



Amy Van Polen Appointed as CEO of Bridge Communities

Dear Friends and Partners of Bridge Communities,

On behalf of the Bridge Communities Board of Directors, I am very pleased to announce that Amy Van Polen, CFRE, has been newly appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bridge Communities. For the last 16 years, Amy has served Bridge Communities in a variety of positions where she has steered program development, funding and endowment campaigns, marketing and outreach, strategic planning, and staff development. Most recently, Amy served as Interim CEO following the departure of Former CEO Karen S. Wells.

As CEO, Amy will lead Bridge Communities' strategic direction, aspirational vision, asset management, and fund development, and continue to cultivate community relationships to fulfill Bridge's mission, while promoting a culture of equity and belonging for internal and external stakeholders.



We are thrilled and confident that with Amy's strong record as an accomplished nonprofit leader and her demonstrated passion for the mission of the organization, she will successfully help guide Bridge Communities into the future and continue to serve families facing homelessness with compassion and excellence.

Throughout her 25-year career, Amy has held roles of increasing responsibility and leadership in the field of nonprofit administration, fund development and consulting, focusing much of her career in discovering opportunities and implementing strategies for nonprofit organizations to create meaningful relationships and community-wide impact.

Prior to being appointed as Interim CEO, Amy led Bridge Communities through a successful capital and endowment campaign launched at the height of the economic recession. Her team surpassed its financial goal to raise \$5.5 million in five years by raising \$6.4 million in just over three years and, while also increasing annual operating contributed revenues from just over \$1 million to \$2.3 million and now nearly \$4 million.

"I am honored to have been selected by the search committee and board of directors as the next CEO of Bridge Communities," said Amy. "I deeply believe in the mission and model of Bridge Communities and

feel privileged to serve the client families enrolled in our programs. I look forward to continuing to work with our outstanding staff, dedicated and generous volunteers and donors to fulfill our commitment to improving the lives of our neighbors in need.”

Before transitioning into a career in nonprofit management, Amy spent seven years as a counselor and case manager for persons living with HIV/AIDS. She received a master’s degree in public health from Benedictine University and a bachelor’s degree in community health education from University of Northern Iowa. Amy obtained her accreditation as a Certified Fund Raising Executive in 2009. She was awarded Woman of Distinction in DuPage County in 2016.

Amy will assume her responsibilities as Chief Executive Officer of Bridge Communities on June 5, 2023. Please join me in warmly congratulating Amy and partnering with her to advance the mission of Bridge Communities!

Grateful regards,

Laura

Laura Jensen
Board Chair and Chair, Bridge Communities CEO Search Committee

Bridge Communities engaged Kittleman & Associates to conduct a search for its Chief Executive Officer. Kittleman & Associates is a national executive search firm that specializes in the recruitment of CEOs for tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, public charities, and philanthropic organizations. Kittleman recruits leaders for the entire nonprofit sector including human services and organizations serving homeless families, foundations, and advocacy organizations. For more information, visit <https://www.kittlemansearch.com/>.

The mission of Bridge Communities is to transition families experiencing homelessness to self-sufficiency by working with community partners to provide mentoring, housing, and supportive services. Each year Bridge Communities provides transitional housing to more than 100 DuPage County families who are experiencing homelessness. During the two years families spend with Bridge Communities, they build budgeting skills to increase savings, pay down debt, and enter more secure career tracks with higher earnings so they can sustain housing stability and financial security and thrive as a family unit. For more information, visit <https://www.bridgecommunities.org>

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