

Ellen Gilchrist believes in the power of community and the idea that we are stronger when we grow together. As CEO of BasBlue, a non-profit dedicated to inclusivity and diversity, she leads with a passion for adding value and leaving every space and project better than she found it.

Her commitment to fostering belonging began long before BasBlue. For 17 years, Ellen devoted herself to education in Detroit, working with Michigan Future Schools, UPrep Schools, and Detroit Public School Community District. She witnessed firsthand how creating spaces where young people feel seen, supported, and included can transform lives. That dedication continued at United Way for Southeast Michigan, where she served as Senior Director of Education and Community Initiatives, ensuring youth across the region had their basic needs met and opportunities to thrive.

Ellen's academic journey laid the foundation for her work: a Bachelor of Arts from Smith College and a Master of Arts from Columbia University. Beyond her professional life, she is a proud wife to Garlin and a devoted mother to Emily, Garlin III, and Ruby, continuing to nurture the same values of growth, care, belonging, and impact that define her career.