

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Ampersand Families
Michelle Chalmers
612.605.1902
michelle@ampersandfamilies.org
ampersandfamilies.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Headline: Ampersand Families names Christina Zeise as Executive Director]



Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN December 13, 2021 — The Ampersand Families board of directors is thrilled to announce that Christina Zeise will succeed co-founder Michelle Chalmers as the next Executive Director of Ampersand Families.

Zeise is a 20-year veteran of the health and human services field, with experience in non-profit management, county government and public policy. Zeise spent 8 years as a Planner for Sherburne County Health and Human Services, before taking over as Executive Director of the Minnesota Social Services Association (MSSA) in 2013. During her tenure she led strategic programming and change

management initiatives, significantly increased revenues, and served as a passionate ambassador for change. She earned a Bachelor's in Social Work from Concordia College and Masters degrees in both Social Work and Public Policy from the University of Minnesota.

In her new role, Zeise will oversee the continuation of a vision set into motion by current ED and co-founder Michelle Chalmers. Chalmers who has been nationally recognized as a thought leader and "hero for children," has been passionate about the need for transparency and accountability in all aspects of child welfare since aging out of foster care in 1985. This informed her efforts to co-found Ampersand Families, with Jen Braun, in 2008. What started as an idea for increasing rates of adoption for Minnesota's longest-waiting teens, is now a 23-person organization with an outstanding Board of Directors and deeply skilled staff committed to fundamentally shifting the way the child welfare functions.

On behalf of Ampersand Families' board of directors, Steve Kenney enthusiastically welcomes Christina. "We are so fortunate as an organization to be able to work with Christina, to build on the successes of our first 13 years, as we continue to deliver outstanding, equitable services to support youth and families.

Zeise will assume day to day operations on January 18, 2022, as Chalmers transitions into a new role at Ampersand Families as Permanency Innovation and Consultation Director. Chalmers will provide leadership and support to initiatives, in Minnesota and nationally, aimed at transforming child welfare practices to realize a new vision for supporting families and building community.

###

Ampersand Families provides permanency and adoption services to older youth and families who face barriers to equity in child welfare, and champions systemic changes that advance belonging, dignity, and hope.