



Bridge Communities, Inc.

505 Crescent Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
(630) 545-0610
www.BridgeCommunities.org

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CONTACT:

Lisa Doyle, Marketing and Communications Manager

lisa.doyle@bridgecommunities.org

(630) 545-0610, ext. 30

Karen S. Wells Appointed CEO of Bridge Communities

Glen Ellyn, IL (May 18, 2020) – Karen S. Wells, a nationally-recognized business and community leader, has been named CEO of [Bridge Communities](http://www.BridgeCommunities.org), which provides housing, mentoring and supportive services to homeless families in DuPage County. Wells will assume this role on June 1, 2020, bringing more than 25 years of corporate and entrepreneurial experience and extensive experience as a committed volunteer, brand ambassador and former board member of Bridge Communities.

“With Karen’s outstanding business and leadership skills and passion for helping the poor and disenfranchised, we will continue to serve families facing homelessness with compassion and excellence,” said Zed Francis, Chair, Board of Directors.

Wells has held leadership positions with the international McDonald’s Corporation, including serving as VP of US Innovation, VP of US Strategy, VP of Operations, and VP of Nutrition and Menu Development for McDonald’s 13,000 US restaurants. She led McDonald’s negotiation team with First Lady Michelle Obama on the “Let’s Move” children’s health initiative. In addition, Wells has owned and operated two small businesses as a franchisee in early childhood development and as President & CEO of The AIW Group—a company she founded based on her passion for philanthropy, leadership development, diversity and inclusion.

For nearly 10 years, Wells gained extensive knowledge and experience with Bridge Communities as an active volunteer and previous Board member. She can relate first-hand to the families of Bridge Communities, as she grew up in poverty and is a first-generation college graduate. Guided by this experience, Wells is devoted to helping the underserved in both the community and the workplace.

“I am deeply humbled and honored to lead and partner with the amazing team at Bridge Communities as we work to help families move beyond poverty and into lives of self-sufficiency,” says Wells.

Wells has been interviewed on *CNN*, featured in the *Chicago Tribune*, named a Rising Star by *Fortune Magazine*, and covered in other media outlets for her corporate and community work.

She lives with her family in Naperville, IL.

Bridge Communities’ mission is to provide housing, mentoring and supportive services to homeless families in DuPage County. Its vision is a community in which all families have safe, sustainable and affordable housing and life-long self-sufficiency. In the past 30 years, Bridge Communities has helped 850 families cross the bridge from homelessness to hope and self-sufficiency. For more information, visit <https://www.bridgecommunities.org/>.