

# FHO Steering Committee Bios

## Executive Committee

**Charles Rutheiser (he/him)**

**Executive Committee Chair**

**Funders Together Board Member**

**Senior Associate, Civic Sites and Community Change, Annie E. Casey Foundation**



Charles Rutheiser is a Senior Associate in the Center for Community and Economic Opportunity at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Charles has been part of the Casey team involved in the East Baltimore Revitalization Initiative, a large-scale effort to build a mixed-income community of opportunity in a deeply distressed neighborhood adjacent to the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. Charles is also an active member of the Urban Land Institute Inner City Council and the Anchor Institution Task Force. A former faculty member at Bryn Mawr College, Georgia State University, Johns Hopkins University and Western Michigan University, he earned a PhD in cultural anthropology from Johns Hopkins University and a BA in

anthropology from New College of Florida. Charles is the author of *The Opportunity Makers: The First Half-Century of Sponsors for Educational Opportunity* (2016, Blurb), *Imagineering Atlanta: the politics of place in the city of dreams* (1996, Verso) and numerous articles, book chapters and reports on education and urban development in the United States and the Caribbean. Charles is former Fulbright and Inter-American Foundation Fellow.

**Dana Bourland, AICP (she/her)**

**Vice President, Environment, The JPB Foundation**



Dana works at the intersection of issues related to health, poverty and the environment. Dana led the creation of the Environment Program at JPB with a focus on transitioning to a just, equitable and clean energy future, increasing access to the benefits of nature, detoxifying the built and natural systems, and strengthening the field of environmental justice. She also oversees the Emergency Relief grantmaking of JPB in response to destructive weather-related events and to prepare for the impacts of climate change. All of JPB's Environment related grantmaking occurs domestically and is prioritized to measurably benefit the health and well-being of low-income communities.

Formerly, Dana was Vice President of Green Initiatives for Enterprise Community Partners where she developed and oversaw all aspects of Enterprise's award-winning Green Communities program including the creation of the Green Communities Criteria and Enterprise's Multifamily Retrofit Program. Dana co-created and served as Managing Director of the Green Communities Offset Fund. A Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, Dana is a graduate of Harvard's Graduate Program in Real Estate and holds a Master of Planning Degree from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Univ. of Minnesota. Dana is the author of *"Gray to Green: A Call to Action on the Housing and Climate Crises"* published by Island Press.

**Eileen Fitzgerald (she/her)**  
**Head of Housing Affordability Philanthropy, Wells Fargo Foundation**



Eileen Fitzgerald is head of housing affordability philanthropy for the Wells Fargo Foundation. She joined the Wells Fargo Foundation in 2019 after a 25-year career in community development, nonprofit and housing industry. In 2019, Wells Fargo unveiled an evolution to its philanthropy strategy including a commitment of \$1 billion through 2025 to address the U.S. housing affordability crisis aimed at bringing forward solutions for homelessness, availability and affordability of rentals, and sustainable homeownership. Most recently, Fitzgerald served as president and chief executive officer of Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF), a collaborative of advancing creation and preservation of healthy sustainable affordable rental homes for low-and moderate-income households. Prior to joining SAHF in 2014, Fitzgerald served as chief executive officer and chief operating officer with NeighborWorks America, a national organization with a network of more than 245 nonprofits that creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives and strengthen their communities. Previously, she worked at the Fannie Mae Foundation and as the Chief Investment Officer for Single Family at the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust. She also served at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service as the Associate and Acting Administrator and held positions in Virginia and Maryland state governments. Fitzgerald is a graduate of Fordham University in New York and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

**Susan K. Thomas (she/her)**  
**President, Melville Charitable Trust**



Susan Thomas is President of the Melville Charitable Trust where she oversees the Trust's grantmaking strategy, philanthropic partnerships and administration. Formerly the Trust's Program Director, Susan led the foundation's housing and racial equity efforts for five years, while managing a state and national portfolio of grants supporting solutions to homelessness. While at the Trust, she was also selected to participate in the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Fellowship program targeting leaders working to improve outcomes for children, families, and communities. Her experience as a Casey Fellow has been instrumental in helping the Trust develop a targeted grantmaking strategy that focuses on ending homelessness for Black, Indigenous and People of Color. Prior to joining the Trust, Susan was Project Officer for Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta, where she was responsible for leading "Unsheltered No More!," an initiative to dramatically reduce street homelessness that placed over 1,000 homeless men, women, and children into permanent housing. As the former president of Providence Consulting Group, she helped launch a statewide foundation to assist foster families and co-chaired an effort for the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Atlanta Housing Authority to rehouse 420 families as part of a major HOPE VI redevelopment project. Susan is a former Vice President of Community Investment and Area Development at the United Way of Greater Atlanta. Prior to her nonprofit career, she worked for 15 years in the areas of accounting, management consulting, and strategic planning. She holds a Master of Business Administration from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Maryland.

**Monica Valdes-Lupi (she/her)**  
**Managing Director, Health, Kresge Foundation**



Monica Valdes Lupi, JD, MPH brings more than 20 years of experience in public health to her role as managing director of The Kresge Foundation’s Health Program. Valdes Lupi most recently served as senior fellow at the de Beaumont Foundation, where she advised and led its efforts to amplify and accelerate policy initiatives aimed at developing and advancing a health agenda on critical public health issues such as tobacco control, racial justice and health equity. Valdes Lupi was also a senior advisor to the CDC Foundation in its COVID-19 efforts. In this role, she guided activities aimed at quickly identifying and supporting critical gaps and needs among state and local health departments in their response and recovery activities. She also

helped build and manage a team of regional advisors to expand the capacity of the foundation in its efforts to support health departments. Previously, she served as the executive director of the Boston Public Health Commission, the local health department for the City of Boston, and as the deputy commissioner for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, where she led the day-to-day operations for an agency that included public health hospitals, several regulatory bodies, and numerous public health programs. She also has experience working at the national level as the first chief program officer for Health Systems Transformation at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. Valdes Lupi led ASTHO’s work on health equity, Medicaid and public health partnerships, government relations, state health policy, and public health informatics. She received her Juris Doctorate from the Dickinson School of Law, Master of Public Health from the Boston University School of Public Health and bachelor’s degree from Bryn Mawr College.

## Steering Committee & Foundation Representatives

**Kristin Aldana-Taday (she/her)**  
**Program Officer, Domestic Programs, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**



Kristin Aldana-Taday coordinates domestic grantmaking activities for the program department of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Aldana-Taday monitors current grants and supports the development, review, and presentation of domestic grant proposals, with a focus on the Foundation’s Chronic Homelessness initiative, for consideration by the Foundation board of directors. Prior to joining the Hilton Foundation, Aldana-Taday worked for the Liberty Hill Foundation, where she directed donor services with a focus on donor engagement activities and donor advised funds. Aldana-Taday also previously worked for Pacoima Beautiful, an environmental justice organization in Los Angeles. She holds a master’s degree in urban planning from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a bachelor’s degree in sociology and urban studies from the University of California, San Diego.

**Sarah Armour-Jones (she/her)**  
**Director of Communications, Melville Charitable Trust**



Sarah joined the Melville Trust in spring 2020 as Director of Communications. In this role she is helping to elevate the work of the Trust and its grantees; shift national and state-based narratives around homelessness and affordable housing; and develop and implement strategic communications that support the Trust’s mission of ending homelessness. For eleven years prior to joining the Trust, Sarah served as a communications, program and research consultant to foundations, nonprofits and academic institutions. Earlier in her career she worked as Special Projects Manager for philanthropist David Haas, Officer of Program Administration at the Pew Charitable Trusts, Marketing Director at Free Press and Editorial Assistant at the British Film Institute. Sarah earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of

Pennsylvania.

**Stacey Barbas (she/her)**  
**Senior Program Officer, Kresge Foundation**



Stacey Barbas is a Senior Program Officer on the Kresge Foundation’s Health Team. She is responsible for managing a portfolio of approximately \$20 million that focuses on increasing health equity by addressing conditions that lead to poor health outcomes. She is the lead staff person supporting equitable and healthy food systems including the previous investment on Fresh, Local and Equitable, a \$12 million dollar initiative with the foundations’ Arts & Culture program surfacing projects around the country that used food-oriented programs to contribute to equity, economic revitalization, cultural expression and health in urban low-income communities. She is also leading the Health team’s work in addressing healthy and affordable housing. Stacey serves on the Board of Directors of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food System Funders and is chairperson of SAFSF’s Policy Committee. Ms. Barbas’ professional career in the nonprofit health and human service fields spans 30 years. She joined the Kresge Foundation in January 2008 after serving for five years as Executive Director of the Michigan AIDS fund, a statewide nonprofit grantmaking organization. Ms. Barbas received a Master of Science in Administration and Management from Central Michigan University and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Wayne State University.

**Janelle Chan (she/her)**

**National Housing Director, Ballmer Group**



Janelle is a community advocate with experience in participatory urban planning, community organizing, resource development, and real estate development and finance. Over the past decade, Janelle has worked with and for the Asian/Asian American community and broader coalitions of color on a wide range of initiatives on equity and housing. At ACDC, Janelle manages the Participatory Chinatown project along with other community-capacity building programs such as housing counseling and the A-VOYCE youth program; oversees the real estate development pipeline, which includes the development of the Parcel 24 mixed-use, mixed-income development with 345 units of both affordable and market rate housing in downtown Boston; and maintains a real estate portfolio of over \$120MM in housing and commercial real estate. Janelle is a LEED Accredited Professional in sustainable development and received a Master in City Planning with a specialization in Housing, Community, and Economic Development from M.I.T. and a Bachelor degree in Ethnic Studies and Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Bea De La Torre (she/her)**

**Managing Director of Housing & Homelessness, Trinity Church Wall Street**



Beatriz (Bea) de la Torre is the Managing Director for Housing and Homelessness at Trinity Church Wall Street. Her main focus is finding and crafting high-impact interventions to address the housing and homeless crisis in New York City, following the principles established by the organization and the Vestry. Before joining Trinity Wall Street, Bea managed the housing and homelessness portfolio at Robin Hood, and focused on the creation and preservation of affordable housing through such projects as New Stories Inwood which co-locates low-income housing over a redesigned public library. Previously, Bea worked at the Department of Preservation and Development (HPD) in various roles, mostly focused on planning affordable housing developments on city-owned vacant land. She led various pilot projects and design competitions to prove various housing concepts, including the design of a building fully composed of micro units. Bea has a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master in Planning from M.I.T. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and three children.

**Ogonnaya Dotson-Newman (she/her)**

**Senior Program Officer, The JPB Foundation**



Ogonnaya Dotson Newman is a senior program officer in the Environment program at [The JPB Foundation](#). JPB's mission is to advance opportunity in the US through transformational initiatives that empower those living in poverty, enrich and sustain our environment, and enable pioneering medical research. JPB's Environment program enables resilient communities to benefit the health and well-being of low-income and underserved communities. Ogonnaya manages the environmental health portfolio focused on detoxifying natural systems and the build environment by eliminating indoor and outdoor pollutants. Ogonnaya comes to JPB with

years of experience in community-based participatory research, partnership and collaboration for organizing around complex environmental issues, and environmental justice. Most recently, Ogonnaya was the Assistant Director of Public Housing and Health based at the [New York City Housing Authority](#) and the [New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene](#). Ogonnaya holds a Master's in Public Health with a focus on Environmental Health and a certificate in Health Geoinformatics.

**Seyron Foo (he/him)**

**Senior Advocacy Officer, Hilton Foundation**



Seyron Foo manages the advocacy strategies that advance the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's programmatic goals on ending chronic homelessness in Los Angeles, supporting transition age youth in foster care, and cultivating successful career pathways to transform the lives of opportunity youth. Previously, Foo oversaw public policy and government relations at Southern California Grantmakers and Philanthropy California, where he led initiatives that strengthened philanthropy's partnerships with state and local governments. He has experience in various government sectors, including the California Senate Majority Leader's Office and the City of Long Beach. He earned his master's degree in public affairs from Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs and his bachelor's degree in rhetoric and political science from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Alyia Gaskins (she/her)**

**Senior Program Officer, Melville Charitable Trust**



A public health strategist and urban planner, Alyia has over 10 years of experience developing and executing large-scale initiatives and partnerships. Previously, Alyia served as Assistant Director for Networks and Programs – Health at the Center for Community Investment (CCI). In that role she led Accelerating Investments for Healthy Communities, which helps hospitals and health systems invest in affordable housing. Prior to CCI, Alyia was a Senior Associate at the National League of Cities where she helped hundreds of municipalities pass over 3,000 policies to promote health equity through First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Cities, Towns, and Counties initiative. As a Policy and Program Associate at D.C. Hunger Solutions, an initiative of the Food Research and Action Center, Alyia partnered with municipal leaders to implement the D.C. Healthy Schools Act and the D.C. Healthy Tots Act – comprehensive legislation to improve the health and wellness of children. She also founded CitiesRX, a consulting firm focused on advancing innovative models of cross-sector partnerships. Alyia is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and has earned a master's degree in public health from University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree in urban planning from Georgetown University. She also holds a Professional Certificate in Municipal Finance from the University of Chicago. Recognized for her leadership, Alyia was honored as one of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce's 40 Under 40 honorees.

**Amy Gillman (she/her)**  
**Senior Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**



Amy Gillman, who joined the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 2017, is a senior program officer with the Foundation's efforts to promote healthy, more equitable communities. She leads RWJF's Healthy Communities theme's work focused on community development and housing. To this end, she draws on her extensive expertise in developing and implementing comprehensive approaches to neighborhood transformation that improve health, well-being and equity in low-income communities and communities of color. Previously, Gillman was the national program director for Community Health at the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the country's largest community development nonprofit, where she directed national initiatives supporting cross-sector

collaborations in local LISC sites to integrate health and well-being into neighborhood revitalization efforts. Prior to LISC, Gillman held several positions in social welfare policy and international community development in N.Y. and Washington, D.C. She has been a speaker on community development and health in forums nationwide. She earned a BA from Wesleyan University and a master's degree in public and private management from Yale University.

**Elisa Harrigan (she/her)**  
**Funders Together Board Member**  
**Housing Opportunities Program Officer, Meyer Memorial Trust**



Elisa is incredibly passionate about building a strong and equitable affordable housing industry that is accessible to all Oregonians. Elisa is innovative, takes strategic risks, and aims for smart, well-managed investments and partnerships. Elisa came to Meyer because she shares the values and mission of the organization. Elisa believes in the unique role for Meyer as it strives to move the needle toward a just and equitable Oregon. Prior to joining Meyer, Elisa was the executive director of the [Community Alliance of Tenants \(CAT\)](#), Oregon's only grassroots tenant-led organization. Elisa is a member of the Class V - Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Latino Leadership Program. Elisa was named "Best Low Income Tenant Advocate" by the Willamette Week in 2009. Elisa has

volunteered for several years for the [MRG Foundation](#).

**Raji Hunjan (she/her)**  
**Director Housing and Homelessness, Oak Foundation**



Raji joined Oak Foundation in 2020 as the director of the Housing and Homelessness Program. The program has an average grant-making budget of USD 30 million and has six staff. It partners with organizations working both nationally and locally in Boston, New York and Philadelphia in the United States and in London, Belfast, South Wales, Glasgow and Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

**Reed Jordan (he/him)**  
**Program Officer, Wells Fargo Foundation**



Reed is a program officer at the Wells Fargo Foundation where he manages a portfolio of strategies that supports affordable housing systems change. The program supports initiatives that drive innovation and transformation, including housing affordability-related research and development of policy proposals, peer networking with identification of best practices, and developing or testing potentially transformative systemic solutions to address the housing affordability crisis, especially as it relates to racial equity issues. The grantmaking also includes an additional focus on the decarbonization of multifamily and single-family homes. Before joining Wells Fargo in 2021, Reed was a senior policy advisor at the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development where he managed the city's affirmatively furthering fair housing planning process called Where We Live NYC. Reed was also a research analyst with the Urban Institute's Research Action Lab and Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center in Washington, D.C. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Carleton College and a Master in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**Amy Kleine (she/her)**  
**Senior Program Director, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation**



Amy Kleine oversees the Weinberg Foundation's work focused on housing to advance the goals of creating new housing opportunities and maintaining housing stability for people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, veterans, and other vulnerable populations. Ms. Kleine partners with nonprofit organizations on capital, program, and operating grants to implement this important work. Ms. Kleine currently co-chairs the newly launched Baltimore network of Funders Together to End Homelessness and serves on the Program Committee for the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers. Her most recent position before joining The Weinberg Foundation in 2008 was with Jhpiego, an international nonprofit organization affiliated with Johns Hopkins University. Ms. Kleine managed the global Cervical Cancer Prevention Program, implementing low-cost screen-and-treat programs in numerous countries. Ms. Kleine's other duties with Jhpiego included program officer for the US government-funded ACCESS Maternal and Newborn Health Program and team leader for the Asia/Near East region. Ms. Kleine served with the United States Peace Corps in Morocco as a community health volunteer from 1997-1999 and the United States Crisis Corps in San Isidro, Nicaragua, where she worked as a community development agent.

**Kate MacLaughlin (she/her)**

**Communications Officer, External Affairs and Communication, Kresge Foundation**



Katharine McLaughlin is a communications officer at The Kresge Foundation. She provides strategic communications support to the foundation's Health and Human Services Programs. Kate joined the foundation in 2019. Previously, she served as communications director at the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, where she led the foundation's strategic communications, public and media relations efforts. Earlier in her career, Kate managed public and media relations at SUNY Erie Community College and was editor of the Cheektowaga Bee newspaper. A native of Buffalo, New York, she earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications and a master's degree in integrated marketing

communications from St. Bonaventure University.

**Mercedeh Mortazavi (she/her)**

**Vice President of Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase & Co.**



Mercedeh Mortazavi is a Vice President at JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s Global Philanthropy department, a global leader dedicated to driving inclusive economic growth in communities worldwide. JPMorgan Chase has made a commitment to invest \$2 billion over five years to strengthen workforce systems, strengthen neighborhoods, grow small businesses, and improve the financial health of individuals – an investment part of the firm's \$30 billion racial equity initiative. Mercedeh established and executed the firm's national philanthropic strategies on neighborhood development, a \$400 million, five-year portfolio focused on affordable housing connected to economic opportunities. She also manages large-scale national initiatives.

Past examples include the PRO Neighborhoods Competition and Advancing Cities Challenge aimed at advancing solutions that tackle major social and economic challenges across the country. Mercedeh holds a Bachelor's of Science in Business Management and International Business from the Pennsylvania State University's Smeal College of Business. She also studied International Business at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan.

**Cecil Sagoe (he/him)**

**Program Officer, Oak Foundation**



Cecil Sagoe is a Program Officer within the Oak Foundation's Housing and Homelessness Program. He oversees projects that seek to influence national policies that shape housing outcomes in the UK and federal policies that influence housing outcomes in the US. Over the past decade, Cecil has worked in the field of housing policy and research. In 2018, he earned a PhD in Geography and Planning from University College London where he researched the political processes and governance actors shaping affordable housing planning in London's Olympic Park Area and community resistance to estate regeneration in this area. Prior to joining

Oak Foundation, he worked for several years within the policy team at the UK housing and homelessness charity. He worked with colleagues to influence social housing, private renting and planning policy as well as immigration policy as it pertains to housing.

**Abigail Suarez (she/her)**

**Vice President of Global Philanthropy, JP Morgan Chase Foundation**



Abigail Suarez is a Program Officer at JPMorgan Chase Foundation where she leads the Foundation's affordable housing and community development work. Prior to joining JPMorgan Chase, Abigail was a Market Leader for Capital Impact Partners, a nonprofit mission-driven investor working in low-to-middle-income communities nationwide. She has more than 13 years of experience in nonprofit and community development work. Abigail earned a BBA in Finance from St. Edwards University and an MBA from the University of Virginia, Darden School of Business. Abigail loves spending time with her 9-month old son Javier and playing tennis. She is originally from Brownsville, Texas.

**Connie Wright (she/her)**

**Senior Vice President, Housing Affordability Philanthropy Social Impact & Sustainability, Wells Fargo Foundation**



Connie Wright, a banker of 31 years with Wells Fargo and its legacy companies, is currently charged with providing strategic leadership and operational support for national philanthropy programming to expand the supply of affordable housing. As such, she manages an expansive grant portfolio with a focus on HUD counseling, Native, rural, LGBTQ youth and senior housing. Connie is also responsible for seeding innovation to advance housing affordability initiatives by working with national affordable housing organizations funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation. A key example of that portfolio includes the Housing Affordability Breakthrough Challenge, a \$20 million program designed to identify and scale innovative finance, construction and residential support services. Furthermore, Connie led the strategic development of initiatives designed to address the housing crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Vital to that work was to identify housing stabilization resources and solutions for both renters and homeowners in rural and Indian areas, as well as in collaboration with the largest HUD intermediaries in the country. Previously, Connie served as philanthropy relationship manager for national affordable housing stakeholders whose primary focus included housing counseling, policy/advocacy/research, affordable housing development in rural and urban geographies and training and development. Her portfolio consisted of nearly 40 organizations (with over 400 network members) with missions to serve low- and moderate-income communities and individuals and various diverse segments including African American, Hispanic, Asian American, American Indian/Alaskan Natives, LGBTQ, seniors and veterans. Connie currently serves on the Board of Governors for the National Housing Conference and Board of Directors for the Center for Community Progress and the Housing Assistance Council

## FHO Staff Bios

### **Terry Burgess (she/her)**

#### **Executive Administrative Support, Funders for Housing and Opportunity**



Ms. Burgess comes to us from Pew Trusts and possesses over 10 years of administrative support experience in an array of industries from technological sales, to supply chain management, medical, and recently landing in government performance for civic engagement and public policy. She received her dual Bachelor of Business at North Carolina Central University graduating Cum Laude and with honors as a member of Phi Eta Sigma National Collegiate Honor Society and Beta Gamma Sigma International Honorary Society. Ms. Burgess spends her free time as a youth volunteer in various organizations in PG County. She has an exceptional track record of superior performance on the job and goes above and beyond the call of position. As an Army veteran, she strongly

believes in "completion of the mission".

### **Jennifer Angarita (she/ella)**

#### **Senior Program Officer, Funders for Housing and Opportunity**



Jennifer brings over a decade of experience in community organizing, community development, labor, and philanthropy to Funders for Housing and Opportunity. Prior to joining FHO, she served as a Loan Fund Officer for BlueHub Capital, a national nonprofit Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) where she led strategic initiatives and managed a diverse portfolio of social impact loans. Previously, she was the National Worker Center Coordinator at the AFL-CIO, where she worked to develop and deepen strategic partnerships between worker centers and organized labor. Her diverse social sector experience includes research and consulting engagements with the City of Cambridge, United Way of Massachusetts Bay

and Merrimack Valley, and Peace First. She has served as an Opportunity Finance Fellow, a New Leaders Council Fellow, and a Sheila C. Johnson Fellow at the Harvard Center for Public Leadership. Currently, she serves on the board of The Philanthropy Connection. Jennifer holds a Bachelor's degree with honors from Yale University and a Master in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.

**Jeanne Fekade-Sellassie (she/her)**  
**Executive Director, Funders for Housing and Opportunity**



Jeanne Fekade-Sellassie is the Project Director for Funders for Housing and Opportunity. She has over twenty-five years of experience working in the affordable housing sector. Prior to joining FHO, she was the Senior Vice President of National Initiatives at NeighborWorks America, which included programming in the areas of real estate development, asset management, green and healthy housing, homeownership, mortgage and commercial lending, foreclosure mitigation, community stabilization, and resident engagement. She provided oversight for the annual deployment of over \$57 million in capital and expendable grants to members of the NeighborWorks network, state Housing Finance Agencies, and national housing counseling intermediaries. Prior to assuming the Senior Vice President role, Jeanne developed and led the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Program at NeighborWorks America, overseeing the award and distribution of over \$800 million in grant funds for foreclosure counseling and legal assistance, benefitting more than 1,700 organizations and serving over 2 million individuals facing foreclosure. Previously, Jeanne was a promotion specialist for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development and she managed the *Make it Your Own*<sup>™</sup> National Women's Homeownership Campaign at McAuley Institute. Jeanne received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Seattle University and a Master of Science degree in Political Science from Illinois State University where she was an Applied Community and Economic Development fellow. Jeanne served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Boston, MA and Washington, DC.

**Ciarra McPhail (she/her)**  
**Program Associate, Funders for Housing and Opportunity**



Ciarra comes to Funders for Housing and Opportunity with a decade of experience in direct service, community organizing, and supporting the unique needs of others. Prior to joining FHO, she served as a Housing Support Specialist, finding low-income housing solutions at Friendship Place, a housing provider in the nation's capital. While in her graduate program, Ciarra conducted research, program evaluation, and advocated for the rights of houseless people at the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services and Women's Medical Fund. Her professional skills also include graphic design, website support and social media management. Ciarra has a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services with honors from Old Dominion University and a Master of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania.