



HFSC appoints first African-American woman crime scene unit director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Houston Forensic Science Center has appointed Carina Haynes, a crime scene expert with 12 years of experience, as the new director of the crime scene unit.

Ms. Haynes, the first African-American and woman to hold this position at HFSC, replaces Jerry Pena, who is retiring effective June 4 after five years as director of CSU.

“HFSC’s crime scene unit has made enormous strides under Jerry’s leadership, including civilianizing and achieving international accreditation, and we could not have made this much progress without him,” said Dr. Peter Stout, HFSC’s CEO and president.

“Carina, with her extraordinary focus on quality and vast knowledge in the crime scene investigation field, will now lead the unit to the next chapter, which includes a much-needed expansion to better serve Houston’s needs,” he added.

Ms. Haynes joined HFSC in January 2017 as a supervisor and since January has served as CSU’s acting director. Ms. Haynes joined HFSC after nine years in North Carolina with the Durham Police Department’s crime scene unit, where she started as a crime scene investigator and eventually became the unit’s supervisor.

“While I am here today because of years of hard work and determination, I know I have also benefited from the leadership, mentorship and guidance of those who came before me and I look forward to providing that same support to others that come after me _ both as a crime scene investigator and a Black woman,” Ms. Haynes said.

Ms. Haynes will focus in the next year on expanding CSU as it continues a five-year plan to double its size and increase the unit's efficiency and quality, in part by introducing new technologies.

"More than 75 percent of HFSC's 200-plus staff are women and it is crucial our management and leadership team not only reflect that reality but also provide the next generation with the confidence and assurance that we will do everything we can to shatter glass ceilings here," said Dr. Stout.

"And while I am pleased with where we are now, I know we must do more to ensure the diversity and inclusivity of our staff. This will be part of our focus in the coming years as we continue to make HFSC a model crime lab for the nation and one that best reflects and serves our community," Dr. Stout added.

Currently, five of HFSC's six forensic discipline managers are women and, with Ms. Haynes' promotion, six of the nine-member executive team are also women.

HFSC is a local government corporation that provides forensic services to the City of Houston and other local agencies. HFSC is overseen by a board of directors appointed by the mayor and confirmed by city council. Its management structure is designed to be responsive to a 2009 recommendation by the National Academy of Sciences that called for crime laboratories to be independent of law enforcement.

HFSC operates in seven forensic disciplines.

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