



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
Samantha Kerkman, County Executive

1010 – 56<sup>th</sup> Street, Third Floor  
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140  
(262) 653-2600  
Fax: (262) 653-2817

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News release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Tami Rongstad  
262-653-2831

## **Kerkman announces appointees to fill vacancies on Racial and Ethnic Equity Commission**

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

Alayna Arrington and Duane O'Keefe are Kerkman's selections to serve terms to expire Dec. 31, 2024, while Cortney Marshall will fill out a term that expires Dec. 31, 2023.

These appointments will move forward pending confirmation votes by the County Board in the coming weeks. Kerkman selected her nominees from a pool of applicants who submitted applications and sat for interviews recently.

"We've been fortunate to have applicants who bring diverse and unique life experiences to the table," Kerkman said. "These three candidates rose to the top of a high-quality group of applicants."

Arrington, of Pleasant Prairie, works as a Campus and Community Recruitment Recruiter for Our Money Matters, an initiative of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Community Development Action Coalition that works to provide opportunities for scholarships, employment, career exploration and pathways to entrepreneurship for members of underserved communities.

In her commission nomination statement, Arrington said she believes she would be a valuable addition to the commission because she understands the need for discussion around racial equity and advocacy. "I am committed to servant leadership, and participating in social change for Kenosha County for the economic and social advancement of communities of color," she wrote.

O'Keefe, of Kenosha, is a registered member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and is the owner and president of O'Keefe's Automotive and Service Repair.

In his statement, he wrote, "I have seen, witnessed and experienced racism as a minority. I feel treating everyone fair is important, and everyone is equal."

Marshall, also of Kenosha, is a local Realtor and works in educational support security for the Kenosha Unified School District.

Marshall wrote in his statement that he has experienced some racial issues during his 30-plus years in the community. “I feel I would be a great advocate to help bridge the gap with the racial issues and tension in the local community, and (would) try to help teach and educate the community on some of the issues that many have been faced with,” he wrote.

Kerkman said she appreciates the varied backgrounds of the appointees.

“Mr. Marshall’s knowledge of the housing challenges in our community, Ms. Arrington’s experiences in education, and Mr. O’Keefe’s life background and small business experience will all add to the commission’s discussions and work,” Kerkman said. “I am pleased to send these appointments to the County Board.

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

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