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## **LYRIC Names Laura Lala-Chávez New Executive Director**

7 October 2021 – San Francisco, CA: San Francisco’s esteemed nonprofit **LYRIC** ([www.lyric.org](http://www.lyric.org)), for 33 years serving LGBTQQ+ youth, has named **Laura Lala-Chávez** as its new Executive Director.

“We’re incredibly excited to welcome Laura to the LYRIC family. LYRIC’s Board of Directors unanimously agreed that we need Laura’s leadership experience, commitment to investing in LYRIC’s people and programs, and relationships with community leaders,” said **Phil Kim and Michael Appel, LYRIC Board of Directors Co-Chairs in a statement**. “Laura will join LYRIC during a pivotal time: we’re in the midst of our first-ever capital campaign to expand our Center as we’re seeing increasing demand for our services. We believe her vision to move LYRIC’s work into its next phase will best serve LGBTQQ+ youth and affirms our commitment to racial equity.”

LYRIC’s longtime former Executive Director **Jodi L. Schwartz** continues as President to oversee the ongoing capital campaign through December 2021 to renovate LYRIC’s landmark home in San Francisco’s Castro District, allowing for increased program opportunities for youth. Interim Executive Director

**Toni Newman**, who will remain through November 2021 to support **Lala-Chávez's** executive transition, was recently named as interim CEO for the Black AIDS Institute.

“When I think of LYRIC, I think of youth moving to San Francisco in search of support. I think of youth in the Bay Area who are struggling to come out to their families, or are navigating family rejection, and the lack of stability losing your support system provides,” said **Lala-Chávez**. “I think of youth who are trying to survive in an unjust, oppressive world day to day. I think of the collective power we have to create change as a place of healing, acceptance, love and nurturance. I see this opportunity as a way to reimagine work in service to youth. I have seen the effects of trauma on youth in my time as a counselor and as a result I have become deeply ingrained in the city of San Francisco as a resident, advocate, director and change maker. I don't think I could have dreamed a better opportunity than this one to create lasting, impact for LGBTQ+ youth in San Francisco.”

Lala-Chávez will start on October 25 and brings over 25 years' experience in youth development, counseling and nonprofit management to LYRIC. Previously, Laura served as Executive Director of Challenge Day, a national organization focused on building empathy, compassion, and equity in school communities across the country. They also served as Associate Executive Director for Mission YMCA in San Francisco, a youth development organization supporting youth in creating educational, career pathways while supporting food and housing insecurity. She holds a Bachelors in Recreation-Nonprofit Management and a Masters in School and MFT Counseling from San

Francisco State University. Lala-Chávez lives with her wife Cheryl, two children and dogs in the Portola district of San Francisco.

LYRIC is the San Francisco Bay Area's leading organization offering expertise in youth workforce development, healthcare navigation, individual counseling, and group-based community building to marginalized low-income LGBTQQ+ youth. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, LYRIC has continued its vital work for queer youth in our community. LYRIC's mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career trainings, health promotion, and leadership development with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ) youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes, genders, and abilities. For more information and to make a donation, go to [www.lyric.org](http://www.lyric.org)

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