Magnolia
Children's Group

Meet the Team



Dr. Christian Vigé FOUNDER

Dr. Christian Vigé is the founder of Magnolia Children's Group and a lifelong advocate for families, children, and community stability. He serves as Chair of the Family Stability Subcommittee of the Louisiana Children's Cabinet, advancing initiatives that strengthen families and improve support systems statewide. He is also a member of the Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee, where he helps guide strategy, foster collaboration, and advocate for child welfare and abuse prevention reforms.

Dr. Vigé serves on the Board of Capital Area CASA and is an active member of the Capital Area Trauma Collective, emphasizing his commitment to trauma-informed care and the well-being of children in foster care. As founder and CEO of Magnolia Children's Group, he leads efforts to revitalize state-owned properties and transform them into residential foster care homes that prioritize family and children's services.

Dr. Vigé also serves as Provost of Delta College, overseeing six campuses statewide and helping to produce three-fourths of Louisiana's nurses while driving excellence in academics and student success. His background as a teacher in both private and public schools has given him a deep understanding of the intersection of education, family, and community needs. Through every role, Dr. Vigé's leadership and advocacy reflect his unwavering belief in building stable, thriving families and creating a brighter future for Louisiana's children.

BOARD CHAIR
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Mrs. Alisa-Karen Vigé CO-FOUNDER

Karen Vigé is a passionate advocate for women, children, and social justice with a strong background in education and ministry. A former theater educator with a bachelor's degree and a minor in psychology, she brings creativity and insight to her work. Karen serves as a volunteer with Caring to Love Ministries Clinic and is a dedicated children's Sunday school teacher. As a woman of faith, she actively promotes child welfare and family-centered policies. She is the wife of Dr. Christian Vigé and the proud mother of two wonderful children. Her compassion, advocacy, and commitment to faith-driven service make her a valuable member of the Magnolia Children's Group board.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE



Brittany Jones

Brittany Jones is the Director of Policy and Engagement for Kansas Family Voice and General Counsel for Kansas Family Foundation. She works closely with legislators to promote laws that honor God, protect religious liberty, and support families. With a strong background in policy and advocacy, Brittany has served multiple organizations on issues including life, education, and religious freedom. She holds a B.A. in History from Louisiana College and a J.D. from Regent University School of Law. Licensed to practice law in Kansas and Washington, D.C., she has also contributed to national media and legal scholarship. As a board member of Magnolia Children's Group, Brittany brings deep expertise in family policy and a heart for protecting and empowering children.

BOARD VICE CHAIR
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Magnolia Children's Group

Meet the Team



Dr. Terrie Thomas

Dr. Terrie Thomas is a board-certified OB/GYN who joined private practice in 2006 and has served in several key leadership roles, including Chief of the Medical Staff at Woman's Hospital. A Baton Rouge native, she earned her undergraduate degree in Microbiology from LSU and her medical degree and residency training from LSU New Orleans. She has received awards for excellence in teaching and continues to mentor medical students and residents as an Assistant Clinical Professor for LSU and Tulane. Dr. Thomas is an active member of the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She brings to Magnolia Children's Group a passion for women's health, education, and community service. Outside of work, she enjoys family time, cooking, and volunteering.

BOARD MEMBER



Bryan Wesley

Bryan Wesley is a seasoned Construction Manager with expertise in budgeting, cost control, contract negotiation, team building, and public speaking. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management from Louisiana State University. As Vice President at Wesley Construction, Bryan is passionate about building, connecting, and advocating for the next generation of leaders in the construction industry. His extensive experience and leadership in project management reflect his commitment to excellence in the field.

BOARD MEMBER
DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE



Ruth Wisher

Ruth Wisher is the President of Wisher Strategies, a political communications firm, and The Wisher Method, a time management organization. In addition to running her own companies, she has over a decade of experience in the political world both in the public and private sectors. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Northwestern State University where she was a member of Phi Mu Fraternity, served on the Student Government Association and was Yearbook Editor. Additionally, she has served her community for years as a committee member for the St. Jude Hospital's annual Day at the Derby Event. She also coaches several youth organization teams and volunteers at her kids' schools, serving on multiple boards, to help fundraise and secure support. She brings her experience in an attempt to support Magnolia Children's Group's mission to help our community's youth. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, playing tennis, being involved in her church (Healing Place Church), and loving on her two year old doodle, Chuck.

BOARD MEMBER
DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Magnolia
Children's Group

Meet the Team



Andrew Bates

Andrew Bates is the Lead Pastor of First Baptist Church in Eunice, Louisiana. Originally from Winnfield, he holds a Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and has pastored in various churches across the state. Andrew is passionate about serving his community and advancing ministry opportunities throughout Eunice, LSUE, and the tri-parish area. He and his wife Emily are proud parents of two daughters. As a board member of Magnolia Children's Group, Andrew brings a heart for families and a commitment to faith-based outreach. In his free time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, ranching, and reading.

BOARD MEMBER
FINANCE COMMITTEE



Stephanie Hicks

Stephanie Hicks is a Program Specialist with the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, focusing on the Truancy Task Force. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Northwestern State University. Recognized for her commitment to community service, Stephanie received the Humanitarian Award from the LA State Conference NAACP and Sheriff Sid Gautreaux's Above and Beyond Award. Her dedication to youth and families enhances the mission of Magnolia Children's Group, where she advocates for positive change in the community.

BOARD MEMBER
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE



Cindy Major

Cindy Major is a retired elementary educator with 32 years of teaching experience and a passionate volunteer in the First Baptist Church Music Ministry. She has a background in early childhood learning and loves fostering creativity in children through music. Cindy is dedicated to ensuring all are cared for while keeping the process fun and engaging. Her nurturing and joyful spirit makes her an invaluable member of Magnolia Children's Group's board.

BOARD MEMBER
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Magnolia
Children's Group

Meet the Team



Brandon Richoux

Brandon Richoux, as a board member of Magnolia Children's Group, brings a wealth of experience in leadership and strategic growth from his real estate career. His expertise in client service, team development, and community engagement enhances Magnolia Children's Group outreach and operational success. His strong commitment to integrity and professionalism, along with his dedication to family values, make him a valuable advocate for MCG's mission to support children and families in the community.

BOARD MEMBER
DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE



Wayne Barineau

Wayne Barineau is a Controller in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with extensive experience in tax preparation, tax planning, and bookkeeping. He holds a degree from LSU and has worked in various roles. Wayne is passionate about helping businesses with financial services and accounting. With his background in accounting and management, he brings valuable expertise to the board of Magnolia Children's Group.

BOARD TREASURER
FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR



Comelia Jackson

Comelia Jackson serves as the Director of Nursing, where she leads academic and clinical excellence in nursing education. She is the Vice Chair of the Commission for the Council on Occupational Education Accreditation Agency. With over 20 years of experience in neuromedical nursing and nurse management, she brings deep expertise and compassionate leadership to the field. Her career includes decades of service as a Director of Nursing, shaping care models and mentoring healthcare professionals. A passionate advocate for women and children's rights, she champions pediatric health, individualized care plans, and support for special needs. Her dedication aligns perfectly with the mission of Magnolia Children's Group.

BOARD MEMBER
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Magnolia
Children's Group

Meet the Team



Amanda Martinez

Amanda Martinez is a passionate former elementary educator with 9 years of teaching experience. She has served in different ministry and administrative areas in faith communities for 16 years, including areas directly involving the next generation of youth. Amanda is dedicated to creating opportunities for children to shine in the community. With her love for seeing children grow, she continues to inspire and support young people through her work with Magnolia Children's Group.

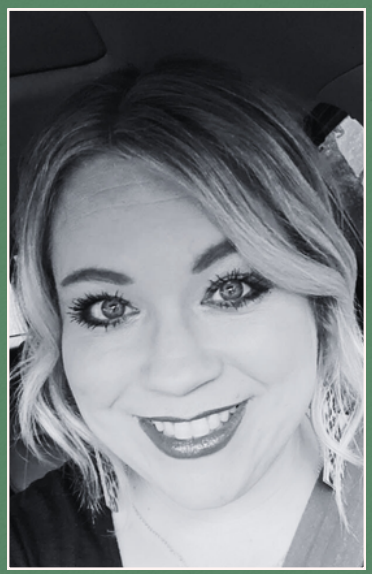
BOARD MEMBER
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
BOARD EA



Gina Umstetter

Gina Umstetter is a seasoned educator and systems administrator with a lifelong passion for ministry and missions. Originally from the Philippines, she has dedicated her career to teaching business and computer systems while managing data and institutional operations. Gina is a published author of computer textbooks and brings both technical expertise and a heart for service to every role she fulfills. She is married to Bill, pastor of a Filipino church, and they have one son, Matt. Her background blends education, faith, and cross-cultural experience, making her a valued voice on the Magnolia Children's Group board. Gina is committed to using her skills to support children and families with excellence and compassion.

BOARD MEMBER
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE



Lacey Lobell

Lacey Lobell serves as the Baton Rouge and Covington Regional Director for the Louisiana Heart Gallery, where she raises awareness for children and teens awaiting adoption. Passionate about ensuring every child finds a family, Lacey is deeply committed to the organization's mission. She is dedicated to building community support for Louisiana's waiting children, believing every child deserves a loving home. Lacey's advocacy and leadership are valuable assets to Magnolia Children's Group as she continues to make a significant impact in her local community.

BOARD SECRETARY

Magnolia Children's Group

Meet the Team



Amanda Moody

Amanda Moody is the Louisiana CASA State Director and the Executive Director of the Louisiana CASA Association, a nonprofit organization advocating for youth in foster care. With a strong background in customer service and nonprofit operations, Amanda has led successful initiatives like House Bill 905, which enables jurors to donate their per diem to support CASA's mission. A dedicated advocate for children, Amanda brings valuable leadership and a passion for community engagement to Magnolia Children's Group. Based in Baton Rouge, she continues to contribute to local youth welfare through her work and advocacy.

BOARD MEMBER
PROGRAMS COMMITTEE CHAIR



Jolie Williamson

Jolie V. Williamson is a seasoned educator with over 14 years of experience in public education. She holds a B.A. in Political Science and an M.S. in Interpersonal and Organizational Communication. Jolie has received numerous accolades, including the NSDA Louisiana District New Coach of the Year award in 2023. She is passionate about community engagement, volunteering, and exploring Louisiana's rich history and culture. With a strong academic background and a commitment to children's advocacy, she currently serves as the Director of Children's Programs and Executive Director of the Louisiana Children's Cabinet. Jolie is dedicated to uplifting Louisiana's youngest and most vulnerable citizens as a board member of Magnolia Children's Group.

ADVISORY MEMBER



Aly Brodsky

Aly Rau Brodsky is Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer at the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity, where she helps shape national policy solutions that expand opportunity for low-income and working-class families. She previously served in multiple cabinet-level roles in Louisiana, including Deputy Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services and Louisiana Works, helping lead nationally recognized reforms in child welfare, workforce, and safety-net systems. Aly was a key architect of Louisiana's "One Door to Work" initiative and authored the mission and vision for the state's child welfare agency, anchoring its work in safety, stability, and family strength. Her leadership portfolio has included oversight of child welfare, SNAP, TANF, child support enforcement, disability services, and employment and training programs, with a focus on outcomes-based accountability and system alignment. Grounded in lived experience as a former foster parent, CASA volunteer, and advocate for survivors of sexual assault, Aly brings a deeply practical and human-centered perspective to reform. She lives in Louisiana with her husband, Elia, and their six children.

ADVISORY MEMBER

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Children's Group

Meet the Team



Dr. Dawn Vick

Dr. Dawn Vick, a Baton Rouge native and LSU alumna, brings a wealth of medical expertise and compassionate care to the Magnolia Children's Group Advisory role. With a background that includes serving as Chief Resident and Faculty at the Medical College of Georgia and leading Woman's Hospital's Pediatric Department, she offers deep clinical insight and proven leadership. Her state-level service on the Child Death Review Panel further underscores her dedication to child welfare. As a mother of four boys and an advocate for healthy living, Dr. Vick understands firsthand the real-life challenges families face. Her ability to connect with parents and simplify complex medical information makes her a trusted voice in pediatric care. Dr. Vick's blend of professional excellence and relatable, real-world experience makes her an outstanding choice for guiding and shaping the Magnolia Children's Group.

ADVISORY MEMBER



Dr. Kris Lindsey Hall

Dr. Kristina "Kris" Lindsey Hall is a tenured Associate Professor of Marketing at Louisiana State University with expertise in service management, consumer behavior, and organizational strategy. She earned her Ph.D. and M.S. in Marketing from The University of Alabama and her B.B.A. in Marketing from St. Mary's University, where she graduated as a Greehey Scholar and received both the Presidential Award and the Dean's Future Leader Award. Kris's research focuses on frontline employee and customer interactions, service inclusion and justice, and stakeholder collaboration, with publications appearing in numerous leading academic journals. Her work has been supported through multiple grants and fellowships and has been presented at more than 45 international, national, and regional conferences. In addition to her academic leadership, Kris brings professional experience in marketing, branding, customer service, and operations across the hospitality, financial services, and petrochemical industries. A passionate advocate for child wellness and opportunity, Kris is a former foster mom who remains deeply involved in community service, family life, and local Louisiana traditions.

ADVISORY MEMBER



Amanda Lanata

Amanda Lanata is the Assistant Director of Louisiana Main Street, where she has worked since 2021. She previously ran a family-owned home repair business and spent nine years at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, contributing to the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. Amanda co-leads a Strong Towns Local Conversation in Baton Rouge, advocating for walkability and quality-of-life issues. An avid DIYer, she is currently restoring her historic Craftsman bungalow in downtown Baton Rouge.

ADVISORY MEMBER

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Meet the Team



Brianna Cooley

Brianna Cooley is a graduate of Louisiana State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Social Work and is currently pursuing her Masters of Social Work. Brianna was born in Baton Rouge and raised in Ascension Parish. Her experienced childhood trauma that went unaddressed led her to pursue healing and education so she could help bridge the advocacy gap for other children in crisis. While at LSU, Brianna interned as a special-education counselor with the Ascension Parish School Board, providing individualized and group support to high-school students. Guided by her faith to serve, she plans to become a licensed clinical social worker. Outside her professional ambitions, Brianna loves to travel and is working toward visiting every continent.

ADVISORY MEMBER



Dr. Eva Adolfo

Dr. Eva V. Adolfo brings over 33 years of experience in education to her advisory role with Magnolia Children's Group. She holds a Ph.D. in Science and Math Education (2024) and a Master of Science in Biology (2022), both from Southern University and A&M College. Additionally, she earned a Master's Degree in Special Education from SWU in 2010 and completed over 60 Ph.D. units in Administration, Supervision, and PreK Teaching from an international institution. Her professional journey includes roles as a classroom teacher, department head, school headmaster, instructional support specialist, and special education compliance facilitator. Dr. Adolfo currently serves as the Special Education Program Facilitator for Curriculum and Instruction with the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Her depth of experience and academic achievement make her a valued contributor to initiatives focused on inclusive and effective education for all learners.

ADVISORY MEMBER



Todd Gaudin

Todd Gaudin is the founder of the Gaudin Law Group, a boutique practice focused on family law, adoption, succession, and property matters across Louisiana and beyond. Since beginning his legal career in 1996 with the First Circuit Court of Appeal, Todd has built extensive experience advocating for children and families through adoption and foster care proceedings in more than 20 Louisiana parishes and 16 other states. He is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys and actively contributes to adoption law reform through the Louisiana Law Institute's Children's Code Committee. Todd is also recognized for his leadership in estate and guardianship matters, where he helps families navigate difficult transitions with compassion, diligence, and clarity. His commitment to service includes board leadership with Paracletia and Apex Collegiate Academy, as well as ongoing support for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Todd lives in Baton Rouge with his wife, Hope, and their four children, and enjoys spending time with his family, animals, and bee hives.

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ADVISORY MEMBER