



For Immediate Release

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First 5 Ventura County announces new Pritzker Fellow with a focus on families, infants and toddlers for a strong start in life

Elizabeth Majestic of First 5 Ventura County selected for prestigious national fellowship program, hired as new Director of Place-Based Initiatives

(VENTURA COUNTY, Calif.) – Sept. 29, 2018 – Elizabeth Majestic has been selected to join a dozen other community leaders nationwide for the inaugural cohort of the Pritzker Fellows Program. The program aims to build a network of strong leaders nationwide who will lead community-based efforts focused on the first three years of life, when rapid periods of brain development are critical for a child’s later success. Majestic will be responsible for helping First 5 Ventura County increase the availability of high-quality programs and services for infants and toddlers from birth to age three. Families are encouraged to learn more about the programs offered by First 5 Ventura County at www.first5Ventura.org.

Majestic comes to First 5 Ventura County after a successful career at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She created, led and implemented many large scale national and international efforts to promote outcomes for vulnerable populations. During her tenure at CDC and HHS, she launched “Steps to a HealthierUS,” a national initiative focused on reducing obesity, diabetes, asthma, and tobacco use, served on the US delegation to the World Health Assembly, and was a member of the working group for the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control – the first health treaty undertaken and ratified by the member states of the World Health Organization.

“I am honored to be the Pritzker Fellow for First 5 Ventura County, said Majestic. “I am eager to dive into the innovative early childhood education programs that First 5 Ventura County has to offer for prenatal to three, from PACT classes, to community education campaigns for ensuring health and wellness, to efforts to increase parent knowledge and access to resources.”

The Pritzker Fellows, with expertise across the fields of pediatric medicine, social work, child care and mental health services, were selected to lead their community’s unique efforts to advance policies and programs focused on increasing the availability of high-quality programs and services for infants and toddlers from birth to age three.

“Elizabeth brings a wealth of experience and expertise with efforts to increase effectiveness of programs, deepen collaboration and strategically address stakeholder engagement, says First 5 Ventura

County Executive Director Petra Puls. We are very excited about Elizabeth leading the transition of First 5 Ventura County's Place-based Initiative, our Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs). We are implementing a newly redesigned NfL model and advancing a coordinated and comprehensive system of services for prenatal to three!"

Fellows are deeply embedded in communities and will be working directly with early childhood leaders, and local policymakers and practitioners to create, implement and sustain ambitious communitywide birth to three action plans to support the healthy development of Ventura County's youngest children. The fellows will also be part of a dynamic cohort who together will have the opportunity to learn from one another as well as other state and national birth to three leaders through their participation in the program. The ongoing work of the cohort will be managed by The Sorenson Impact Center, housed at the University of Utah's David Eccles School of Business.

About First 5 Ventura County

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a significant impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on tobacco to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Ventura County distributes more than \$10 million each year to programs and services that support children's health, learning and families, including the 11 community-based Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs). More information at www.first5ventura.org. ###

Funding provided by the Pritzker Children's Initiative, a program of the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation

The National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers is committed to advancing policies and programs that ensure families have the support they need to give their infants and toddlers the foundation for a strong start in life. This effort brings together national partners, early childhood leaders, policymakers and practitioners inside and outside state and local government to create and strengthen promising policies and programs and share what works so that more states and communities can support the healthy development of our youngest children.

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