

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 7, 2023**

## **Hands On Hartford Executive Director Barbara A. Shaw Set to Retire**

*Janet Bermudez chosen to lead agency*



*Barbara A. Shaw*

*Janet Bermudez*

**HARTFORD, Conn. (December 7, 2023)**

Hands on Hartford announced today that its long-time Executive Director, Barbara A. Shaw, LCSW, plans to retire in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2024. She joined HOH in 2002 and has served as its Executive Director since 2011.

During Shaw's tenure, Hands On Hartford has grown significantly, moving into its first consolidated and agency-owned center for community; expanding its supportive housing and homeless prevention programs; increasing the reach and quality of its pantry; and offering creative and innovative food programs, including its shared use kitchen and current Gather55 restaurant. The strength of her leadership is reflected in the agency's recent receipt of the 2023 ImpaCT Award for being the community organization making an impact from FOX61/CW20 and the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut. Shaw herself also received the 2023 Social Justice Award at Charter Oak Cultural Center's annual Vision Awards.

"I have lived, worked and worshipped in Hartford for most of my adult life, and looking back over my time at Hands On Hartford, I am proud of all we have achieved and grateful for the amazing and inspiring team of staff, volunteers, donors and partners who have made it all possible," said Shaw. "Most important, I am honored to have had the opportunity to connect with and serve so many of our Hartford neighbors."

"The impact of Barbara's leadership cannot be overstated", said Cynthia Bates, Chair of the Hands On Hartford Board of Directors. "Her profound dedication to the mission, deep respect for every individual, perseverance and creativity form the foundation for the culture, strength and impact of Hands On Hartford. The Board of Directors is incredibly grateful for her service."

The Board of HOH is committed to continuing the agency's momentum and impact in the community. The Board has voted to name Janet Bermudez, the current Hands On Hartford Director of Continuous Quality Improvement, Staff Development and Support, as Shaw's successor. "Janet is the right person to lead Hands On Hartford into the future and we are fortunate that she is already a part of our team", said Bates. "Janet brings a deep connection to the community, broad experience within the agency and with our staff, and great leadership and management skills, all of which will enable seamless transition for our staff and the community we serve."

"I'm honored for this opportunity as I've been a part of the Hands On Hartford fabric for almost 17 years putting caring into action," said Bermudez. "This is a team that truly believes in the dignity and respect for all and I'm looking forward to my new role and growth within the organization."

**Hands on Hartford** was founded in 1969, and works with thousands of volunteers and dozens of community partners to increase food security and nutrition, improve health, and provide homelessness and housing support in Hartford through a range of innovative direct service programs. For more information, visit **[handsonhartford.org](http://handsonhartford.org)**.

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