ariana Vruwink

608-267-8823

Vruwink.Ariana@countyofdane.com

Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced that Shawn Tessmann has been selected as the new Director of the Dane County Department of Human Services. Tessmann has worked in the Department of Human Services as a senior leadership team member since 2016 and previously worked for the state of Wisconsin in a number of state agencies where she acquired broad experience in Medicaid, FoodShare, Child Care, W-2, and other economic assistance programs.

“I look forward to working with Shawn Tessmann as the new Dane County Human Services Director,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “Between Shawn’s extensive experience working in the public sector and her dedication to serving those in need, the Dane County Department of Human Services has a bright future with Shawn as its next director.”

In Tessmann’s role as Economic Assistance and Work Services Administrator for Dane County’s Department of Human Services, she administered all public assistance functions for Dane County, provided oversight of the County’s commitment to end homelessness, and held leadership responsibility for an eight county income maintenance consortium, among other duties.

“I’m delighted and honored to be asked by the County Executive to lead the

delivery of the excellent services and programs we administer to Dane County citizens,” Tessmann said. “I look forward to working with our staff, partners, policymakers, agencies, stakeholders and clients to make sure the department is being as responsive as possible to community needs as they exist now, and as new needs emerge.”

Prior to her work at the Dane County Department of Human Services, Tessmann served as Eligibility Policy and Systems Director for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, where she had primary day-to-day responsibility for all income maintenance functions for Medicaid and FoodShare. Tessmann’s past experiences also include working as the Member and Employer Services Director for the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds, as Business and Operations Manager for the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, and as Policy Advisor for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

“I’m pleased that this nationwide search pointed us to a talented individual in our own ranks,” said Dane County Board of Supervisors Chair Sharon Corrigan. “Shawn’s career experiences and the respect she has earned from those she works with in the Department will serve her well as the Director.”

For five years, Tessmann was an owner of Isthmus Research and Consulting, LLC. She served as the Project Manager for the independent evaluation of all welfare reform and workforce development programs for the state of Arkansas. She also managed broad-based qualitative and quantitative research projects and worked with Wisconsin legislators to detail program improvements to Wisconsin’s welfare replacement program.

Tessmann resides in Mount Horeb with her husband and son, who is currently a junior in high school. She grew up in the Dane County area and is an active volunteer with her local school board. Her favorite pastimes include reading, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.

Tessmann will replace Lynn Green, who has served as the Director of the Dane County Department of Human Services since 2002 and has spent a total of 46 years serving Dane County. Tessmann’s confirmation as Dane County Human Services Director is pending final approval by the County Board.