

Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc. (LARS)  
311 Laurel Avenue  
Laurel, MD 20707  
(301) 776-0442  
www.laureladvocacy.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LARS Appoints New Executive Director  
June 26, 2015

**Laurel, MD** – The staff and Board of Directors of Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services (LARS) are excited to announce the appointment of Leah Paley as the organization’s new Executive Director. Leah brings significant experience to her new role at LARS, including serving as LARS’s Director of Homeless and Emergency Services for a year and a half and Deputy Director for the past two and a half years. During this time, she developed a deep understanding of the needs of the Laurel community and substantial capacity to ensure that LARS is meeting those needs. Having overseen the daily operation of LARS’ Crisis Center, Leah has the ability and perspective to bring LARS’ vision to life as the agency implements its recently developed strategic plan. She has heard the stories and struggles of LARS’ clients, and these first-hand experiences remain at the heart of her leadership.

Before joining LARS, Leah managed statewide advocacy and client program efforts for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Maryland Chapter. Leah is a graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore where she received her Master’s in Social Work (MSW) with a concentration in Management and Community Organizing and a specialization in Social Action and Community Development. She is a Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW) in the state of Maryland.

About her new role, Leah says, “I am really excited about this opportunity and look forward to moving the organization forward by identifying new resources that will allow our staff to assist more clients in crisis and implement services that will allow clients to achieve long term self-sufficiency. I look forward to partnering with local businesses, city and county officials, congregations, schools, and community members, in order to meet the basic needs of all community members.”

Don Ausherman, President of LARS’s Board of Directors, states, “The LARS Board of Directors would like to thank former Executive Director Lori Proietti for her many contributions to the agency over the last ten years. For more than a year now, the LARS Board and Staff have conducted strategic planning to develop near-term to long-term goals and strategies that will enable LARS to increase the number of people we serve and assist more clients in achieving long term self-sufficiency. In her role as Deputy Director of LARS, Leah has been a very critical contributor to this process. We are extremely pleased that Leah has agreed to become LARS’s Executive Director as we begin to implement these new goals and strategies.”

###

*LARS has been a vital lifeline for Laurel residents in crisis for nearly 30 years. LARS serves thousands of low-income and homeless individuals and families each year through programs that include a food pantry, rental and utility assistance, transitional and permanent housing, case management, and employment assistance. LARS’s mission is to enable homeless and low-income people in Laurel who are in crisis to achieve stability and long-term self-sufficiency.*