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### **Diane Tackett to Succeed Retiring Al Lopez as COO of Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area**

CEDAR PARK, Texas – Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area (WSRCA) announced today that Contracts Specialist Diane Tackett was promoted to Chief Operating Officer, effective immediately, succeeding Al Lopez, who plans to retire after serving more than 21 years with the nine-county workforce development board.

As COO, Tackett will report to WSRCA CEO Paul Fletcher, and oversee agency-wide program and policy development; oversee agency-wide research and evaluation; manage and coordinate annual planning process, including development of Requests for Proposals, performance standards and evaluation methods; lead resource and grant development, manage department staff and serve as CEO in the event of Fletcher's absence.

"I have had the privilege of working with Diane in the past and I know she will be a big asset to our organization in this new position as we move forward," said Fletcher. "Diane is a dynamic leader and a passionate advocate for our regional businesses, communities, and service providers. She is an important part of our success and our future."

"I am honored to have been chosen as the next COO and will continue the momentum that Al Lopez has created in this role," said Tackett. "I would like to thank Paul Fletcher, Board Chair Frank Leonardis, and the Rural Capital Area team for the support and encouragement they have provided. I know that, together, We Are Rural Capital Area! Maya Angelou once shared, 'When you know better, you do better. When you get, give. When you learn, teach.' My goal is to help our organization strive to always 'do better.'"

Lopez announced his retirement in July and will serve as a senior advisor to the CEO through the end of September 2019.

"WSRCA appreciates the hard work, dedication, and service Al has contributed to the board and to our communities," added Fletcher. "He has played a transformational role in growing our partnerships, helped develop the Socrates strategic planning tool as a member of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Labor Market and Career Information team, and launched key programs and initiatives in Central Texas, such as Rural Capital Headlight, teacher externships, and Summer Earn and Learn. We are grateful for his leadership during this important time in our organization's history, and we wish him and his family all the best."

Tackett began her career in workforce development in 1999, as a Choices Career Specialist based in Austin, as part of Workforce Solutions Capital Area. In 2002, she transferred to WSRCA's contractor as a Quality Assurance Specialist, and earned a promotion in 2003 to become the North Area Manager, overseeing three career centers in Williamson County, and serving as Program Manager for the Choices Program and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) Program.

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During Tackett's management tenure in the Rural Capital Area, she brought online the Choices Non-Custodial Parents program in Williamson County. After several years as the Area Manager, she was promoted to Deputy Director, and served in that position for two years. In 2012, she returned to the Capital Area to serve as the Deputy Director of Operations and Programs, and later the Director of Child Care Operations. Tackett moved on in 2017 to serve as a Policy Analyst with TWC. She joined the WSRCA Board Staff in 2019 as a Contracts Specialist, serving as a subject matter expert for the Child Care Services Program and introducing new innovations to streamline contract oversight and management.

Tackett holds a Master of Science in Social Work, and a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin.

Diane Tackett Photo: <http://bit.ly/DianeTackettPhoto>

Al Lopez Photo: <http://bit.ly/AlLopezPhoto>

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*Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area is a nonprofit community partnership providing no cost recruitment, employment services and child care assistance, to businesses and job seekers in the Rural Capital Area of central Texas. This nine-county region includes Bastrop; Blanco; Burnet; Caldwell; Fayette; Hays; Lee; Llano; and Williamson counties. For more details on WSRCA, and the services it offers, visit [www.workforcesolutionsrca.com](http://www.workforcesolutionsrca.com).*