

## Arlene Daily named new executive director at Souderton's Keystone Opportunity Center

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Arlene Daily is Keystone Opportunity Center's new executive director.  
Submitted photo

Souderton >> Arlene Daily started her career in the for-profit world, but switched in the 1990s to working for nonprofit organizations.

"And I've been there ever since," she said.

"Life is really short and I wanted that time to be as valuable as it possibly could be," she said, "so I thought if I could spend my days working on trying to make changes, that would be way more important an investment of my time."

Daily, who started on Sept. 11 as Keystone Opportunity Center's new executive director, replaces E. Richard Aichele III, who retired in January. "Daily comes to Keystone with decades of experience in the nonprofit world. She has served in leadership positions in nonprofit organizations such as social service agencies, disease-fighting charities, arts organizations and community centers in Pennsylvania and New York City," Keystone said in a release announcing Daily's hiring. "She has worked locally, nationally and internationally, managing executive directors in chapter offices across the U.S., leading advocacy and lobbying efforts at the state and federal levels, building creative community alliances that advanced all involved and shepherding organizations out of debt."

"Regardless of the mission, it's still at an executive level a lot of the same skills and a lot of strategy and analysis and trying to figure out the way to do more and grow the organization and bring more community members in and grow the number of connections that you have and serve more people ultimately," Daily said during an interview at Keystone's office on Main Street in Souderton.

As she settles in at Keystone, she said, "It's a lot of looking at what does the staff need to be even more successful, to serve more people, to grow all the different areas that Keystone offers — the education, helping those that are homeless and providing food," along with providing connections to other social services.

"The entire umbrella — instead of looking at the three buckets — is really dealing with people that are facing the trauma of poverty, that are trying to deal with how to get their feet underneath them," Daily said.

Keystone's food pantry serves over 1,100 people in the Souderton Area School District, according to Keystone information.

Daily was the unanimous choice of the Keystone Opportunity Center Board of Directors to be the organization's next executive director, Lucy Sharp, Keystone's board president, said in the release.

"During our search for a new executive director, it was clear the future of Keystone depends on being able to engage multiple constituencies from our community to maintain our multiple programs. Because of her extensive and varied leadership experience, Arlene is ready to accept this challenge," Sharp said.

Most recently, Daily was executive director of the Mayfair Festival of the Arts in Allentown.

Mayfair's mission was to provide access to the arts for the entire community, regardless of the person's income, Daily said. Art adds to a community's vitality, she said.

"When you make your community a more vibrant place to live, you attract new businesses," she said. "New people move into the area. It's really partly a community development project."

Mayfair was not held this year, but there are plans for it to return next year at a new location, Cedar Crest College, according to information from various sources, including the Cedar Crest website.

Now an Allentown resident, Daily said it's only a half hour drive to work, but she is thinking of moving closer to Souderton.

She said she grew up in the Wilkes-Barre area, has lived in other areas, including Europe, New Jersey and New York City, but has returned to her home state.

"Originally from Pennsylvania and came back here, as many people do," Daily said. "Go back to your roots."