

**UNITED
WE** .

Institute Director

Leadership Profile

November 2024

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WittKieffer

Executive Summary

United WE (United Women's Empowerment) seeks an established nonprofit leader to serve as its inaugural Institute Director. This unique position is critical within a growing national nonprofit organization committed to breaking down systemic barriers in women's economic development and civic leadership. Since 1991, United WE has marked substantial growth and has become influential in public policy arenas, particularly in advancing equal pay and combatting sexual harassment.

The Institute Director will report directly to the Chief Operating Officer and serve as the integral research and policy leader for United WE. Working closely with United WE leadership to shape the research agenda and nonpartisan policy vision, the Institute Director will be able to contribute significantly to women's economic and civic advancement across the nation.

United WE is advancing women through the power of statistical truth and storytelling. They believe the formula to increase women's economic and civic leadership requires a strategic blend of qualitative and quantitative data. Then, they use that data to spark systems-level change. United WE is a "think-and-do tank:" Once their research is completed, the United WE team gets it into the hands of the policymakers, coalitions, and partners to best position the research to advance all women's economic and civic leadership.

United WE offers a unique ecosystem to build a highly functioning model to empower women nationwide. The organization unites with appointees, elected officials, community leaders, supporters, and everyday women to positively impact hundreds of thousands of women. Their impact includes fielding research studies and briefs on women's economic development, contributing to policy reforms that advanced equal pay efforts, increased paid family leave, removing barriers to women's professional licensing and entrepreneurship, and aiding in fighting against sexual harassment. Through their award-winning Appointments Project®, they have assisted more than 200 women in getting appointed to civic boards and commissions.

The Institute is dedicated to advancing women's economic and civic leadership through evidence-

based policy initiatives. Specializing in research, town halls, policy advisement, and educational workshops, the Institute focuses on creating impactful change, particularly for women in disadvantaged and minority communities. With a commitment to non-partisanship, civility, and effective policy designs, its efforts start in the Midwest and aim for national influence, empowering individuals to lead change in their communities.

The Director will oversee and coordinate research efforts while leading policy initiatives, ensuring the development and execution of a robust research and policy agenda. The ideal candidate will proactively identify resources through grants and partnerships to secure sustainable financial support for the organization's initiatives. They must possess strong management skills in overseeing research partners and exhibit excellent writing, editing, and oral communication abilities. Additionally, the Institute Director should be organized, a problem solver, and self-directed, demonstrating leadership and initiative while remaining flexible and committed as a team player. A deep understanding of major public policy issues, particularly those affecting Midwest states, and strong leadership and project management skills are essential for success in this role.

The Director will be committed to promoting women in economic and civic spheres, preferably with a history of work in the nonprofit or government sectors. A significant aspect of the role includes nurturing influential connections with donors, partners, officials, and stakeholders. The role demands exceptional communication, organizational, and interpersonal abilities and a passion for motivating and empowering women.

This is a remote position with semi-regular travel to Kansas City, Missouri. Preference will be given to candidates in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, or the DMV region. The anticipated starting salary range is \$125,000, commensurate with experience. Benefits include health care, retirement, paid time off, and a generous holiday schedule. Interested individuals should refer to the "Procedure for Candidacy" section at the end of this document for comprehensive application details.

We are advancing women through the power of statistical truth and storytelling. We believe that meaningful progress requires a strategic blend of qualitative and quantitative data. Then, we use that data to spark systems-level change.



Organization Overview



United WE is a national nonprofit organization that champions and empowers women and families of all backgrounds to overcome systemic barriers to economic development and civic leadership.

Originally known as the Women's Foundation of Greater Kansas City, the organization quickly established itself as a leader in advancing women's economic and civic leadership in the Kansas City area. Established in 1991, United WE was founded by a group of determined women from diverse backgrounds with a shared goal of empowering women and girls to reach their full potential. Over the past decade, United WE has transformed its work and broadened its impact. In 2024, the Board created a new strategic plan (more details on page 5). The Board's commitment to empowering all women remains unchanged, and they continue to work tirelessly toward their mission to advance all women's economic and civic leadership to make meaningful change.

The mission of United WE has never been more important. For women and our democracy, leadership gaps remain, and the future is uncertain. In 2023, in the US Congress, women held 29% of seats in the House and 25% in the Senate. Women held approximately 39% of seats on major municipal boards and commissions. In the same year, rates of depression and anxiety among young women have never been higher. Many worry that the next generation of women face an even greater economic and leadership challenge ahead. United WE aims to address these challenges.

United WE Believes

...In Being Nonpartisan and Supporting All Women

...In Increasing Diversity and Inclusion

...In the Importance of Evidence-Based Research to Further its Mission

...In Coming Together as People of Diverse Backgrounds, Women and Men, to Advance Women

...In Approaching Problems from All Angles



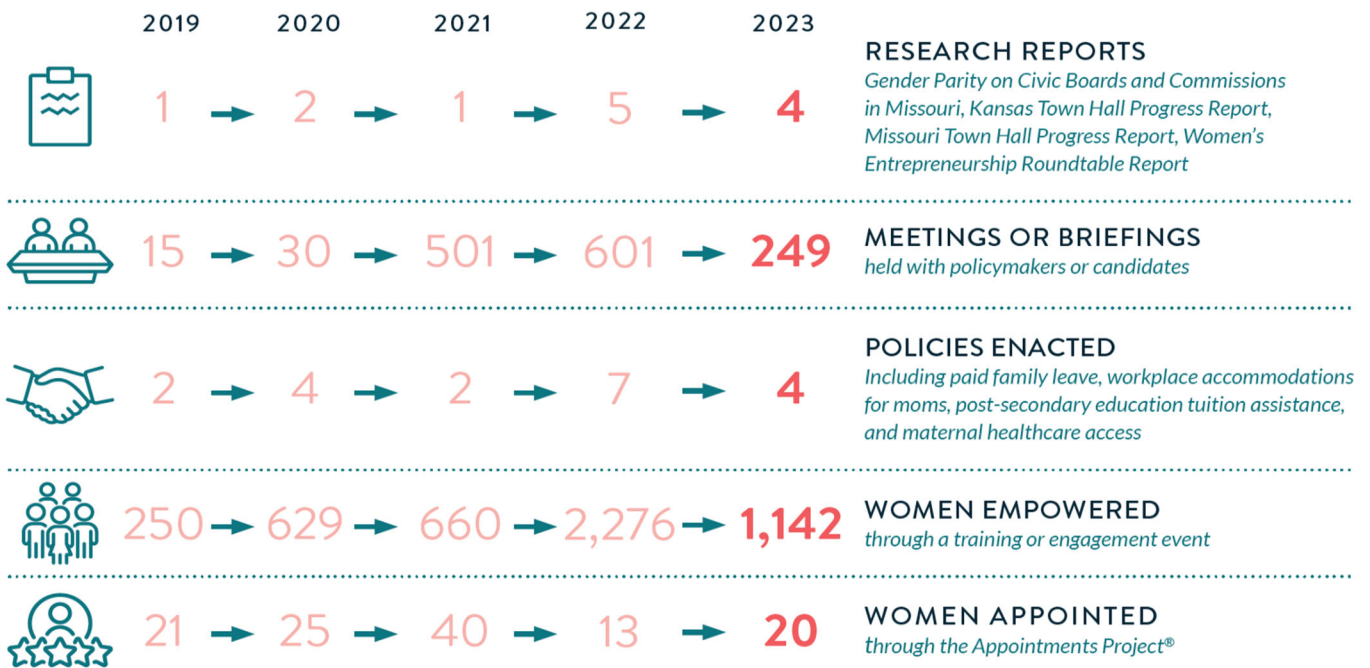
Recent Impact

United WE continues to make a significant impact. 2023 was a year of launching new initiatives to push the needle for all women. In addition to producing four evidence-based research studies, influencing four policy actions, and holding 249 meetings or briefings with Kansas and Missouri policymakers on issues that matter to women. In addition, a record 1,142 women participated in the Appointments Project®, and 20 women were appointed to serve on a board or commission.



CALENDAR YEAR 2023

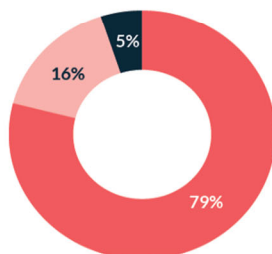
BY THE NUMBERS:



2023 FINANCIALS

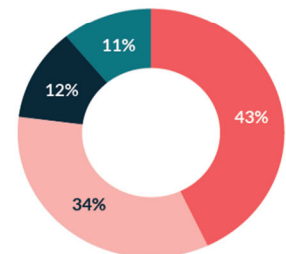
REVENUE

- Donor Contributions
- Investment Allocations
- Other Income



EXPENSES

- Economic Development Initiative
- Civic Leadership Initiative
- Fundraising Expenses
- Operating Expenses



Future Growth

United WE knows change can be slow and incremental. They also know that truly moving the needle for women is a long-term process that requires significant investment in research, advocacy, and programming.

While United WE has conducted research and made policy improvements in specific regions, its focus in the future will be more regional and national as it works to empower women and create a more equitable and prosperous society for all.

In 2024, United WE implemented a new three-year strategic plan to further its innovative efforts. The plan focuses on three key strategies: building a national network, demonstrating thought leadership, and delivering on-demand programming. Priorities include expanding the United WE Institute and growing the Appointments Project® network to empower women across the U.S. to serve on civic boards and commissions.

Program Framework

Women in local civic and economic leadership can lead change and restore trust.

To advance all women in local economic and civic leadership, United WE focuses on the following areas:

<p>LISTEN</p> <p>To women to identify barriers and solutions</p>	<p>DEVELOP</p> <p>And distribute influential research and data</p>	<p>LEAD</p> <p>Nonpartisan policy change with elected officials and community partners</p>	<p>EQUIP</p> <p>And connect women serving, and who want to serve, in local civic leadership</p>
<p>→ Local and state Town Halls</p>	<p>→ Institute for Advancing Women</p>	<p>→ Midwest Policy Lab</p>	<p>→ The Appointments Project®</p>



The United WE Institute

Elevating evidence-based research and nonpartisan policy to advance all women.



United WE's Institute is dedicated to advancing women's economic and civic leadership through evidence-based policy initiatives. Specializing in research, town halls, policy advisement, and educational workshops, the Institute focuses on creating impactful change, particularly for women in disadvantaged and minority communities. With a commitment to non-partisanship, civility, and effective policy design, its efforts start in the Midwest and aim for national influence, empowering women and partners to lead change in their communities.

The Institute partners with leading research organizations to create comprehensive research and data analysis. Its current areas of focus cover a variety of policy and research topics, including:

- **Childcare:** Ensuring access to affordable childcare allows women to remain in the workforce and helps close the gender pay gap.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Breaking Down Barriers for Women: Breaking barriers for women entrepreneurs by advocating for access to capital and creating supportive networks to foster success.
- **Paid Family Leave:** Championing paid family leave policies that benefit families, businesses, and the broader economy by ensuring no one has to choose between work and caregiving.
- **Equal Pay:** Closing the Gender Pay Gap: Leading efforts to close the gender pay gap, working to ensure that women are paid equally for equal work.
- **Occupational Licensing:** Removing Barriers to Professional Opportunities: Advocating for reforms in occupational licensing that remove unnecessary barriers and open economic opportunities for women across various professions.
- **Civic Leadership:** Increasing Women's Representation in Leadership: Increasing women's representation on civic boards and commissions, ensuring more diverse and effective leadership in communities nationwide.

To learn more about the Institute, visit <https://united-we.org/institute>.

United WE Leadership Team

United WE is led by a dynamic [team](#) that includes FTEs and contracted experts with extensive experience, creativity, and innovation. Each leadership team member brings unique value to the organization and is passionate about the mission and vision.

Wendy Doyle, President and CEO



Wendy Doyle is a passionate advocate for women's economic and civic advancement, with a track record of producing results. As the leader of United WE, she has been at the forefront of policies that impact women and their families, regularly educating and informing decision-makers and community leaders about policy solutions for women at the local, county, and state levels. She is a dynamic and informative presenter who frequently testifies to state legislatures and publishes op-eds in state newspapers.

Under Wendy's leadership, United WE has invested in research, advocacy, and policy solutions to remove economic barriers for women. She has led the organization to conduct 27 meaningful research studies, advocate for issues resulting in 57 policy actions, and support more than 200 women in securing civic appointments. Wendy's commitment to impacting hundreds of thousands of women and families through transformative research, scaling United WE's fast-growing Appointments Project®, and advocating for policy solutions that advance equal pay, paid family leave, affordable childcare, and occupational licensing, among others, is unwavering.

Wendy's success in the Heartland is spreading nationwide, with United WE's focus expanding from serving Kansas City to all of Kansas and Missouri since 2013. The organization's work has since extended to cities such as St. Louis, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, Pittsburgh, and South San Francisco. Wendy's previous experience as an executive and strategic consultant for large nonprofits provides a unique systems approach to accelerating the pace of change through partnerships.

Wendy's impact has not gone unnoticed. In 2022, she received the Women Who Mean Business award from The Kansas City Business Journal, which honors outstanding professional women who have significantly contributed to their businesses, industry, and community. Wendy also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Command and General Staff College Foundation at Fort Leavenworth, KS, and was inducted into the Missouri Public Affairs Hall of Fame in October 2021. Wendy earned a B.A. from Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri. She was recognized in 2021 as an Idealist of the Year by City Year and in 2020 with Rockhurst University's Rashford-Lyon Award for Leadership and Ethics.

Sarah Smith, Chief Operations Officer



As Chief Operating Officer at United WE, Sarah is dedicated to turning vision into action, championing strategies that drive meaningful change for women and families nationwide. Committed to advancing all women's civic and economic leadership, she plays a pivotal role in aligning United WE's strategic vision with the operational capabilities needed to make a lasting impact. Sarah leads efforts to expand and strengthen the organization's infrastructure, ensuring effective and impactful programming. By working closely with the CEO, Sarah is guiding United WE through a dynamic new chapter of growth, building on an unwavering commitment to amplify the voices and opportunities for women.

Sarah brings nearly a decade of experience in nonprofit and foundation leadership. Before joining United WE, she served as Vice President of Learning and Foundation Operations at the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, where her leadership strengthened operational foundations, advanced innovative initiatives in learning and evaluation, and fostered a culture of continuous improvement. Her earlier work in learning and evaluation at the Missouri Foundation for Health deepened her dedication to driving systemic change through data-driven solutions.

An advocate for both creativity and social impact, Sarah holds a bachelor's degree in music and psychology from the University of Washington in Seattle and dual master's degrees in Social Work and Public Health from Washington University in St. Louis. Her unique blend of analytical and empathetic insight continues to shape her mission to empower communities and drive systemic change.

For a complete list of the United WE team, including board members, visit: <https://united-we.org/people>.



Position Summary

Reporting Relationships

The Director will report to the Chief Operating Officer while working with the President & CEO.

Responsibilities

The inaugural Institute Director is the integral research and policy leader for United WE, working with United WE leadership to shape the research agenda and nonpartisan policy vision. This position oversees and coordinates research and policy for the organization, oversees the policy team, and assists the organizational leadership in developing and executing the research and policy agenda. Additionally, the Institute Director will be key in proactively identifying resources through grants and partnerships to ensure sustainable financial support for the organization's research and policy initiatives.

The Institute Director must be adept at managing research partners and have excellent writing, editing, and oral communication skills. The Director must also be organized, a problem solver, and self-directed, demonstrating leadership and initiative while being flexible and a committed team player. The position requires political savvy, a keen understanding of major public policy issues facing Midwest states and beyond, and strong leadership and project management skills.

The Institute Director will build on the impressive progress made to date, continuing United WE's long history of advancing women and their families through research and action. In partnership with the broader United WE team, the Institute Director will work across multiple states to enhance research studies, enact laws, issue executive orders, and implement administrative and policy actions.

The successful Institute Director candidate will have the following duties and responsibilities:

Research Coordination and Quality Control

- Oversee the development of a research agenda and work plans in collaboration with the Chief Operating Officer, organizational leadership, and policy teams.
- Develop and maintain systems to support research coordination. Manage the research process to ensure timely release of products in partnership with United WE leadership.
- Review and edit all research reports, fact sheets, and other materials produced by research partners, including external communications.
- Prepare testimony and talking points for the organization as needed.
- Ensure that all materials adhere to United WE standards for qualitative and quantitative research, requesting changes or additional documentation from research partners as necessary.
- Identify new economic research and analysis opportunities to support a strategic, nonpartisan policy agenda.

Public Policy and Advocacy

- Support the overarching strategy development for the organization's research institute.
- Conduct analyses to assess opportunities, challenges, and trends relevant to the organization's strategic goals.
- Assist the President & CEO in developing and executing United WE's advocacy and legislative agenda.

External Relations

- Take a leadership role in collaboration with coalitions and partner organizations around key policy issues, primarily focusing on those aligned with United WE's nonpartisan economic development strategy.
- Serve as a primary resource and liaison to local, state, and national partner organizations.

Partnership Development and Fundraising

- Develop and implement strategic development plans with the Chief Development Officer and organizational leadership to support the Research Institute's initiatives and broader United WE goals.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with donors and partners to enhance the organization's fundraising efforts.

Program Administration and Team Support

- Provide technical support and guidance to team members, particularly in areas of fund development and resource management.
- Participate in internal meetings and activities related to program planning, resource allocation, and scheduling.
- Perform other duties as assigned that relate to United WE's mission or support coalition partners, funders, or other stakeholders.

Candidate Qualifications

Education/Certification

- An undergraduate degree or equivalent work experience is preferred.

Knowledge and Work Experience

- Minimum of 8-10 years in research and policy leadership within the nonprofit, government and/or related sectors focused on civic engagement, with a proven track record in effective communication and delivering impactful messages to diverse audiences is desired

Leadership Skills and Competencies

Staff and Partner Management and Mentoring

- Build meaningful partnerships with research partners, fellows, interns, and other staff.
- Nurtures relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds, value systems, needs, and aspirations.
- Assists, supports and encourages others in identifying challenges, prioritizing tasks, defining goals, and achieving positive results.
- Share expertise and provide informal advice and developmental feedback.
- Fosters a collaborative team environment at United WE.
- Maintains a genuine interest in facilitating the personal and professional growth of team members.

Strategic Leadership and Agility

- Articulates a clear vision of the organizational research and policy agendas and goals shared by leadership and staff.
- Demonstrates the ability to lead policy teams toward achieving these goals.
- Accurately anticipates trending issues, potential opportunities, and their consequences.
- Effectively manages complex and occasionally shifting timelines.
- Works constructively with United WE leadership and the Board of Directors.

Quantitative/Qualitative Skills

- Analyze and document data clearly to make comparisons and draw conclusions.
- Identifies cause-and-effect relationships to solve complex problems.
- Discovers opportunities to visualize data and present analyses creatively to expand potential reach and impact.
- Effectively reviews the work of policy analysts, probing for data discrepancies, logical inconsistencies, or alternative analytical approaches.

Written Communications and Editing

- Prepares written documentation to convey technical information about concepts, situations, products, services, or results to diverse audiences.
- Organizes and communicates ideas succinctly, accurately, and persuasively across various settings and styles.
- Enhances reports, fact sheets, and other written materials developed by the policy team through substantive suggestions and light editing.

External Communication and Presentation Skills

- Conveys information clearly and effectively, both verbally and visually.
- Excels in various formal presentation settings, including one-on-one discussions, small and large groups, interactions with peers and direct reports, and media engagements.
- Addresses factual data and hot, controversial topics effectively within and outside the organization.

Interpersonal Communications

- Adapts communication styles to suit a wide range of audiences.
- Actively listens to seek clarification and understanding.
- Remains open to considering diverse viewpoints.
- Employs diplomacy and tact while being a dependable and accountable team member capable of managing stressful situations.

Priority Setting and Problem Solving

- Focuses on what is essential for advancing United WE's mission.
- Quickly identifies critical priorities while setting aside less important tasks.
- Effectively eliminates or navigates roadblocks and creates focus.
- Probes various sources for answers, looking beyond the obvious for potential solutions.
- Re-prioritizes projects flexibly to accommodate additional demands.

Internal and External Political Savvy

- Understands the political environment, management priorities, staff roles and responsibilities, and external factors impacting the organization.
- Identifies when issues need to be discussed with other policy team members, including United WE leadership and external partners.
- Perceives organizational and political sensitivities and acts accordingly.
- Recognizes differing attitudes about power and politics and adapts personal approaches for optimal influence.

Networking, Relationship Building, and Collaboration

- Works cooperatively with others, both inside and outside the organization, to accomplish objectives and build productive partnerships.
- Identifies, organizes, facilitates, and sustains mutually beneficial partnerships and alliances with internal and external stakeholders.
- Maintains positive and productive relationships.
- Collaborates with others to share information and achieve shared goals.

Procedure for Candidacy



All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include a CV/resume and a letter of interest as separate documents. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#). Please direct all nominations and inquiries to the WittKieffer consultants assisting the United WE with this recruitment, preferably via e-mail, to UnitedWE_InstituteDirector@wittkieffer.com.

Ashley Buderus
Consultant
abuderus@wittkieffer.com

Roxana Woudstra
Associate
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United WE values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other status protected by law.

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from United WE documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

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