

Dr. Karin Baird

PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago

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Dr. Karin Baird is a lifelong contributor to the nonprofit sector. She began her career shortly after graduating from Michigan State University as the Director of Public Relations for the Dane County Chapter of the American Red Cross in Madison, Wisconsin. From there she moved to Washington, DC where she worked in the public relations department of the American National Red Cross. After starting a family, she was an active volunteer in her community in the local parent-teacher organization and the League of Women Voters. As a member, and later president, of the Glencoe Friends of the Parks she helped organize the annual historical walk and bike tour throughout the village, raised money to refurbish parks, and led a successful referendum to generate tax monies to save the outdoor ice rink.

Dr. Baird also helped establish a park district summer competitive tennis league for women. Called the Shoreline Tennis League, the new league began with four teams and 8 to 10 participants per team. The league was established to provide a way for women to participate in organized summer competitive team play who were not eligible to play on area country club teams. The new Shoreline Tennis League started in the late 1970's and has since grown to 44 teams for men and women representing 12 north and northwest suburban park districts. Every summer over 400 adults join the league and participate in organized competitive team play.

Dr. Baird also served in a number of local elected government positions including two elected terms of service on the Glencoe Caucus, and a term on the Glencoe Park District's Board of Commissioners. She also served as a park district representative on the Glencoe Planning Commission.

In the early 1990's, Dr. Baird went back to school to complete her master's degree in Nonprofit Management at Spertus College in Chicago. After graduation she served for three years as the Executive Director of the Chicago District of the United States Tennis Association (USTA), the third largest District of the USTA. She has also served as the Executive Director of an American Red Cross chapter in West Michigan.

Dr. Baird went on to earn a master's degree in Educational Administration and her PhD in Educational Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). While she was in school she was a member of the adjunct faculty of Spertus College. For the past eight years she has been with Spertus College as an academic advisor and instructor. She became an assistant professor in 2000 and teaches American Social Policy, History of Philanthropy, and Grant Writing in the nonprofit master's degree program. She also teaches fundraising and grant writing workshops that are open to the public. Dr. Baird is currently the Acting Director of the Master of Science in Nonprofit Management (MSNM) degree program at Spertus College. She also serves as the Faculty Chair in the MSNM program.