

Scaling Up Microfinance



Underwriting to Scale Webinar November 1, 2013

Presenter Bios

Leslie Hoffman began her microfinance career in 2005 when she was hired to coordinate public relations and marketing activities for then-ACCION New Mexico. She quickly took on additional responsibilities ranging from project management of a loan software system conversion to gap coverage on loan collections. She went on to play a number of management and senior-level roles, including vice president positions overseeing lending, portfolio quality, client service and strategic partnership development. She helped the organization expand its footprint into Arizona and Colorado and grow to become the nation's fourth largest microlender by 2011 while improving overall portfolio performance. Her operational experience includes direct small business lending, loan collections, microloan underwriting, portfolio management, sales team development and management, staff recruitment and training, strategic planning, business development and market expansion, process improvement, fundraising, community organizing and outreach, credit education and entrepreneurial training. She has also published articles on financial and small business management topics. Leslie began her professional career as a print journalist, serving as a newswoman for The Associated Press and The Albuquerque Tribune's legal affairs reporter, among other roles. She also served as a municipal development volunteer in the Peace Corps in rural El Salvador and speaks Spanish. She is a two-time University of New Mexico graduate, having earned a bachelor's degree in both journalism and political science and a master's degree in business administration. She returned to UNM's Anderson School of Management in 2012 as a part-time lecturer to teach undergraduate entrepreneurship.

Luz Gomez is a Consultant with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program. She has over ten years of experience in the U.S. microenterprise field. She is author or co-author of several studies related to scale in the microenterprise field including *Dollars for Dreams: Scaling Microlending in the United States*, and *A Newly Crowded Marketplace: How For-Profit Lenders are Serving Microentrepreneurs*. Most recently, she worked with microlender ACCION USA as Senior Director of Marketing, where she identified new partnership opportunities and conducted market and product research. In 2003, she launched ACCION USA's Miami program, leading it to become the state's largest microlender. She holds an M.A. in Political Science from Columbia University and a B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley.

