

Patina Park heads Division of Indian Work

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When Noya Woodrich moved into her new position with the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches five months ago, she and the board of the Division of Indian Work set an ambitious goal of having a new executive director for DIW in place before the end of the year.

With three weeks to spare, that goal was met when interim director Roger Meyer welcomed Patina Park to the oldest direct-service organization for American Indians in the Twin Cities

Before joining DIW, Park, a lawyer from the Cheyenne River tribe in South Dakota, was a child welfare project coordinator with the Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice. She has strong connections in Hennepin County, with Minnesota tribal communities and experience in tribal government. "I am very excited by the opportunity and humbled by the excitement I am feeling," she said. "DIW is a wonderful organization and I am optimistic that with everyone's help, we can continue to expand its impressive impact."

Woodrich said Park will be a good fit for the organization and that she has the skills and vision to lift DIW even higher. "Her organizational management and fundraising abilities are stellar," she said. "She is already well respected and connected in the community."

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Park has already met the DIW and GMCC staff members and she and Meyer are working together on a smooth transition. There will be additional opportunities for supporters and community members to get to know Patina better after the first of the year.

DIW, founded in 1952, empowers American Indian people through culturally-based education, counseling, advocacy and leadership development. It is a partner with the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, a human-service nonprofit which also focuses on helping seniors, nurturing families, mentoring youth and fighting hunger.