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RELEASE: Gov. Reynolds announces staff changes

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**Governor Kim Reynolds ★ Lt. Governor Chris Cournoyer**

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Gov. Reynolds announces staff changes

DES MOINES— Today, Governor Kim Reynolds announced a number of staff changes in the Office of the Governor.

“As I look ahead to my final year as governor, I’m especially grateful to my dedicated staff who have supported me in serving Iowans over the years,” Gov. Reynolds said. “I’m also pleased to welcome new members to my team who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their roles, and welcome back a veteran senior staff member who was with me throughout the pandemic and for much of my time in office. I look forward to the work ahead and to seizing every opportunity for the people of Iowa.”

Heather Nahas returns to the office as communications director, a role she previously held from August 2019 to September 2024. Her decades-long career in communications and public relations spans a number of industries and includes leadership positions at UnityPoint Health and the Iowa Hospital Association.

Gary Wynne has been appointed agriculture and energy policy advisor. Gary received his undergraduate degree in agricultural business and international agriculture at Iowa State University before obtaining a Master of Science in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State University. He previously worked in the offices of U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley and U.S. Representative Randy Feenstra, and the U.S. Embassy in Brazil.

Madi Willis joins the governor’s staff as director of state and federal relations. Madi graduated from Drake University with a bachelor’s degree in law, politics, and society in 2020. She previously worked in the offices of U.S. Senator Joni Ernst, U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley, and Congressman Zach Nunn.

Collin Slowey joins the governor’s staff as chief speechwriter and communications advisor after serving as speechwriter for then U.S. Senator Marco Rubio from December 2021 until January 2025. Collin is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas where he received a bachelor’s degree in political science.

Rachel Ostergren joins the governor’s office as deputy press secretary. A Fruitland, Iowa native, Rachel graduated from the University of Chicago in 2024 with degrees in public policy studies and Jewish studies. She also has previous communications experience working on congressional and gubernatorial political campaigns.

Michelle Haupts has joined the governor's office as scheduling director. Michelle brings extensive experience in state government, previously working in the Iowa Treasurer's Office as an executive officer and the Chief Clerk's Office of the Iowa House of Representatives, before becoming an operations specialist for the U.S. Southern District Court of Iowa in 2023.

Nick Tansey assumes new duties within the office as director of boards and commissions. Nick previously served as special assistant to Lieutenant Governor Chris Cournoyer, a role now held by Piper Boysen.

The following is a complete list of Office of the Governor staff:

Taryn Frideres – Chief of Staff

Jacob Nicholson – Chief Operating Officer

Molly Severn – Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison

Stan Thompsen – Senior Legal Counsel and Administrative Rules Coordinator

Emily Russell – Deputy Legal Counsel

Megan Hall – Paralegal and Records Custodian

Heather Nahas – Communications Director

Mason Mauro – Deputy Communications Director and Press Secretary

Rachel Ostergren – Deputy Press Secretary

Collin Slowey – Chief Speechwriter and Communications Advisor

Patrick Tomka – Senior Tax and Economic Policy Advisor

Jane Dufoe – Education Policy Advisor

Dax Oberreuter – Health Care and Veteran's Affairs Policy Advisor

Laura Book – Workforce and Public Safety Policy Advisor and Deputy Legislative Liaison

Gary Wynne – Agriculture and Energy Policy Advisor

Michelle Haupts – Director of Scheduling

Madie Willis - Director of the Office for State-Federal Relations

Nick Tansey – Boards and Commissions Director

Annie Hayes – Executive Assistant to the Governor

Piper Boysen – Special Assistant to the Lieutenant Governor

Anna Hartzog – Constituent Services Director

Kate Schreier – Constituent Services Liaison

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