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Opportunity Finance Network Names Amber Kuchar-Bell as Chief Strategy and Operations Officer (CSOO)

Community development finance professional with over 15 years of experience will drive the organization's growth and capital to support rural, urban, and Native communities nationwide.

Washington, DC—Opportunity Finance Network (OFN) today announced that Amber Kuchar-Bell, a professional with a demonstrated history of driving capital to underserved communities, has joined the organization as the Chief Strategy and Operations Officer (CSOO). Amber is responsible for strategic initiatives, corporate budgeting, and facilitating partnerships with major financial institutions, philanthropy, and new corporate partners. With 15 years of experience in the CDFI industry, Amber will play a key role in the development, planning, and execution of OFN's corporate and financial strategy.

"I'm thrilled to have Amber join our team at such a critical time when the CDFI industry is experiencing unprecedented growth," said Lisa Mensah, president and CEO of the Opportunity Finance Network. "Our membership has grown to a nationwide network of 350 CDFIs with over \$22 billion in assets. Amber's experience will be instrumental as we face the challenge of rebuilding an economy with deep inequality and structural racism; she is the right partner as OFN redoubles its efforts to help CDFIs grow and increase their impact."

"I look forward to working with the Opportunity Finance Network to help CDFIs provide the support needed for small businesses, housing initiatives, and community projects to thrive," said Amber Kuchar-Bell. "I have a deep understanding of how effective CDFIs can be as agents of change, and I'm eager to continue OFN's work in increasing their capacity to do just that."

In her most recent role as CDFI Program and Native Initiatives Manager for the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund), Kuchar-Bell was responsible for the design and implementation of a \$1.25 billion CDFI Rapid Response Program to help CDFIs respond to the economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During her time there, she managed over \$200 million annually in grants and loans to over 300 organizations. Most notably, she was responsible for redesigning the 2017 CDFI and Native American CDFI Assistance (NACA) Programs application and evaluation process, which resulted in reduced applicant burden and a transparent award review process utilizing data metrics.

Prior to her work at the CDFI Fund, Kuchar-Bell was an Investment Officer at Calvert Impact Capital where she managed a \$68 million investment portfolio consisting of over 30 CDFIs, community development entities, and social enterprises. She oversaw portfolio operations for the \$200 million Communities at Work Fund and was responsible for credit and pipeline management. Kuchar-Bell also has direct experience working at two CDFIs, Bay Federal Credit Union and Capital Impact Partners.

Kuchar-Bell holds an M.P.P. from Duke University and has a B.A. in International Development Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles.

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About OFN

Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), the national network of community development financial institutions (CDFIs), strives to ensure low-income and other under-resourced communities have access to affordable, responsible financial products and services. Members of OFN are CDFIs that deliver responsible lending to help low-income communities join the economic mainstream. Through 2019, OFN's network originated \$82.7 billion in financing in rural, urban, and Native communities. This financing has helped to create or maintain more than 1,751,000 jobs, start or expand 448,541 businesses and microenterprises, and support the development or rehabilitation of more than 2,148,000 housing units and more than 12,000 community facility projects.