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Air District appoints Arsenio Mataka as deputy executive officer for Equity & Community Programs

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has announced the appointment of prominent environmental justice leader Arsenio Mataka as deputy executive officer for Equity & Community Programs at the agency's Community, Health and Environmental Justice Committee meeting.

After an extensive nationwide recruitment, Arsenio was selected for the position by a panel comprised of Air District officials and notable Bay Area community leaders. In this role, he will oversee the agency's community engagement, strategic incentives, technology implementation and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Arsenio will serve as the primary liaison for environmental justice matters both internally and externally on behalf of the Air District.

"The Bay Area has gained a formidable advocate for environmental justice, and I am pleased to welcome Arsenio Mataka to the Air District," said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. "Arsenio was raised in a rural Central Valley community overburdened by air pollution and witnessed firsthand the profound impact it had on his family and neighbors. His wealth of personal and professional experience brings a unique perspective to the agency that will enable him to tackle the most difficult issues facing our communities."

"Arsenio brings experience and commitment back to California at a time where the Bay Area Air District is leading the way on new strategies for investing in communities and achieving cleaner air," said U.S. EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman.

"Arsenio has spent his career working to address environmental inequities in pollution-burdened communities, helping craft groundbreaking legislation like AB 617 and launch the first-ever Bureau of Environmental Justice in a state attorney general's office," said Yana Garcia, California Secretary for Environmental Protection. "His expertise and deep ties to California communities are invaluable as we work collectively to move the needle on pressing air quality, climate, and environmental challenges facing the Bay Area. I'm thrilled that he is returning to California in this new role."

"Arsenio and I have worked together for over 15 years on environmental justice projects," said Ms. Margaret Gordon, founding member of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project. "I appreciate that he accepted the appointment to this position at the Air District and I know he will be a strong leader and ally for the Bay Area environmental justice communities."

Arsenio holds a bachelor's degree in history from Sacramento State University and a Juris Doctor from Humphreys College School of Law. Arsenio has been a dedicated advocate for environmental justice and health equity, lending his voice to disadvantaged communities and underserved populations while collaborating with stakeholders across all levels of government.

Arsenio is a Biden-Harris Administration appointee where he led the establishment of two new offices at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office of Climate Change and Health Equity; and Office of Environmental Justice. He is currently serving as counselor to the secretary for climate change, environmental justice, civil rights and equity at the agency.

Arsenio brings a wealth of expertise to his new role within the Air District's leadership team. His extensive experience includes serving as senior advisor on environmental policy and law to California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and as a special advisor to California Governor Jerry Brown, where he played a pivotal role in crafting climate change legislation. Prior to this, he served as assistant secretary for environmental justice and tribal affairs at the California Environmental Protection Agency, where he spearheaded initiatives to mitigate environmental disparities in disadvantaged communities.

Arsenio will start his role at the Air District on June 10, after he concludes his duties as counselor to the secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Air District is dedicated to addressing environmental disparities and promoting community engagement within the Bay Area. Through targeted initiatives and partnerships, the agency aims to reduce pollution burdens in disproportionately impacted communities, improve public health outcomes and confront environmental injustice.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [X/Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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