



James Armstrong

J.A. Armstrong III is a change agent focused on improving the economic conditions of historically marginalized communities. He currently serves as the President & CEO of Builders of Hope Community Development Corporation- a multi-faceted community development firm that focuses on creating pathways to economic mobility primarily through real estate and building thriving neighborhoods. Through his leadership BOHCDC has emerged as a nationally recognized leader in affordable housing and community building – addressing the increasing demand for affordable housing while building over \$30M in wealth for low to moderate incomes families.

J.A.'s previous experience includes an extensive background in banking & finance at some of the top Fortune 500 firms like J.P. Morgan Chase & New York Life securities. His mix of corporate and community experience has led to serving on multiple boards and commissions including the Housing Finance Corporation, Chair of the Sports Arena Tax Increment Financing District overseeing the distribution of a multi-million-dollar fund, and board member of the statewide agency Texas Association of Community Development corporations. He also serves as a board member of BcWorkshop, and the Trinity Park Conservancy CDC. J.A. also is a contributing columnist with the Dallas Morning News.

James is a proud graduate of Baylor University's Hankamer School of Business with a bachelor's degree in finance. In 2017 James was awarded the Dallas Business Journal 40 under 40 award for his accomplishments in business. In 2023 James was named on the Texas 100 list and top 25 business leaders in North Texas by the Dallas Business Journal. James' greatest role is serving as Lead Pastor of The Community Fellowship Church in West Dallas.



Olivia Barrow Strauss

Olivia Barrow Strauss is the Vice President of Neighborhood Development at JPMorganChase. In this role, she leads national philanthropic and policy strategies to advance the firm's Housing Market Affordability priorities, collaborating closely with Corporate Responsibility teams to drive meaningful impact for people and communities.

Before joining JPMorganChase, Olivia served as the Deputy Director for National Policy and Advocacy at the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF), where she played a pivotal role in shaping a strategic influence agenda for affordable housing and impact lending. Her leadership at LIIF was instrumental in advancing national policy initiatives. Earlier in her career, Olivia was a Senior Policy Analyst at Enterprise Community Partners, where she led advocacy efforts for affordable housing and community development tax credits. Her work has consistently focused on creating sustainable and inclusive communities.

Olivia has written several housing publications and actively engages in key housing policy discussions, contributing her expertise to shape the future of housing and community development. She holds a bachelor's degree in public policy and a master's degree in public administration from The George Washington University.

**Dr. Jose Diaz**

Dr. Diaz is the Chief Economist at the Constellation Fund. He specializes in cost-benefit estimations and applied economic models in the areas of microfinance, education, and non-profit organizations. He holds a B.A. in economics from the University of Carabobo, from his native Venezuela, a masters degree in public administration from Hamline University, and he received his Ph.D. from the Applied Economics Department at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Diaz has taught economic theory in several prestigious universities including the Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and the University of St. Thomas. He has authored and collaborated on social return on investment reports of non-profit and government projects in Minnesota and nationally for the last 20 years. He lives in St. Paul, with his wife and two Hungarian Vizslas, enjoys long and steep gravel bike rides across rural Minnesota.

**K. Scott Kohanowski**

K. Scott Kohanowski serves as General Counsel at the Center for NYC Neighborhoods and its wholly-owned subsidiary Sustainable Neighborhoods, a Community Development Financial Institution and tax-exempt mortgage lender, where he oversees a wide range of legal and operational matters. The Center's mission focuses on preserving and fostering affordable homeownership throughout New York through advocacy and support and leveraging its subsidiary to serve homeowners through charitable loan programs, including foreclosure avoidance, climate resiliency, home repair, first-time homebuyer, and heirs' property preservation.

Scott previously directed the Homeowner Stability and LGBT Advocacy Projects at the New York City Bar Justice Center. In that role, Scott trained attorneys, supervised cases placed with pro bono and staff attorneys, provided direct legal representation to distressed homeowners, and engaged in law reform to preserve housing and communities. Scott's areas of expertise include (i) foreclosure, lending and property law, (ii) heirs property and community stabilization, (iii) deed theft and scam prevention, and (iv) non-profit law, all with an acute focus on racial equity and social justice across communities. He is a 1996 graduate of the University of Minnesota with a B.A. in Portuguese and Spanish and a 2001 graduate of NYU School of Law. Scott worked at Morrison and Foerster prior to transitioning to public interest law. He serves on the New York City Bar Association's Mortgage Foreclosure Task Force and Non-Profit Organizations Committee, the New York Attorney General's Deed Theft Task Force and the New York City Non-Profit Legal Services Foreclosure Prevention Task Force.

**Dr. Karama Neal**

Karama Neal, serves as the Strategic Project Director at Asset Funders Network (AFN), focusing on heirs' property. Before AFN, Karama served the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, as Administrator of the Rural Business-Cooperative Service. She served as president of Southern Bancorp Community Partners, a nonprofit community development loan fund and financial development organization.

Inspired by her family's ownership of rural heirs' property in Arkansas, Karama started a statewide grassroots organization promoting the successful passage of

the Uniform Partition of Heirs' Property Act in Arkansas. Karama founded the Heirs' Property Information Project and has written many book chapters and articles about heirs' property.

Karama holds an undergraduate degree in biology from Swarthmore College, master's degree in bioethics and health policy from Loyola University Chicago, and doctorate in genetics from Emory University. She also completed executive education in impact investing at the University of Oxford Said School of Business. She currently resides in Little Rock, Arkansas.