

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NAMES SUSAN D. ANDERSON DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AND PROGRAMS

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., December 5, 2018 – The California Historical Society has appointed Susan D. Anderson as its new Director of Library, Collections, Exhibitions, and Programs. Anderson comes to CHS from the African American Museum & Library in Oakland, where she has served as Interim Chief Curator for the past year.

Anderson is a third generation Californian who was born at the Presidio in San Francisco, and has studied, lived, and worked throughout the state to increase public understanding of history. She is an expert in American and African American history with focused interest on ethnic, literary, and social justice communities in California.

“We are grateful to have found Susan, whose experience and expertise stood out among a group of exceptional candidates. As a historian, Susan has explored deeply a wide range of diverse communities and social justice movements,” said CHS Executive Director and CEO, Anthea Hartig. “That experience will be invaluable to her future work in acquisition, the development of CHS’s permanent collection, and guidance of our public history programming, with the goal of reflecting the diversity of California and documenting contemporary movements.”

Anderson’s additional professional experience includes working as curator and managing director at UCLA and USC libraries’ special collections, as well as curating a statewide, touring exhibition commemorating the centennial of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park alongside the California African American Museum. Anderson has one published book of poetry and is working on another book to be published through Heyday Books entitled, *“African Americans and the California Dream.”* Throughout her decade of experience working in the public history realm, she has lectured at the California State Capitol Museum, the California State Railroad Museum, the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology, UC Berkeley, the San Francisco Presidio, Richmond Museum of History, and the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles, among others.

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the talented, committed staff at the California Historical Society to expand its vision, reach, activities, and success to continue to make history a meaningful part of everyday experience,” Susan Anderson said. “This is truly an honor to be associated with such an esteemed organization that has been a trailblazer in terms of its exhibitions, historical significance and mission.”

In her new role at CHS, Anderson will serve as a key leader to the organization, providing guidance and vision to the North Baker Research Library and the CHS collection, as well as its rotating exhibitions and public programming, in alignment with CHS’s mission and strategic objectives. Critically, she will drive the fulfillment of two primary initiatives in the near future: The assessment of the collection’s needs and future in San Francisco’s Old U.S. Mint as part of an intensive study of that property as CHS’s new home, and the completion of *Teaching California*, a collaborative project funded by the State of California, designed to offer California K-12 teachers and their students an innovative online collection of teaching resources.

About the California Historical Society: The California Historical Society (CHS) is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire and empower people to make the state's richly diverse past a meaningful part of their contemporary lives in order to create a more just and informed future. Founded in 1871, CHS maintains a premier collection of original materials documenting the history of California from the Spanish conquest to the present day. The CHS Collection represents the environmental, economic, social, political, and cultural heritage of the entire state, including materials from outside California that contribute to a greater understanding of the state and its people. Beginning with its founding, and especially since establishing its Yerba Buena District headquarters on Mission Street in 1995, CHS has served residents of the Bay Area, the state, and beyond with its research library, exhibitions, publications, and public educational programs that draw on its important and wide-ranging collections of California history. Today, CHS is embarking on a four-pronged effort to increase its public accessibility, relevance, and impact through innovative and thought-provoking exhibitions; impactful educational programs for youth and adults; expanded programming in Southern California where CHS holds significant collections in partnerships with the Autry National Center and the University of Southern California; and a major digital preservation, management, and access initiative. Importantly, CHS has received a major grant from the State of California to evaluate a relocation to the Old U.S. Mint via a partnership with the City and County of San Francisco. For more information, please visit www.californiahistoricalsociety.org

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