



Amanda Parrish Block was born and raised in Summit, NJ. Growing up during a time when organizations like Bridges, Family Promise, and SHIP were just starting, she grew up with a sense that a healthy community is one where that embraces and protects the humanity of all of its members.

During college, Amanda learned about community organizing and how social systems can reduce poverty during her internships at the White House and the State Department. Nearly 17 years ago she began her advocacy career when she opened the community outreach office for NYC's street homeless and underserved at Washington Square United Methodist Church. It was there she created the acclaimed "street sheets" which were a series of ten booklets for food, hygiene, medical, legal, housing, and job skills training services available to anyone in need and without referral.

Nine years ago, Amanda returned to Summit with her family. During her time as Bridges Board Chair and Community Vice President of the Junior League of Summit, she founded GRACE in 2016 in order to marshal Summit's resources to increase the quality of life for all of Summit's community members. Today GRACE serves an average of 400 families from the Summit community each week with nutrient dense food, seasonal and household supplies, educational enrichment, and medical education and free care.