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Kerkman announces appointees to Racial and Ethnic Equity Commission

Kenosha County Executive Samantha Kerkman today announced her appointees to fill two vacant seats on the county's Racial and Ethnic Equity Commission.

A. Brian Gonzales and Xavier Solis will serve three-year terms on the commission, pending confirmation votes by the County Board.

Gonzales, a lifelong Kenosha resident, is a former Kenosha Police officer who retired last year. In a personal statement submitted with his appointment application, he said he believes his life and work experience as a minority will bring a diverse perspective to the commission.

Solis, of Bristol, is a private-practice attorney who has worked as an advocate counsel for the Kenosha and Racine County circuit courts and the Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office, and has also served as a guardian ad litem in Kenosha County. In his nomination statement, he cited growing up in a low-income home and being the first in his family to graduate from college, and having firsthand experience with the struggles many minority families endure.

Kerkman said she believes both will bring valuable perspectives to the commission.

"I am pleased to send these appointments to the County Board for its review," Kerkman said. "I am confident that retired Officer Gonzales and Attorney Solis will serve well on behalf of the Racial and Ethnic Equity Commission and the entire community."

The commission was established in 2021 with a stated mission to realize greater racial equity and dismantle racism in Kenosha County through research, education and ongoing review of current procedures, as to implement transformative ideas born through research, collaboration and community engagement.

As outlined in a resolution adopted by the County Board, the commission shall — at a minimum — reflect the diverse racial and ethnic makeup of Kenosha County as determined by the most

recent census information, with five of the seven non-County Board commissioners representing racial and ethnic minorities in Kenosha County.

The vacancies Gonzales and Solis would fill were the result of the resignations of two former commission members for personal reasons in late 2022.

More details about the commission is available at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/2123/Racial-and-Ethnic-Equity-Commission>.

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