



M. Bernadette Patton, CAE, ACC

Interim CEO

IREM® (Institute of Real Estate Management)

Chicago, IL

M. Bernadette Patton is currently serving as IREM's interim CEO. She was introduced to nonprofits early in her career and learned nonprofit sector strategies and opportunities from the ground up, eventually serving five organizations as CEO. After seventeen years serving as CEO for the Human Resources Management Association of Chicago, she retired from the organization in 2017 as CEO Emeritus.

Following a brief period supporting executive leaders with business and career coaching, she founded Leadership Liftoff and its sister organization, The Board Builders. These organizations provide executive coaching and governance consulting to nonprofits.

Throughout her career, Bernadette has been recognized as an inclusive and results-oriented leader who collaborates internally and externally to lead industry transformations. She's led global teams, created events focused on professional development and milestone celebrations, developed fundraising and sponsorship campaigns, and mentored the next generation of nonprofit staff and volunteer leaders. She's also a frequent presenter and expert resource to the media on nonprofit and industry topics.

In her executive coaching practice, engagements include nonprofit CEO clients and their leadership teams, as well as executives experiencing career transitions. These assignments frequently focus on developing executive presence, accomplishing defined outcomes, and navigating job search activities.

A graduate of the University of Northern Iowa with a bachelor's degree in education, she completed certificate course work at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and DePaul University. She graduated from the Chicago Management Institute at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business and the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management at the University of Notre Dame. She holds two credentials: the Certified Association Executive (CAE) and the Associate Certified Coach (ACC).