



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STEPHANIE HUDDLESTON NAMED HANFORD'S NEXT POLICE CHIEF

Huddleston becomes the Hanford Police Department's first female Chief

HANFORD, CA – Following an extensive recruitment and interview process, Hanford City Manager Mario Cifuentez has selected Stephanie Huddleston to be the City's next Police Chief. Huddleston, currently a Captain with the department, will fill the position following the departure of Chief Parker Sever in October.

Huddleston, a lifelong Hanford resident, started her career with the department as a patrol officer in January of 2006. She became the highest-ranking female officer in the department's history when she promoted to Sergeant, and will now serve as its first-ever female Police Chief.

“I believe Captain Huddleston is the right person to move the department forward in our growing community,” Cifuentez said. “Her character and leadership are beyond reproach, and I look forward to seeing what she will accomplish in the years ahead.”

As Police Chief, Huddleston will oversee all department functions and activities, including patrol, traffic, investigations, internal affairs, community policing and support services. With a passion for mentoring the community's youth, she plans to continue her involvement in Hanford PAL, a crime prevention program for local children.

“I feel like I've been preparing for this opportunity since I started my career in law enforcement,” Huddleston said. “One of the reasons I've never wanted to leave here is that I've always felt that support from our community. I've never felt like we lived in a place where they don't like us or they don't trust us.”

Huddleston says she is committed to being fair, honest, and open with the community. Internally, she plans to make employee morale a top priority, and will look for new ways to recruit and retain the best police officers in the Central Valley.

“When we spend so much time at work, we need to be happy when we're here,” she said. “I believe there's more we can do for employee appreciation and recognizing when officers do go above and beyond.”

Huddleston says her husband and three children are her strongest supporters.

“Without their love, their support, their understanding, I wouldn’t have made it to this point,” she said.

Huddleston has a bachelor's and master's degree in criminology from Fresno State University and will be pursuing a doctorate in criminal justice leadership from Liberty University.

Huddleston's appointment will become effective on **January 22, 2024**.

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