



TENANT

RESOURCE CENTER

Board of Directors Application Form

Please use this form to apply for the Board of Directors of the Tenant Resource Center.

What is your name?

Meghan O'Connell

What is your mailing address?

8255 Starr Grass Dr., Madison, Wisconsin 53719

What is your phone number?

(608) 692-4837

What is your email address?

meg.ross19@gmail.com

What is your occupation? Please include employer and job title if you are employed.

Quality Manager & User Experience Advisor - Epic Systems

Why are you interested in being on the Board of Directors for the Tenant Resource Center?

I believe that housing plays an integral role in many facets of our lives including access to healthcare (both physical and mental health), education, ability to find and keep a job, social wellbeing, equity, etc. As a lifetime Madisonian, I am deeply in love with this city, but am also aware that the experience that I have in this city is not the experience that everyone is able to enjoy. Providing resources to help people secure housing as well as know their rights and have access to resources to keep their housing status is a very significant step in the direction of allowing all Madisonians the opportunity to experience what is truly beautiful about our city.

Additionally, I have firsthand experience of homelessness and home insecurity, having grown up in a situation where mental health issues and domestic abuse led to my family losing our home when I was a teenager and becoming a part of the "invisible homeless" in the city (i.e. those who live in their cars, at friends/families homes, in hotels, etc.). I am passionate about working with organizations that help families in similar situations as well as reversing the stigma that often comes with facing home insecurity and homelessness. TRC seems to be an organization that does just that!

What kind of experience have you had with the Tenant Resource Center?

I have not had any direct experience with Tenant Resource Center, however I have heard very positive things about the organization and the services that it provides to the community.

Have you ever been on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit? Please tell us about your Board experience, or if you've helped a nonprofit in other ways.

I have never been on a formal member of a Board of Directors, however I do have a lot of experience working with and volunteering local non-profits.

I served on the Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhood Association for 2+ years and was the Committee Chair of

our Duck Dash Race Planning Committee, a former paddle/run/walk that raised funds for Science Thursdays (a free educational program that was offered at Wingra Boats in the neighborhood to all children throughout the summer). In that role, I planned a paddle/10K and 3K run/walk event. Tasks including working with the city to secure permits, soliciting local businesses to sponsor the event, gathering and coordinating volunteers for the day of the race, coordinating sign ups, setup/take down, social media marketing, etc. I also served as the Jazz in the Park committee chair for one year. I had similar duties, but instead of a race, it was for planning/securing artists to perform at a free all day concert at Wingra Park.

In addition to the work described above on the committees that I served on, I also attended monthly meetings to help with approving budgets, voting on contractors to hire for various needs that the neighborhood had, approving agendas/minutes, etc.

I have also volunteered for many years (sort of off and on) at Second Harvest Foodbank in Madison, WI. My duties have spanned from packing/distributing/sorting food to working at their annual telethon answering phones at the phone bank.

I recently worked for about a year at Gilda's Club of Madison helping with fundraising efforts via small events.

As a part time fitness instructor, I have planned and taught many charity fitness classes that have benefited organizations over the years including Second Harvest, Gilda's Club, The American Cancer Society, National Organization for Women and many more.

Over the years, I have also led many letter-writing campaigns to elected officials and fundraising efforts to protest ICE presence in our community, support pro-choice legislation, etc.

My most recent endeavor has been the creation of The 608 Virtual Community Rec Center (The608.org) which I created during the pandemic to bring people together to share their passions/skills with others virtually in exchange donations that went directly to organizations such as Clean Lakes Alliance, Gilda's Club, Second Harvest, and others. The idea of the website is that folks can sign up for classes taught by volunteer instructors and then use a link from our website to directly navigate to a non-profit to place a donation rather than pay for the class.

The Board of Directors makes sure the Tenant Resource Center is financially stable, the Executive Director shows good leadership, and that our "big picture" plans are in line with our mission: For Housing Justice in Wisconsin. What skills would you bring to this work?

I would bring experience in approval of budgets (see above with my work with the DMNA Neighborhood Center). I would also bring experience with fundraising and project management. I do a fair amount of project management in my job and have done a lot of project management over the years in my nonprofit/volunteer work.

Optional - Please check all that apply to you

I am a private homeowner

Optional - Please check all that apply. Tenant Resource Center believes people who have been homeless are an important part of our leadership and should be on the Board of Directors. Are you currently, or have you ever

Been homeless

Been evicted

Been at risk of losing your housing or becoming homeless

Do you have any conflicts of interest with the TRC? A conflict of interest occurs when your personal relationships - family, friendship, romantic, business, or financial - could come in conflict with the best interests of the TRC. This is anything that could inhibit your ability to act in the best interest of the TRC at all times, or that could give others reason to think that you are not putting the TRC's interests first. Please check any conflicts of interest that may apply.

I have a friendship/relationship/family connection with a TRC staff member, board member or board candidate.

I am not aware of any conflicts of interest.

If you checked yes to any conflicts of interest above, please explain, and please tell us your plan for removing yourself from decision making around these conflict of interests.

I work with Andrea Singletary, the current Board President, but I do not believe that would be a conflict of interest. I would willingly remove myself from decision making if a conflict were to arise.

Right now, the Board of Directors meets on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 6pm. Does that time work for you?

Yes, the 3rd Thursday of every month generally works for me.

Board Members also volunteer at least 3 additional hours each month doing things like fundraising and event planning, reading and writing policies, housing counseling with clients, etc. Additionally, 2021's strategic planning process has about a 2 hour per week asynchronous learning component, for 2.5 months (~July-September). Can you make these time commitments to the TRC during your 2 years as a board member?

Yes, I am willing and able to make this time commitment.

The Board communicates mostly by email, and reviews/edits documents on Google Docs and Google Drive. We have conference calls with Google Meet. We also do group texting on WhatsApp. Board members are given a Tenant Resource Center email address to use for Board business. Does that work for you? If not, what communication methods work best for you?

Yes, that works for me.

If elected to the Board of Directors, are you willing to commit to a two-year term?

Yes, I can commit to a two-year term.