



California Historical Society Announces the Death of Executive Director & CEO Alicia L. Goehring

SAN FRANCISCO (September 1, 2022) - The California Historical Society (CHS) is saddened to announce the passing of our friend, colleague, and Executive Director & CEO Alicia L. Goehring. Alicia died on August 23 at home in San Francisco in the arms of her husband, Jerry, after a brief and courageous battle with cancer.

Tony Gonzalez, chair of the board of trustees, said, “Alicia was a fearless advocate for those who have been marginalized and forgotten, and a passionate public historian. She came from Wisconsin to California with a sense of adventure and brought a unique blend of pragmatism and optimism to her work at CHS. She will be greatly missed by our board and staff.”

Alicia L. Goehring (née Naylor), age 61, served as executive director and chief executive officer since August 2019. Alicia [came to CHS from the Wisconsin Historical Society](#) with a vision to increase access to California history and expand the society’s statewide reach. Under her leadership, CHS weathered the global COVID-19 pandemic and began laying the groundwork to emerge [ready to embark on a bold new vision](#) to increase statewide reach and impact.

In these times of political disharmony, heightened awareness of social justice issues, climate change, and other pressing matters, Alicia advocated that it is more important than ever for Californians to look to the past to learn lessons that will help us make better decisions today and in the future. To this end, she worked tirelessly on a proposed History Education and Field Services Initiative to help CHS obtain its

statewide outreach goals, and reach its vision for the future. Her work was dedicated to enabling CHS to serve and collaborate with educators, university students, cultural and local history organizations, and Californians throughout our state to create a more just, equitable, and prosperous present and future for everyone.

The Board of Trustees has appointed Chief Operating Officer Jen Whitley as interim chief executive officer. “The board is confident that Jen Whitley and the rest of the CHS team are well positioned to carry out Alicia’s roadmap for CHS’s future,” said CHS trustee Jan Berckefeldt.

Goehring leaves behind her husband Jerry Goehring; three sisters, Jan Allan and Pat Larsen, both of DePere, Wisconsin, and Debbie Opiekun of Burlington, Iowa; brother-in-law Duane Goehring and his family of Destin, Florida; and several nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews.

The family has asked that memorial gifts be made to the California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. You may also donate online [here](#).
