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Snyder appoints five members to Women's Commission

LANSING, Mich. – Gov. Rick Snyder today announced five appointments to the Michigan Women's Commission, located in the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

Christine Etienne, Susan Dobrich, Krista Haroutunian, Cathleen Knauf and Anne (Brook) Thompson are appointed.

The commission works to improve the quality of life for Michigan women through leadership and partnership on key issues.

"I am confident the backgrounds and various areas of expertise of these individuals will be a tremendous asset to the commission's mission and work," Snyder said.

Etienne, of Petoskey, is the community relations director for the Bay Harbor Company and an associate broker for Harbor Sotheby's International Realty. She previously served as the sales director for Bay Harbor Properties and vice president of treasury management of the National City Bank (First of America Bank). Etienne serves as a member on the Bay Harbor Foundation and Northwest Michigan Industrial Association. She is a former member of the Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce, Hospice of Little Traverse Bay and volunteer of the Women's Resource Center. Etienne also serves in multiple leadership positions with Rotary International. She earned a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in business administration from Lake Superior State University. She replaces Thomas Wilson.

Dobrich, of Dowagiac, is the Cass County probate and family court judge. She previously served as Cass County's first female prosecutor and a partner in the Law Firm of Westrate, Holmstrom & Dobrich. She served as a member of the Governor's Task Force and Executive Committee on Child Neglect and Abuse. Dobrich is a past president and current board member of the Michigan Probate Judges Association. She earned a bachelor's degree from Kalamazoo College and a law degree from the Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Dobrich replaces Pamela Faris.

Haroutunian, of Detroit, is vice president and attorney of Haroutunian Licata Haroutunian, P.C. She also serves as guardian ad litem for the Wayne County Probate Court and vice chair of the Wayne County Board of Canvassers. Haroutunian is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the

Armenian Relief Society, St. Christopher's – St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Northwest Civic Federation. She earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Michigan and a law degree from the Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University. She replaces Rana Abbas.

Knauf, of St. Joseph, is a retired special education coordinator from the Bridgman Public Schools and holds endorsements in mental and emotional impairment, and pre-primary special education. She earned a bachelor's degree in group social studies/psychology from Grand Valley State College, a master's degree in special education from Western Michigan University and a learning disabilities certification from WMU. Knauf replaces Emily Stoddard Furrow.

Thompson, of Haslett, is an administrative supervisor and program manager with Michigan State University's College of Education, Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education Department. She is a retired U.S. Navy veteran (LDCR-USN, Ret.) of 20 years from the Vietnam era and founded the chapters of Woman Officers Professional Association in Norfolk, VA, and San Diego, CA. Thompson served on the Ingham County Veteran Affairs Committee, as treasurer of WAVES National Unit 32 and as commander of NUWARINE Post 535 of the American Legion, the only all-female post in Michigan. She earned a bachelor's degree in art history from Hamline University in Saint Paul, MN, a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Providence College in Rhode Island and teaching credentials from Chapman University in California. She will serve as vice chair and replaces Sheryl Mitchell.

Etienne, Dobrich, Haroutunian, and Thompson will serve three-year terms expiring July 15, 2014. Knauf will serve the remainder of a three-year term expiring July 15, 2012. The appointments are subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

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