

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## MARISA CALDERON

Chief of Community Finance & Mobility, NCRC and Executive Director,  
NCRC Community Development Fund



**1. Hometown**

San Bernardino is where I was raised, I live in San Diego now.

**2. Fun Fact**

I was an extra in a Cypress Hill video for Insane in the Brain filmed at the DNA Lounge in San Francisco.

**3. Employer and Position**

Chief of Community Finance & Mobility, NCRC and Executive Director, NCRC Community Development Fund

**4. Describe your journey in the financial services industry and how your career has evolved to your current position**

My journey in financial services began quite unintentionally. I was working in retail, managing a record store, and I was frankly tired of getting robbed. I had a friend that worked at a credit card call center and suggested I apply and since I am bilingual in Spanish I got a premium. My career progressed rapidly, in part due to my willingness to take on new assignments in different states which led me to New Orleans, Atlanta, San Juan, San Antonio, and Las Vegas before moving back to California. My career in corporate America provided a great foundation through training and coaching in management and leadership fundamentals, as a Six Sigma greenbelt, consultative sales certification, and many other areas of focus I found indispensable once I transitioned into the non-profit sector. At the NCRC CDF I have occasion to utilize those same skills to open up access to credit and implement solutions to address historic inequities in an effort to bridge the racial wealth gap.

**5. What do you love most about what you do?**

I love that we serve as mission, my colleagues are all passionately aligned around that mission, and we have an ability to see the direct impact through our borrowers.

**6. Hobbies?**

Hiking, camping, travel, culinary exploration, a myriad of crafts including crochet and sewing.

**7. How long have you been a member of WHF?**

Almost three years

**8. Please describe your involvement with WHF.**

I'm a member and have participated in events as an attendee and as a speaker.

**9. What have you gained from being a member?**

I appreciate the network, the content from events and that there's an organization in our largely male dominated industry that is intentionally welcoming to me and other women.

**10. How do you make the best use of your day?**

I start my day with yoga, a 15- 30 minute series depending on the day. It helps me to start my day with intention and focus. I organize my work days with a time blocking approach, first a cup of coffee and the day's new and industry news so I keep current on what's going on in the world and our business. Next, I clear out my email inbox, completing, delegating or scheduling follow-up depending on the item. I have meetings or calls I attend, and project blocks in my day so I can get specific sets of work done. Since our team is geographically dispersed, we leverage Slack for internal communication and email for external communication. We also use Asana as our project management software so collaborative work moves forward and everyone stays in the loop. I like to take a walk in the afternoon to stretch my legs and clear my head. In the evening, before I wrap up for the night, I give my schedule for the following day and rest of the week another look to ensure everything is on task for the remainder of the week.

**11. Who or what inspires you?**

In business and life, I'm inspired by the quiet confidence of so many women colleagues who bring their passion and skill to bear and intentionally make space for others in doing so.

**12. What is the best advice you have ever received?**

Make these three values your North Star: integrity first, service before self, excellence in all you do." These are the core values with which I was raised, they are the core values of the Air Force which were central to my upbringing as a military brat.

**13. Who do you look up to the most and why?**

I most admire my mother – as a Chief Master Sergeant, 33-year Air Force veteran, she lived the core values of the service and raised us in those values. She exemplified “ganas” and accomplished so much at a time when it was extremely difficult for women to succeed and was an exceptional mom and human being.