

OFN Candidacy—KRISTINE MICHIE—Personal Statement

VP Strategic Philanthropy & Investments, Accion serving Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas

Eighteen months ago, I didn't know what a CDFI was. Today, I seek the high honor of serving on the Board of OFN, the organization which has been the leading voice of the CDFI sector for more than 30 years – and is needed now more than ever. This admission may seem strange at the outset of a statement about my fitness to serve and the contribution I think I can make. **But I think not.**

Here's why:

While I am new to the CDFI world, having joined Accion as Vice President of Strategic Philanthropy and Investments in September 2017, I have been working in the change sector since 1993. For 25 years, I have been helping nonprofits, foundations, government agencies and individual philanthropists attract resources and align their actions to redress imbalances in society and create greater opportunity for all. With consulting and employment history that ranges from the ACLU and Boy Scouts of America to a social enterprise fund that combats prisoner recidivism, a community theatre, and a host of individual philanthropists, I have developed experience and expertise in “making the case” for a range of nonprofits and catalyzing their theory of change to make the world a better place.

I believe now more than ever, CDFIs need to make their case.

Battling political headwinds and unsure footing for policies that once seemed sacrosanct, we must continue to make our case with elected officials and policymakers. Experience on political campaigns, as a legislative intern, and lobbying with the Council on Foundations through their Foundations on the Hill program, make me a practiced and eager participant in this part of OFN's work.

But we need more than the politicians behind us. We need the people who put them there to care.

And by “people,” I mean philanthropists, impact investors, and academics. I mean our nonprofit partners, the media, and “Jane Q Public.” For the role of CDFIs to be fully understood and for the work we do to be broadly embraced and protected, **we need to make access to capital a mainstay of every conversation about economic dislocation, the opportunity gap, the “haves and the have-nots.”** Until there is broader understanding of the systemic barriers and prejudices that keep certain groups of people locked out of traditional capital flows (and just how prevalent these practices are) we will never achieve the parity of opportunity so many of us believe is the cornerstone of our democracy.

I would like to help bring this about, and I think OFN can lead this effort. **With my fresh eyes and wide-ranging experience, I know I can help OFN do it.**

Personally and professionally my experiences have converged, resulting in this amazing opportunity. I'm a mother of two and step-mom of four. All told, the cast ranges in age from 13 to 26. I earned my BA in Political Science from UCLA and a Masters in Journalism from Northwestern University. I spent the earliest years of my career working as a reporter and editor, transitioning to the philanthropic sector in the early 1990s. I live in San Diego (yes, lucky me) and am an avid runner, having completed 7 marathons and multiple triathlons. I am conversant in Spanish, and passionate traveler and explorer. I've been both a paid writer (including a book published by St. Martin's Press about my experience suffering and recovering from a cardiac arrest at age 35) and paid spokesperson (including a national media tour based on my book), indicating my prowess at vibrant, compelling communication.

In my role as Vice President of Strategic Philanthropy and Investments at Accion, I lead a five-state team on fundraising (philanthropic and lending capital), communications, events and the Moonshot (an endeavor inspired by the Kauffman Foundation to mobilize \$1 trillion into the hands of underserved entrepreneurs by 2030). My job is to spread the word about entrepreneurship as a catalyst for economic mobility and get more people talking about small business ownership as a social sector solution.

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I am truly inspired by the notion that OFN's work will become EVERYONE'S work, OUR goal, EVERYONE'S goal – an inclusive economy that works for all.

Please vote YES for Kristine Michie, OFN Board Candidate 2018.

With enthusiastic appreciation,

Kristine Michie

