

2021 BOARD NOMINEES

EMILY BEAUPRE

Zen Loft Wellness Center

Emily currently serves on the Aurora Downtown board and is a member of the Business, Attraction, and Retention (BAR) Committee. She is the owner of Zen Loft Wellness Center at 6 W. Downer Pl. Emily has a Master's Degree in Liberal Studies, and she is a certified elementary teacher. She lives in Aurora, and works as a massage therapist. She likes to garden and grow her own food and share it with neighbors. Her mindset is world peace and equity for everyone. Emily was nominated by Kim Woodin, who said that Emily is an active business owner and is dedicated to the downtown and surrounding community.

Emily said, "I want to help make Aurora a better place for everyone to live, work, shop, and relax."

TIM FREDERICK

If These Walls Could Talk

Tim is a current board member and serves on the Events committee. He is co-owner of If These Walls Could Talk at 32 S. Stolp Ave. in the Keystone building. Tim has an arts and design background. If These Walls Could Talk was one of the original businesses to participate in First Fridays. He said he has accumulated a lot of experience setting up and hosting events. "I love this city and hope to continue to help with its revitalization," he said.

Tim was nominated by Kim Woodin who said that Tim is an active board member, and brings a much-needed business to downtown Aurora.

PENELOPE A. GARCIA (TORRES)

Downtown Resident

Penelope is an Ops Asst. for Broadway in Chicago and Co-Chair for HRC Chicago. She is one of the original organizers of Aurora Pride, and now serves as the Director of Operations. She is dedicated to Aurora becoming a more inclusive and equitable city. She has experience in operations, property management, and business management. She wants to help bring together, build up, and serve the diverse community of Aurora.

Penelope was nominated by Harish Ananthapadmanabhan: "Torres is a long-time resident, leader, and active part of the city of Aurora. She has the experience and commitment to engage more of the marginalized peoples of the city into our collective prosperity."

MICHAEL “MIKE” MANCUSO

Yetee Station Arcade

Mike currently serves on the Aurora Downtown board and is a member of the Governance Committee. He is the owner of Yetee Station and The Yetee, an online t-shirt company based in Aurora. Mike has been involved in downtown for the last 10 years, and he curated and participated in many art shows during that time. He is a member of the Aurora Rotary Club. He said he has started multiple businesses in downtown, and he knows the process and problems that owners face.

Mike was nominated by Kim Woodin: “Mike has been a friend of the downtown for many years. He has participated in events, volunteered, and been an advocate for change with the organization and throughout the community.”

JONATHAN “JON” MONSMA

Invest Aurora

Jon currently serves on the Aurora Downtown board and is the Vice Chair for 2020. Jon was nominated by Melinda Kruder because of his knowledge of downtown Aurora due to his job at Invest Aurora. Jon is an Economic Development Specialist for Invest Aurora. He has a Master’s in Economics, and is working to become a certified economic developer. He enjoys cooking, fishing, playing basketball, and tending to his garden plots at the Marie Wilkinson Community Garden.

Jon said, “Aurora Downtown plays a vital role in creating a vibrant downtown.”

NICOLE MULLINS

Culture Stock

Nicole is the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for Culture Stock, a nonprofit organization that she helped to found and managed for six years. She has a degree in social work, and has volunteered for Girl Scouts and The Peace House in Aurora. Nicole has experience with event planning, volunteer management, fundraising, and nonprofit management. She said she is interested in serving on the board to ensure that equity, diversity, and inclusion is a constant part of the work being done by the board and to amplify the diverse voices within the community.

Nicole was nominated by Adam Bracero: “Nicole has been instrumental in engaging underrepresented people in downtown activities and events; contributing to our thriving community.”

RAQUEL RODRIGUEZ

Aurora resident

Raquel is a Senior Corporate Accountant and has his Master’s from Aurora University. His grandparents own Tecalitlan, and he was nominated by his grandfather, Rafael Valencia. Valencia said he is nominating Rafael “to have someone represent our business that has been in downtown Aurora for over 40 years, and that will help attract new business into the downtown area with new ideas.” Raquel is an active volunteer and loves soccer and helping his community grow and thrive through education and action.

“I would like to see the continual development of downtown Aurora and make an impact that diversifies the development and events that take place,” he said.

ROGER SCHNORR

Old Second Bank

Roger currently serves as the treasurer for the Aurora Downtown board. He is the Senior Vice President of Commercial Banking at Old Second Bank, and he works in the downtown office. He is a long-time volunteer, and actively volunteers at his church and for Aurora Downtown's events. Roger was nominated by Don Pilmer, who said he represents Old Second very well as an existing board member.

"I enjoy working to benefit others including Aurora business," he said.

YVONNE TONEY-THOMPSON

The Cotton Seed Creative Exchange

Yvonne is a Veteran of the U.S. Navy, and has a business degree. She opened The Cotton Seed Creative Exchange at 8 N. Broadway in 2019. She was nominated by Kim Woodin, who said that Yvonne's input would be valuable as a Broadway business owner. Yvonne said she wants to help downtown and support other local businesses.

"I have a passion for business, innovation, and creating new things," she said.