



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* KANSAS CITY

Fed Listens Participants
October 9, 2019



Ruben Alonso
President
AltCap
Kansas City, Missouri

Ruben Alonso is president of AltCap, a community development entity and community development financial institution based in Kansas City, Mo. Mr. Alonso is responsible for the overall administration, management and ongoing development of the organization and its targeted lending activity as well as its small business and economic development programming. He also serves as the executive director of AltCap's 501(c)(3) organization, Community Capital Fund, which he established to promote and support neighborhood capacity building in Kansas City's economically distressed communities.

Mr. Alonso is a graduate of the Centurions Leadership Program of The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, serves on the board of The Catalyst Fund for Kansas City Public School students and is a member of the Community Advisory Committee for IFF, the largest nonprofit CDFI in the Midwest. Mr. Alonso was appointed to the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Community Development Advisory Council on Jan. 1, 2017. He is also an adjunct professor in the Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Design at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, where he teaches a course in urban redevelopment.

Mr. Alonso has a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting from the University of Miami and a Master of Public Policy with a concentration in economic development from the University of Southern California.



Lee Blank

Chief Executive Officer and Board Member
GFG Ag Services
Kansas City, Missouri

Lee Blank is the chief executive officer and board member for GFG Ag Services. GFG Ag Services provides a variety of agricultural products and financial services. Mr. Blank is also the founder and chief executive officer of Cornerstone Ag Advisers.

Prior to joining GFG Ag Services in 2013, Mr. Blank held leadership positions at Twin Rivers Technologies, an agricultural processing company, and Alternative Energy Sources where he focused on marketing fuel grade ethanol and dried distiller grains for the feed industry. Mr. Blank also held various management positions with Archer Daniels Midland Company for nearly 20 years.

Mr. Blank holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in agriculture business and management from Iowa State University.



Ramin Cherafat
Chief Executive Officer
McCownGordon Construction
Kansas City, Missouri

Ramin Cherafat is the chief executive officer of McCownGordon Construction, a Kansas City-based general contractor with offices in both Missouri and Kansas. In this role, he is responsible for business development and marketing as well as corporate management.

Mr. Cherafat is a construction management executive with more than 20 years of experience in various capacities in construction operations with recent history focused on delivering overall business growth.

Mr. Cherafat holds a Bachelor of Science in Construction Science and a Master of Business Administration from Kansas State University and University of Missouri-Kansas City respectively. He is committed to various civic and philanthropic organizations in the Kansas City area including the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, University of Missouri-Kansas City's Alumni Board, KC Economic Development Council's Advocacy Council, Kansas State University's Board of Trustees, Metropolitan Community College's Foundation Board and Nelson Atkins Museum of Art's Business Council Steering Committee.



Leonard Graham
President
Taliaferro & Browne
Kansas City, Missouri

Leonard J. Graham is the current co-owner and president of Taliaferro & Browne, Inc. Founded in 1968, Taliaferro & Browne, Inc. is a comprehensive civil and structural engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture and master planning firm based in Kansas City, Mo.

A registered professional engineer with more than 40 years of experience, Mr. Graham's areas of expertise include general civil engineering and project management including site development, storm water and wastewater engineering, roadway and transportation planning and design.

Under his leadership, Taliaferro & Browne has become one of the 25 largest engineering firms in Kansas City. Mr. Graham has been awarded the Engineering Honor Award from the University of Missouri-Columbia and the Lucille H. Bluford Special Achievement Award from the Kansas City NAACP.



Herb Hardwick
Founder and Principal
Hardwick Law Firm, LLC
Kansas City, Missouri

Herbert E. Hardwick is the founder and principal of the Hardwick Law Firm, LLC. Mr. Hardwick has significant experience in public finance, real estate finance and development, and public incentive financing.

As co-head of the Firm's public finance division, Mr. Hardwick has represented cities, municipalities, city and local agencies, and state governments, as well as for profit companies, not for profits, and developers. He has significant experience in public finance transactions covering a wide range of financing which includes the issuance of general obligation bonds, airport bonds, water and sewer bonds, and revenue bonds for stadiums, hotels, and mixed-use projects. Mr. Hardwick's experience also includes serving as bond counsel or underwriters counsel on single family and multi-family housing bond financing projects.

Mr. Hardwick has significant experience in real estate transactions and development having worked on the acquisition and sale of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, and large-scale land acquisitions for development purposes. Mr. Hardwick has experience in many facets of real estate law including real estate contracts, lease agreements, the negotiation of construction and architectural contracts, development agreements and zoning and title issues. Mr. Hardwick's experience is further complemented by his work with public incentives which includes experience in low income housing tax credit, historic tax credit, and tax increment financing matters. He also has structured projects which utilize Community Development Block Grants, HUD 202 Grants, and other public subsidies to finance new construction and rehabilitation of single family and multi-family housing projects.



Beto Lopez
Chief Operating Officer
Guadalupe Centers
Kansas City, Missouri

Beto Lopez is the chief operating officer for Guadalupe Centers. Guadalupe Centers' mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals in the Latino communities of Greater Kansas City by providing early childhood, secondary and adult education, facilitating access to health and social services, promoting Latino culture, and sponsoring social activities that engage diverse communities.

Prior to his current position, Mr. Lopez also served as chief development and asset management officer overseeing facilities management, construction projects, and economic development initiatives for the organization. He also worked as a commercial lending manager for CommunityAmerica Credit Union.

Mr. Lopez is a member of the Lee's Summit, Mo. City Council and was appointed to Mayor Pro Tem in 2018. He also serves on the Lee's Summit City Planning Commission.

Mr. Lopez holds a bachelor's degree in political science and Spanish from Rockhurst University and a Master of Business Administration from Baker University.



Alise Martiny
Business Manager
Greater Kansas City Building and Construction Trades Council
Kansas City, Missouri

Alise Martiny is business manager and financial secretary for the Greater Kansas City Building and Construction Trades Council, the first woman elected to that position.

Ms. Martiny has worked in the construction industry for more than 37 years, including as a concrete finisher for her family's firm, JJ Martiny Concrete Co. Inc and in the Kansas City regional office of The Builders' Association in a variety of positions including workforce development manager.

Ms. Martiny has worked as a journey person on thousands of job sites. She began utilizing her knowledge and skill in the trades and obtained the position of Apprenticeship Coordinator in 1993 and Business Agent for the Cement Masons' and Plasterers' Local Union 518 in 1999.

Ms. Martiny serves on the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Economic Advisory Council. She holds an associate's degree in labor studies from Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana.



Clyde McQueen
Chief Executive Officer
Full Employment Council
Kansas City, Missouri

Clyde McQueen serves as chief executive officer of the Full Employment Council (FEC), the strategic workforce organization and fiscal agent for two workforce development boards. During Mr. McQueen's tenure since 1987, FEC has grown from a staff of 22 to the current regional workforce system of 10 job center & branch locations with a staff of more than 80 employees during Mr. McQueen's tenure.

Mr. McQueen is a member of and has served as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Workforce Development Council and is a member of several regional boards including the Clay County Economic Development Corporation, the Research Medical Center Board, The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Board, the Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City, the United Services Community Action Agency, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the United Way Income Impact Council, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Community Development Advisory Council, the Alliance for Economic Inclusion, and the United Services Community Action Agency Board.

Mr. McQueen has received numerous awards including: "Professional of the Year" by the Missouri Association of Workforce Development, "Local Hero" by *Ingram's Magazine*, and "Job Training Professional of the Year" by the National Alliance of Business.

Mr. McQueen previously served as the state division director of training and employment development for the Texas Department of Community Affairs. Prior to this assignment, he served as the administrator of technical programs in the Texas Economic Development Commission, where he worked with communities and various economic development groups to develop strategies for attracting business and industry into specific regions of the state of Texas. He also worked at the same agency assisting small and minority businesses to secure financing, management and technical assistance, as well as procurement of private, state, and federal contracts.

Mr. McQueen holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in speech communications and political science from Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.



Karen Orosco
Senior Vice President, U.S. Retail
H&R Block
Kansas City, Missouri

Karen Orosco was appointed senior vice president, U.S. retail, in May 2016. In this position, Ms. Orosco, who joined H&R Block in 1999, is responsible for driving service delivery of tax services and adjacent products, growing new clients and providing outstanding client service through 10,000 company- and franchise-owned offices across the country, including 350 Block Advisors locations.

Prior to her current role, Ms. Orosco was the vice president of retail operations. During her six years in this role, she led the implementation of the company's new tax preparation system and the redesign of the training and operational functions to better support clients, franchisees and company associates across the country.

During her tenure at H&R Block, Ms. Orosco has held a variety of technology, operations and client service positions including serving as Vice President, Information Technology and Vice President, Strategic Sourcing. She also has been responsible for several major initiatives such as the creation of a new development center and the design of the corporate headquarters in Kansas City.

Ms. Orosco holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Houston and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Kansas. She received the Henry Bloch Community Service Award in 2012.



Jeanette Prenger
Chief Executive Officer
ECCO Select
Kansas City, Missouri

Jeanette Prenger is chief executive officer of ECCO Select, one of the Top 500 Hispanic businesses in the country, with more than 250 employees serving clients nationwide. ECCO Select is a talent acquisition and advisory consulting company, specializing in providing people, process and technology solutions for its clients.

Ms. Prenger started her career as a software developer and later held various management positions at Sprint, TWA, and Waddell & Reed. In 1995, Ms. Prenger founded ECCO Select, with one client. It has grown into a leading provider of technology talent for Fortune 1000 companies and government agencies, with offices in Kansas City, Mo., and Washington, D.C.

An advocate for business and economic growth, Ms. Prenger has earned many awards for her leadership and community involvement. She serves on the national boards of The Latino Coalition, Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts of America and Women Impacting Public Policy, Orphaned Starfish Foundation as well as those closer to home – the American Royal, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City’s Economic Advisory Council, the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America and is a trustee of Park University.

Ms. Prenger is a graduate of Park University with a bachelor’s in management information systems.



Kim Randolph
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
INC U LLC
Kansas City, Kansas

Kim Randolph is the founder and chief executive officer of INC U LLC, a woman- and minority-owned small business that offers business management consulting, construction management, and travel and logistics coordination. Ms. Randolph is also the president of the Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce.

In her current role, Ms. Randolph oversees board administration and support, product and service delivery, financial and risk management, human resources, and public relations. Throughout her career, she has held several management positions in the construction industry specializing in business development and operations management.

Ms. Randolph holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.



Cassandra Savage
President
The Savage Group, LLC
Overland Park, Kansas

Cassandra Savage is president of The Savage Group, LLC, a family-owned company that owns and operates six McDonald's restaurants in the Kansas City area. The Savage Group, LLC was established in 2000 and employs approximately 250 employees.

Prior to becoming a McDonald's franchisee, Ms. Savage held executive level positions in the education, marketing and public relations industries. She is an active member of several local and national professional and civic organizations, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Economic Advisory Council.

Ms. Savage completed her undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana.



David Warm
Executive Director
Mid-America Regional Council
Kansas City, Missouri

David Warm has been the Executive Director of the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) since July 1990. Prior to joining MARC, Mr. Warm was the city administrator of Liberty, Missouri, and also served in administrative positions with the city of Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Warm is active in many civic groups and initiatives, as well as state and national professional associations. He is a recipient of the Walter Scheiber Leadership Award from the National Association of Regional Councils for making a significant impact in the Midwest region and at the national level. He is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, and the recipient of the 2015 National Public Service Award bestowed by the National Academy of Public Administration and the American Society of Public Administration.

Mr. Warm earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science and economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of California, Riverside.