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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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**INGRID FERMIN BECOMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

ARCADIA, CA – Ingrid Fermin served her first day as executive director of the California Horse Racing Board on Friday, and as the e-mails and telephone calls went well into the night, she had some idea of what life is going to be like in the months and years ahead.

“I had plenty of busy days as a steward,” she related, “but my responsibilities usually ended after the last race on the card.”

A steward in California since 1981, Fermin was selected December 2 by the racing commissioners from a list of highly qualified candidates. She had hoped to assume her new duties January 1, but the position of CHRB executive director has a peace officer status, and the requisite background check and other reviews caused the delay.

Though not yet on the payroll, Fermin spent the last five weeks familiarizing herself with the job ahead, meeting with racing commissioners, racetrack officials, legislators, CHRB investigators, horsemen, and jockeys. She also granted numerous interviews to reporters and radio show hosts.

“In the past month, I’ve attended and participated in many hearings and meetings related to the industry,” she explained. “I’ve tried to get a feel for the current situation. I was pleased to find out that all the facets of racing are trying to work together on various fronts. I see the Thoroughbred Owners of California and the racetracks being especially cooperative, and I hope that continues.”

While maintaining her residence in Del Mar, she plans to continue traveling to racetracks throughout the state, meeting with racing participants, and finding solutions to some of the problems facing the industry. She will be at the CHRB headquarters in Sacramento early next week.

Fermin, 63, has a degree in humanities from the University of California at Berkeley and was an educator until she decided to pursue a career in the horse-racing industry. She attended the Jockey Club’s school for racing officials. She became the first female steward in California in 1981. Accredited as a steward by the Association of Racing Commissioners International, she served on the prestigious Southern California thoroughbred circuit from 1991. She is a certified mediator and a specialist in the area of intervention and addiction. She is married to Buzz Fermin, a veteran horseshoer on the southern circuit. They have three children and four grandchildren.