Karen Novak Swalwell

Born and raised in Iowa, Karen is a graduate of the University of Iowa with a Bachelors degree in Liberal Arts.  After completing her degree in 1986, Karen returned to Des Moines to join Francis & Associates as a Researcher.  She quickly grew into the role of Search Consultant. In 2009 Karen took on overall responsibilities for the firm after being named President of Francis & Associates.  During her time with Francis & Associates, Karen has been a key team member in the successful completion of over 650 senior-level retained executive searches.  Those searches have covered all industries and all functions within organizations ranging from $3M non-profits to $3B publicly traded companies nationwide. One of Karen’s strengths is working with Boards and Search Committees in providing guidance and management of their critical hiring needs.

Karen is an active member in her community having served in numerous leadership roles for several non-profit and civic Boards over the years.

In addition to being recently appointed to the *Prairies Meadows Board of Directors*, Karen currently serves as the first female *Trustee and Chair of the West Des Moines Water Works* – an $12.5M public utility serving 22,000+ accounts. Karen also currently serves on the *Central Iowa Drinking Water Commission*andwas appointed by the Governor to serve on the*Consumer Advisory Panel of the Office of the Consumer Advocate.*

Karen is proud to have also worked with the following civic and business groups:

*President of the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce*

*West Des Moines Economic Development Connection*

*West Des Moines Community School Foundation Board*

*West Des Moines Capital Improvement Planning Committee*

*West Des Moines Ambassadors*

*West Des Moines Leadership Academy Board*

*West Des Moines Leadership Academy - Inaugural Class Member*

*Iowa Association of Business and Industry - Leadership Iowa*

*Iowa Association of Business and Industry - Co-Chair Membership Committee*

*Iowa Association of Business and industry - 2012 Conference Chair*

*Society of Human Resources Managers of Central Iowa*

*Variety, the Children’s Charity Board of Directors*

*Hospice of Central Iowa Foundation Board*

Karen is married to Rick Swalwell and they live in West Des Moines. Karen enjoys spending time with her two stepdaughters, their husbands and granddaughter. In addition to family, Karen and Rick both enjoy being involved in the community and other activities including bicycling, sailing, traveling and gardening.