
Minnesota Home Ownership Center

Primary Staff Bios

Julie Gugin, Executive Director, joined the Center in January, 2007. She has over fifteen years of experience in non-profit leadership and housing program development. Prior to joining the Minnesota Home Ownership Center, Ms. Gugin served as Associate Director and Director of Development in the supportive housing division of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. As Vice President and Director of Programs at Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, Ms. Gugin coordinated an elaborate array of programming and facilitated significant program growth for the organization. In both positions, Ms. Gugin successfully cultivated numerous partnerships with philanthropic organizations, local governments, for-profit and non-profit builders, faith-based organizations, corporations, in-kind suppliers, and home buyers to achieve organizational goals. Ms. Gugin brings expertise in non-profit leadership, partnership negotiations, fundraising and stakeholder engagement, strategic planning and fiscal management. She holds an MBA from Hamline University and a B.S. degree in Technical Communications from the University of Minnesota. Ms. Gugin is actively involved in the Twin Cities' housing community and has served as a board member for numerous organizations. She is currently on the Board of Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services and the Emerging Markets Home Ownership Initiative.

Brooke Walker, Program Director, is responsible for the development, implementation and quality delivery of home ownership education and counseling programs sponsored by the Center. In this position, Ms. Walker provides training, curriculum standards, programs materials and field support to a network of over 50 community-based affiliates that conduct services locally in communities throughout the state. Prior to joining the Center, Ms. Walker served as Director of Housing Services for Model Cities, Inc. in St. Paul, where she developed a homeownership program targeted to diverse, low-income families. Ms. Walker also worked as a Recruiting Specialist for Target Corporation where she was responsible for implementing an executive internship program for college students. Ms. Walker holds a Master's of Social Work in Human Services Management from the University of Minnesota and a B.S. in Social Work from Augsburg College.

Karen Duggleby, Director of Research and Program Evaluation, oversees the organization's evaluation efforts, including providing training and technical assistance to providers on the use of CounselorMax reporting software, directing the three-month follow-up survey for Home Stretch and publishing annual reports on Home Stretch and the Foreclosure Prevention Assistance Program. Before coming to the Home Ownership Center, Ms. Duggleby worked as the evaluation coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Disability Services Division. In that position, she worked on two federal grant projects, focusing on the implementation of comprehensive quality assurance programs. Ms. Duggleby is an experienced trainer has skills in survey and focus group research, qualitative and quantitative research methodology and advanced database management skills. Ms. Duggleby has a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Minnesota and a B.S. in Psychology from the University of North Dakota.

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Dana Snell, Program Director, is responsible for managing the Center's foreclosure counseling programming. Dana works in partnership with foreclosure prevention funders and providers to develop policies and procedures to ensure consistent quality service that responds to the changing needs of homeowners and the mortgage industry. Prior to joining the Center Dana was a foreclosure prevention counselor and program manager for over 12 years. Dana has been a leader in various initiatives including combating predatory lending and developing Minnesota's statewide network of professionals that span the housing counseling continuum. In 2008 Dana authored a nationally recognized model that provides guidance for developing a foreclosure counseling program, triaging clients and delivering foreclosure counseling services. Ms. Snell has a B.A. degree in economics with minors in business administration and psychology from the University of St. Thomas.

Debbie Wuerffel, Program Manager, joined the staff of the Center in early 2008 as Foreclosure Prevention Manager. She has been involved in non-profit management for over six years. Debbie spent several years at Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity where she coordinated many aspects of homeowner and home buyer support, including home ownership education and foreclosure intervention. Prior to joining the Center, Debbie served as the director of St. Martin's Table, a local nonprofit bookstore and café. Debbie has a B.A in Biology from Valparaiso University.

Ed Nelson, Marketing & Communications Manager, is responsible for the creation, implementation and oversight of the Center's outreach and communications programs. Before joining the Minnesota Home Ownership Center, Mr. Nelson served as an Operations Analyst for Wells Fargo Bank and as a founder and marketing manager of an Apple Macintosh computer reseller in Madrid, Spain. Mr. Nelson holds a B.A. degree in Economics from Hamilton College, New York and a B.A. in Spanish Literature from the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, Spain. He is currently working towards his Master's Degree in Theology from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary.