Gloria Perez, President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Since joining Jeremiah in 1998, Perez has become one of the country’s leading experts in two-generation strategies to reducing poverty. As an Ascend Fellow at the Aspen Institute, she is working with leaders from across the country to drive innovative ideas and proven strategies to help families achieve educational success and economic security. She was one of two fellows selected by Ascend to attend the Aspen Institute’s Action Leaders Forum, a gathering of 350 world leaders who have been successful in moving thought to action. She also contributed an essay to Maria Shriver’s report, “A Woman’s Nation Pushes Back from the Brink.” A graduate of Macalester College, Perez is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Alexandrine Medal from St. Catherine University. She serves on the board of directors for Hazelden and Irwin Andrew Porter Foundation, and on the board of trustees for The Minneapolis Foundation and the F.R. Bigelow Foundation. Perez also serves on the Young Women’s Initiative Council, a key committee of the statewide initiative, Young Women’s Initiative MN. The mother of two children, Perez lives with her husband in Minneapolis, MN.

Peggy Dismeyer, Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Dismeyer came to Jeremiah after a successful career ranging from three years of public accounting in the nonprofit sector to 20 years for two Fortune 500 consumer products companies. She oversees finance, administration, facilities and IT functions, as well as provides leadership in the overall advancement of operational excellence for Jeremiah and serves on several national expansion committees, lending her expertise in financial forecasting and business planning. She received a Bachelor of Science in accounting from the University of Wisconsin.

Jess Lehman, Chief Operating Officer (COO). In her current role, Jess applies her skills and experience from the private sector to lead day-to-day operations, including organizational strategy and policy, human resources, and IT. Jess’ current focuses include leadership of Jeremiah Program’s Executive Directors and the development, design, and improvement of infrastructure to support a growing organization. Jess received her B.S. from the University of Minnesota and her M.S. from Indiana University. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her partner and three young girls, boating, and gardening.
Ellen Muller, Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). Muller joined Jeremiah in this new role dedicated to expanding Jeremiah Program nationally while also maintaining resources for the high caliber results within our existing operations. Muller came to Jeremiah from the public sector where she served as the Economic Development Manager for the City of Saint Paul’s Department of Planning and Economic Development. Prior to that she served in leadership and business and financial development roles in the non-profit and business sectors.

Wanda Walker, Director of Program Excellence. Walker oversees and contributes to the continued delivery and development of superior programming within existing communities while transferring the knowledge from one site to the next as the organization expands nationally. Walker is responsible for program development, design, evaluation and process improvement in collaboration with the senior leadership. She also provides leadership in the evaluation and improvement of the program model. Prior to joining Jeremiah, she served as Chief Administrative Officer for Community Action of Minneapolis for over a decade. Prior to Community Action, Walker was a public health program consultant and a teen center director with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, volunteer administrator with Catholic Social services of Atlanta, and associate director of Wesley Child Care Center in Cincinnati. Earlier in her career she was a social worker in Cincinnati.