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Denise Lombard Joins Child Advocates' Board

Director at Cisco to help lead prominent nonprofit serving foster youth in Santa Clara County



Milpitas, CA – August 2, 2017 – From volunteer to board member, Denise Lombard's passion for helping foster children has driven her to join the board of Child Advocates of Silicon Valley at a crucial juncture in the 31 year-old agency's history.

"We are thrilled Denise has joined our board," says Karen Scussel, executive director of Child Advocates of Silicon Valley. "The experience she brings in building and leading high-performance teams at Cisco Systems and her passion for inclusivity and diversity will be invaluable as we work toward our goal to provide a CASA for every foster child in Santa Clara County."

Child Advocates has an ambitious five-year strategic plan to provide a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for every child in the Santa Clara County foster care system by year-end 2021. CASAs serve as a friend and mentor, and represent the best interests of the child in dependency hearings. There are about 1,200 children in the Santa Clara County dependency system who live in the county and would benefit from having a CASA. In fiscal 2017, Child Advocates served 810 children with a CASA volunteer and hopes to serve 920 foster children in fiscal year 2018.

"I love the challenges and joys of being a Court Appointed Special Advocate," says Denise. "I work with a teen who's been through some serious challenges and is working to stay on a good path, and a little girl who is so resilient she inspires me. As a board member, I look forward to utilizing my business skills to help the agency put systems in place to serve every foster child with a CASA by 2021."

Denise is a Director of Supplier Diversity at Cisco Systems where she is responsible for the overall strategy and architecture for Cisco's Supplier Diversity Program and execution of Global Procurement services program. In her role, she ensures top performing diverse suppliers are included in opportunities at Cisco and are provided development and mentorship.

In addition to serving on Child Advocates' board, Denise co-leads the San Jose Connected Women's Community Outreach pillar, which is focused on increasing young women's excitement and awareness around Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers. She received the Teacher of the Year award from Citizen Schools 2013 and one of the Silicon Valley Business Journal's Women of Influence for 2017. She earned a BS degree in Business Management from San Jose State University.

About Child Advocates of Silicon Valley

Child Advocates is the only agency in Santa Clara County that provides Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) to foster youth. Because our volunteers are court-appointed, they can thoroughly explore every aspect of a child's case, including meeting teachers, doctors, social workers, counselors, biological family members and foster parents, thereby gaining a comprehensive perspective on what the child needs in order to thrive. CASAs assist their child in accessing needed resources, follow their school progress, and speak up for



their child's best interests in court. They maintain complete records about the case, submit reports and attend court hearings. CASA volunteers stay with their case until their child has a safe, loving home. Find out more about our CASA program at www.BeMyAdvocate.org.