
Profile

Jerilyn

First Name

Harris

Last Name

Jerilyn Rolinson Harris

Full/Legal Name (if different than name provided above)

Email Address

Street Address

Suite or Apt

Ukiah

City

CA

State

95482

Postal Code

Mailing Address (if Applicable)

Voter Registration Address (if different than street address or mailing address)

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Mendocino County Employees' Retirement Association Board: Submitted

Public member

Which position, seat, or representational category would you prefer?

Availability to Attend Meetings

☒ Other (Please Specify Below)

Retiree - able to attend meetings
whenever scheduled

Availability to Attend Meetings (Other)

Interests & Experiences

Special Expertise, Experience, or Interest in This Area?

I have extensive experience in retirement policy. I was a Governor's appointee to the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS), the largest educator retirement system in the world (\$210 Billion portfolio) for two terms and was elected to the Chairmanship of the Board.



Upload a Resume

Upload Additional Supporting Documents

Upload Additional Supporting Documents

Upload Additional Supporting Documents

Question applies to Mendocino County Employees' Retirement Association Board

Describe your experience as an executive financial manager in a public agency or private enterprise.

My experience has been at the policy level, not directly responsible for financial management.

Describe your expertise in developing, planning, and implementing investment and money strategies.

Appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) for two terms (seven years), I was unanimously confirmed by the California State Senate both times. The CalSTRS Board was responsible for the policies, planning, and investment decisions for a \$210 Billion portfolio for almost one million active and retired teachers in our state. CalSTRS is the largest educator retirement system in the world and the second largest public retirement system (CalPERS is first) in the United States. Board education was the critically important at CalSTRS. I was able to benefit from a plethora of opportunities such as visiting China and Vietnam to study emerging markets. I was also privileged to be the only Schwarzenegger appointee who was elected Chair of the Teachers Retirement Board. It was because of the rich experience at CalSTRS that I wanted to bring what I learned home to the county I love. Since my appointment to the MCERA Board I have continued to learn about investing and money strategies through the continuing education requirements of the Thirty-seven Act. Each meeting brings something new and of interest.

Describe your expertise in the interpretation of executive level financial reports and correspondence.

Throughout my years in state level policy, both as an employee and as a policy leader, I have been responsible for the interpretation of financial reports. I served as Chair of the Board of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), as Chair of the Sunset Review Committee, Board Member of the Academic Standards Commission, Administrator of the Professional Development Unit of the California Department of Education (where I had oversight of \$1.1 Billion in programs), and as Administrator of the Teacher Education Programs in the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education. All of these experiences required significant knowledge of finance and financial reporting.

Describe your expertise in the human resources and employee benefits arena.

As CalSTRS Board Chairman I was where the buck stopped, not only for the one thousand state employees who worked in Sacramento to administer benefits and do the day-to-day investing of our portfolio, but to be sure we hired the right people to do the job. I worked closely with the CEO when we hired employees and, unfortunately when we needed to let people go. I am familiar with benefit structure and the challenges of funding those benefits in the wake of the 2008-09 recession. Retired educators lack a health care benefit which puts them at a disadvantage compared with state employees with a CalPERS retirement. Mendocino County retirees are at the same disadvantage. The MCERA Board had to make the tough decision to cease retiree health coverage to keep the system whole. The ability to make such difficult decisions makes the understanding of what being a fiduciary actually means, relevant to board members. For the last 2.5 years I have learned about the Thirty-seven Act and the unique benefits that apply to Mendocino County employees.

Describe how your commitment and willingness to spend the necessary time to work as a Board member has been demonstrated in other experiences.

I have served on the MCERA Board for the last 2.5 years. The only meeting I missed was when I fell and took out a new hip and shattered my femur. I was still hospitalized when the meeting took place. I come to meetings prepared and try to work collegially with the other board members to address the challenges that almost all public pension funds face in our country. My involvement in local and state arenas speaks to my commitment and willingness to serve. Locally I was a Charter Member of the Sun House Guild, served as Chair of the Mendocino County Hospital Board, served in a variety of education organizations at the local, county and state level. My 27 years of state level service has, with the exception of my time as a Visiting Scholar at UC Berkeley and Visiting Educator at the State Department of Education, been as a volunteer. I take the commitment to serve as a core value. I've been honored to serve Mendocino County on the MCERA Board and hope to be afforded the privilege to continue. We have an outstanding Retirement Administrator and staff and, with the addition of Kathy Lehner Smith, an excellent board. So much good has been done.

Certification

Please read the following statements and indicate your acceptance thereof.

I hereby certify that I am a registered voter in the State of California, County of Mendocino, a citizen of the United States, and will be at least 18 years of age at the time of the next election. I am not imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony. I certify under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that the information on this application is true and correct. I understand that assuming this public responsibility could result in public knowledge of my background and/or qualifications, including financial interests. Applications will be kept on file for one year.

☒ I Agree *