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Susan B. Anthony Project Associate Director Jeanne Fusco will replace longtime Executive Director Barbara Spiegel, who is retiring June 17.

Associate director to be new executive

Change at Susan B. Anthony Project as Barbara Siegel retires on June 17

BY BRUNO MATARAZZO JR.
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TORRINGTON — Jeanne Fusco started as a part-time employee for the Susan B. Anthony Project in 1995 and next month she will be its executive director.

The board of directors unanimously tapped Fusco, associate director, to replace Barbara Spiegel, who is retiring next month after 20 years as the organization's leader.

The decision comes following a nationwide search that brought in 60 applicants, said Nanette Falkenberg, the board's vice president and the chairwoman of the search committee.

"We found that out of all of these applicants, Jeanne had the strongest set of skills," Falkenberg said. "When you add her knowledge of the issues and her knowledge of the community, we felt she was the strongest choice."

Falkenberg said of the 60 applicants, about 10 were interviewed.

Fusco, 56, will take over after Spiegel's last day on June 17. She will oversee a management team of five people, a staff of 25 and more than 100 volunteers. The nonprofit has a budget of \$1.7 million. After taking over, Fusco said she hopes to meet with staff and domestic violence survivors, as well as stakeholders in the community, to develop goals and services for clients.

The nonprofit has grown considerably since it started in 1983 in the basement of Trinity Episcopal Church with one phone line and a small group of volunteers. Today, the organization provides services to 2,500 victims of domestic and sexual violence, and brings prevention education programs to

more than 6,500 students in 20 towns across the region.

Fusco would like to see the program's funding increase even while state funding and grants are cut or kept at the same rate.

"Sustainability for the long term is a challenge," Fusco said.

One way to help the nonprofit sustain that funding is with an endowment fund, which currently contains about \$1 million. Fusco said she would like to see the fund at \$5 million in five to 10 years.

A native of Rhode Island, Fusco started working at Susan B. Anthony Project on a program called workplace basics, which helped domestic violence survivors become economically self-sufficient. She went on to become the organization's first development director and later associate director.

Fusco currently oversees all of the crisis and client services — shelter, transitional housing, counseling and support groups. She also supervises the prevention education programs in schools throughout northwestern Connecticut.

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