



Headwaters CEO Announces Departure

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Missoula, Montana --- Headwaters Foundation announced today that its founding CEO, Brenda Solorzano, will be leaving the organization to accept an opportunity out-of-state, and that a selection process for their next CEO will begin soon. Headwaters Foundation formed in 2017 to work side-by-side with Western Montanans to improve the health of our communities. They fund nonprofits that support children, families, and Native American communities, go ‘upstream’ to address the root causes of problems, and support collaboration between organizations and across sectors.

Brenda moved to Montana in 2017 to build the foundation from the ground up, re-inventing philanthropic practices along the way. Under her leadership, Headwaters awarded over \$26 million in grants, opened a nonprofit event space in Missoula - Confluence Center, received a \$14 million dollar gift from MacKenzie Scott, and became nationally known as a leader in trust-based philanthropy.

“I am so proud of the work we’ve accomplished at Headwaters in the past seven years,” said Solorzano. “Western Montana has many incredible nonprofit leaders and organizations doing work that changes lives. I will miss our team, partners, and the amazing people I have met and worked with in Montana. However, I move on knowing that Headwaters is in a strong position for the future with a new 10-year strategy, solid staff, and an excellent Board of Directors.”

Brenda will be at Headwaters through the summer, and she will start her new position as President and Chief Executive Officer at The California Endowment in early September. Headwaters Foundation has a transition plan in place that will begin with hiring a firm to lead a national search process for their next CEO. The Board intends to hire a leader consistent with Headwaters’ values and approach.

“We are sad to see Brenda go. However, we are grateful for her leadership and are proud to launch her to lead one of the country’s largest health foundations,” said Carissa Kuhl, Board Chair. “Because of her work, Headwaters is a strong organization and a leader in innovative and equitable philanthropic practices. We continue to be committed to trust-based philanthropy and continue to center our grantees as partners and trusted experts in the vital work they do.”

Headwaters Foundation serves Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Flathead, Granite, Jefferson, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Madison, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, and Powell counties, and the Flathead Reservation. Past grantees by county can be found at www.headwatersmt.org/past-awards/. To learn more about Headwaters Foundation, visit www.headwatersmt.org.

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