

First 5's Kendra Rogers takes new job, won't challenge Poochigian for supervisor

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Kendra Rogers

Kendra Rogers last month officially ended 14 years with First 5 Fresno County in a stew of acrimony and hard feelings. She resigned her position as the agency's executive director, only saying her next job would continue to involve children's issues.

On her way out the door, Rogers pointed the finger at Fresno County Supervisor Henry R. Perea, saying her one-time ally was now out to fire her. And she had long been in the crosshairs of Supervisor Debbie Poochigian. Rogers even pulled papers in May 2013 to challenge Poochigian when her seat is next up for election in 2016.

Such as life in the public sector — and working in a job that, politically speaking, is to a certain extent under the thumb of Fresno County supervisors.

Now, all that is in the past.

Rogers, 37, is no longer going to run for supervisor, she said. And she's landed a new job — in the private sector.

Good to her final word in the public sector, the job involves children's issues.

She starts Monday as Granville Homes' community investment director, a newly created position that will feel very familiar to her: it will focus on children and education issues from birth to age 8.

First 5, by comparison, is a public agency that seeks to bolster health and education programs for children to age 5 and their families.

"It's really a human capital investment strategy," Rogers said of the thrust of her new job.

Granville President Darius Assemi said Rogers will look for ways for the company to make philanthropic investments in health and education endeavors that will help the "community move out of poverty."

Assemi said it is a troubling trend for the entire community when children aren't reading by the third grade. He said Granville is willing to put "resources" into turning that around.

But Rogers' job, Assemi added, won't just be handing out checks. She'll chip in on policy issues and look to help local school districts "more effectively meet their missions... We want to be part of the solution as the districts see fit."