

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE



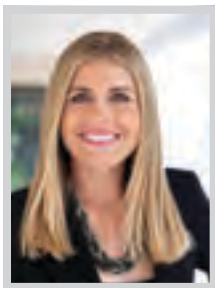
FROM NAVIGATING THE VARIOUS CHALLENGES OF THE LAST FEW YEARS TO OVERCOMING THE FISCAL REPERCUSSIONS of devastating wildfires and international unrest while charting a course for responsible data protection in the age of A.I., leadership of the banking and financial services sector has faced some key challenges recently.

With 2025 well underway, finance professionals are more essential than ever. There are some particularly stellar trusted advisors in the LA region – who happen to be women – and we’ve alphabetically listed some of the very best of them here, along with key information about their careers and relevant successes they’ve achieved.

These are the women we chose to recognize for exceptional leadership, knowledge, skill and achievements in banking across the full spectrum of financial responsibility along with the highest professional and ethical standards, and for contributions to the Los Angeles business community at large.

Methodology: The professionals featured in these pages did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from nomination materials submitted to the Los Angeles Business Journal. Those selected for inclusion were reviewed by the editorial department. The professionals were chosen based on a demonstration of impact made on the profession and on the Los Angeles community.

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**CAROL BATES**

Private Wealth Advisor
Strategic View Advisors

Carol Bates has been in the finance industry for almost two decades and brings with her extensive experience in financial planning, investment management and client advising. She graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, with a M.S in business administration and a concentration in finance. She is a passionate advocate for client education, applying her depth of expertise to the center of every client interaction.

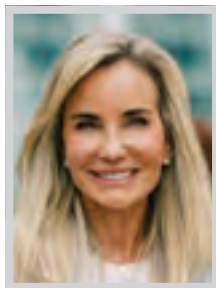
In addition to her responsibility of providing advice and guidance to Strategic View Advisor's clients, Bates also sits on several committees, including the financial planning and investment committees, and contributes to the broader organizational strategy as a strategic partner of the firm.

**BARBARA BERNSTEIN**

Wealth Management Advisor
Fortuna Wealth Management, Legacy Strategies and Insurance Solutions

Barbara Bernstein works closely with clients to articulate their goals and connect them to the needed tools to bring those goals to fruition. With over a decade of experience in financial planning and client relationship management, she has honed her skills in guiding individuals towards their financial aspirations.

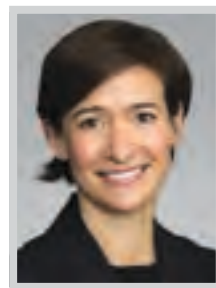
Bernstein understands that many people are overwhelmed by financial complexities such as investment management, and the challenge of integrating personal goals with finances. She follows a consistent investment and financial planning philosophy which ensures that all plans are well-tailored regarding risk tolerance, asset allocation and long-term planning. This alignment helps clients make informed decisions that are in sync with their overall financial goals and risk appetite.

**KARA BOCCELLA**

Founder; Managing Partner
Serenus Wealth Advisors, LLC

Kara Boccella is the founder of Serenus, and with her team, oversees about \$1.2 billion in client assets. Many of her clients are partners at top law firms and C-suite executives. Boccella takes a holistic view of each client's financial situation and tailors her approach to suit their needs. Her unique, all-encompassing approach covers planning and execution in such areas as investment management, tax, trust and estate, retirement, and employee benefits, company stock, partnership plans and more.

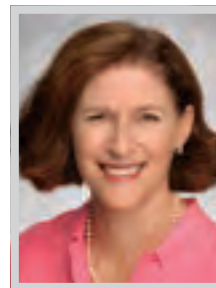
Throughout her 30-year career, Boccella has provided unpaid financial planning advice to those in need due to losing a loved one or other life-changing circumstances. She currently manages the financial affairs of several widows and widowers pro bono.

**PIPPA BOND**

Partner
Kirkland & Ellis LLP

Pippa Bond is one of the top capital market attorneys in the country. She has extensive experience in corporate finance and securities, including leveraged buyouts, acquisitions and restructurings. Bond serves as primary outside counsel for Ares Management and Blue Owl Capital, Inc., two leading global alternative asset managers. After leading their respective IPOs, she is now part of an elite Kirkland team and advises the asset managers, their portfolio companies, and affiliated vehicles on capital market transactions, public company governance and compliance, and other significant matters.

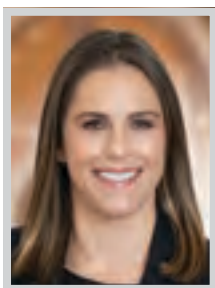
Bond's practice also focuses on liability management and restructuring transactions outside of the courts for household brand-name companies, including Neiman Marcus, Staples, and Equinox Group.

**SHERRY CEFALI**

Managing Director
Duff & Phelps Opinions Practice of Kroll, LLC

Sherry Cefali has been with Kroll for over 30 years, advising companies and boards, rendering fairness opinions and solvency opinions and determining valuations of companies and securities. In addition, she is director on the board of RF Industries, chairs its compensation committee and is a member of the audit committee and nominations and governance committees.

Cefali has significant experience in REIT roll-up and REIT internalization transactions. She rendered fairness opinions in the four largest US REIT IPO transactions in history, including Lineage, Paramount Group, Douglas Emmett and Invitation Homes, and authored the articles "REIT Roll-up Transactions: How Much is Your Manager Worth?" (GlobeSt.com) and "Management Company Values in REIT Roll-ups" (Real Estate Forum).

**SABRINA DUKHOVNY**

Executive Vice President, Operations
Arixa Capital

Sabrina Dukhovny has led Arixa through substantial growth, supporting the company's geographic expansion and improving its resilience in challenging financial conditions. She joined Arixa in 2020, and by leveraging her 15+ years of private real estate lending expertise, she transformed the operations, compliance and technology infrastructure of the company. As a result, the company has experienced remarkable growth, recently surpassing \$5 billion in cumulative originations.

Over the past two years, Dukhovny helped to strengthen Arixa's capital foundation. She helped launch a \$200+ million joint venture with Oaktree Capital Management to expand the company's lending program. She also helped increase Arixa's flexibility and financing options to help close \$250+ million in senior warehouse facilities with multiple lenders.

**LINDSAY DUNN**

Executive Vice President;
Head of Commercial Real Estate Banking
City National Bank

Lindsay Dunn is executive vice president and head of commercial real estate banking at City National Bank. She also serves on City National's senior management team. She is responsible for providing a wide range of financial services to real estate developers and investors in markets where the bank operates. She is responsible for a \$10 billion loan portfolio and \$8 billion deposit base.

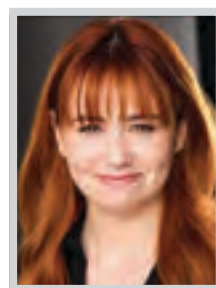
Under Dunn's leadership, her team expanded into the affordable housing space over the last 12 months, where they have since financed the construction of nearly 350 units of affordable housing and continue to grow this portfolio. Before her current role, she served as a senior vice president and regional manager responsible for real estate lending, operations and business development.

**MARCELIA FREEMAN**

Senior Investor Relations Professional
Clearlake Capital Group

Marcelia Freeman's two decades of private equity and investment management experience, combined with her deep fundraising and product knowledge across PE, VC, private credit, infrastructure and other private markets, has made her a key asset to Clearlake Capital Group and other organizations. Since joining Clearlake in 2020, Freeman has been responsible for raising capital for the firm's various investment vehicles. She played a pivotal role in the firm's record-breaking 2022 fundraises, Clearlake Capital Partners VII (\$14.1+ billion). She has also been instrumental in extending Clearlake's capabilities in credit and the insurance space.

Prior to joining Clearlake, Freeman was responsible for managing investor relationships and products globally across EIG Global Energy Partners' platform.

**KELLY GRANDMAISON**

Co-Founder
Impact Ventures International LLC

Kelly Grandmaison is an extraordinary leader in the finance sector, blending entrepreneurial innovation, strategic financial expertise and a passion for community impact. Her work embodies not only excellence in her field but also a commitment to fostering financial literacy, sustainability and ethical business practices.

As co-founder of Impact Ventures International (IVI), Grandmaison spearheads initiatives that enable companies to navigate complex financial landscapes, optimize their profitability and achieve long-term sustainability. Under her leadership, IVI has become a trusted partner for startups and established enterprises alike, particularly for those seeking to align their financial success with broader social and environmental objectives. By marrying innovation with actionable strategy, Grandmaison has consistently delivered results.

**JESSIE HALE**

Founder; CEO
Vita Wealth Advisors

With over 18 years of experience in wealth management, Jessie Hale is the founder and CEO of boutique wealth management firm Vita Wealth Advisors. Throughout her career, she has provided expert financial guidance to individuals and families, skillfully helping them navigate economic cycles and achieve their financial goals. Hale provides holistic wealth management that includes investment services, estate and tax planning, and comprehensive financial planning.

Before founding Vita Wealth Advisors in 2024, Hale held the position of senior portfolio advisor at a leading global financial institution, where she managed over \$650 million in assets. During this time, she honed her expertise in investment strategies, risk management and client relationship-building, consistently delivering exceptional service and measurable outcomes.

Ares Management Congratulates



Christina Oh

Partner, Deputy CFO and Treasurer,
CFO of Secondaries and Infrastructure

For being recognized as a

2025 Woman of Influence: Finance

by the Los Angeles Business Journal

We are proud of her inspiring leadership at Ares,
in the industry and in the broader L.A. community.



WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE



LAUREN ANTION HANSEN

Director; Co-Head of Beauty, Personal Care & Wellness
Intrepid Investment Bankers

Lauren Antion Hansen was named co-head of beauty, personal care & wellness at Intrepid Investment Bankers in 2023 as a result of her increasing role, responsibility and leadership within the industry group. With nearly a decade of beauty mergers and acquisitions experience, Hansen has an incredibly strong understanding of the trends and value-drivers across the sector, close relationships with leading strategic acquirors and investors, and significant experience sourcing and executing transactions.

Given her expertise, Hansen has worked on most of the beauty, personal care and wellness transactions at Intrepid since 2015, including sell-side and buy-side mergers and acquisitions, capital raising and restructuring transactions.

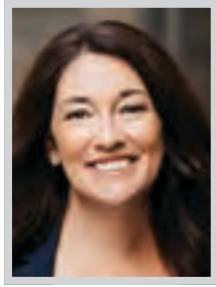


ALYSSA HEIM

Managing Director
Kroll, LLC

Alyssa Heim is one of the youngest managing directors within Kroll and leads with an expertise of regulatory compliance consulting. Heim manages a book of business worth approximately \$5 million per year, providing ongoing retained compliance support primarily to private equity and hedge fund clients. She actively collaborates with colleagues across the firm, driving internal referrals, and has built a strong network within the Los Angeles business community. She has assisted numerous clients to register with the SEC and NFA, establish customized compliance infrastructures, implement compliance programs and conduct mock examinations.

Heim also spearheads the firm's volunteer efforts in Los Angeles, raising over \$100k to help individuals in the community overcome homelessness.

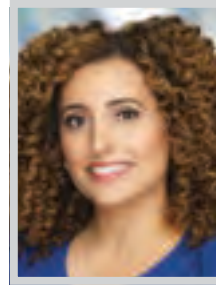


KELLY HEINEN

Financial Advisor
Northwestern Mutual

With a mission to challenge the status quo in the finance industry, Kelly Heinen aims to redefine the narrative that financial advisory services are exclusively available to the high net worth. She firmly believes that everyone should have access to expert financial guidance, regardless of their financial standing. This unwavering commitment drives her to help clients take the necessary steps to build a secure and prosperous financial future.

Heinen's approach to financial advising is deeply rooted in empathy and a genuine desire to see her clients succeed. Her comprehensive approach ensures that clients feel empowered and equipped to make informed financial decisions. She is an expert in business planning, investment planning, insurance protection strategies, tax-efficient strategies, education planning and funding, and retirement planning.



LANA HOUT

Managing Broker
First Choice Business Brokers
Los Angeles

Over the past decade, Lana Hout has built a thriving, female-owned business brokerage, transforming the traditionally male-dominated field with a modern, client-focused approach. Specializing in small and medium business transactions across diverse industries with values up to \$50 million, Hout has distinguished herself as a leader and top performer, consistently delivering superior results for her clients.

As a founding managing broker, Hout has successfully listed over \$156 million in businesses for sale and worked with more than 250 small business owners, earning her an unparalleled reputation in the industry. Her client-centric approach is marked by meticulous financial analysis and smooth transaction execution.



CAROLYN HUNT

Partner
Barnes & Thornburg LLP

Carolyn Hunt is a distinguished leader in the field of finance law, serving as co-chair of Barnes & Thornburg's debt finance practice group. Her expertise spans the intricacies of structuring and negotiating complex financial transactions, making her a trusted advisor to both financial institutions and corporate borrowers.

Hunt has played a pivotal role in numerous high-stakes financing transactions, particularly in the entertainment industry, ranging from single-project capital raises and production loans to large-scale portfolio financings. Her clients include leading financial institutions, numerous private funds and non-institutional lenders, as well as prominent corporate entities seeking strategic financing solutions. Hunt's work exemplifies precision, creativity, and deep financial acumen.

Clearlake Capital congratulates
Marcelia Freeman and Darien Lee
for being recognized by the
Los Angeles Business Journal's
2025 Women of Influence



www.clearlake.com



Congratulations,

2025 WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE

We're so proud to see **Lindsay** and **Adey** recognized for their commitment to our clients and communities.



Lindsay Dunn
EVP, Commercial
Real Estate Banking



Adey Tesfaye
SVP, Head of Community
Reinvestment Act Division

CITY NATIONAL BANK



AN RBC COMPANY



Let's connect at cnb.com

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE



AMY JOHNSON
Vice President
Perennial Financial Services

Amy Johnson is a seasoned professional with nearly a decade of experience in the financial services industry. She is a true thought leader and innovator who has achieved remarkable growth in her practice, all while navigating the challenges of being a single mother of two and an independent financial advisor.

With over 13 years of experience in the financial industry, Johnson has dedicated her career to helping clients navigate their personal financial journeys with confidence and clarity. Her diverse roles within the industry have provided her with a comprehensive understanding of financial services, equipping her with the expertise to deliver exceptional guidance and results. Her dedication and insight set a standard of excellence that benefits everyone she works with.



LILIT KAZANGYAN
Special Counsel
Covington & Burling LLP

Lilit Kazangyan represents investment banks as well as public and private companies in connection with a variety of domestic and international capital markets transactions, including initial public offerings, follow-on offerings, and high-yield and investment grade debt offerings. Kazangyan has significant experience in capital market financings by special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs). She also advises clients on general corporate matters, including securities laws compliance and corporate governance.

Additionally, for the last five years, Kazangyan has volunteered year-round, including in a leadership capacity, for the national, non-partisan election protection hotline administered by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.



ANNE KIM
Partner
Kirkland & Ellis LLP

Anne Kim is a partner in the Los Angeles office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Her practice focuses on advising public and private companies in both taxable and tax-free mergers and acquisitions, divestitures, cross-border transactions, recapitalizations and the formation of joint ventures.

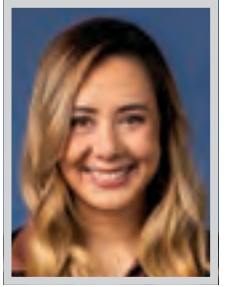
Kim's expertise spans a wide range of complex financial dealings, including secondaries transactions, innovative liquidity solutions for fund sponsors and asset management M&A. She also advises clients on the tax aspects of capital markets transactions, debt restructurings and liability management exercises. With deep insights into California's most dynamic industries, she brings specialized financial knowledge to clients in technology, energy, retail, entertainment, media, and insurance sectors.



VERONICA LAH
Partner
Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP

Veronica Lah is a partner in Manatt's cross-industry M&A, capital markets, private equity and finance practice. She is a highly sought-after adviser representing public and private companies, investors and financial institutions in a wide range of corporate matters. She focuses her practice on securities, joint ventures, corporate governance, board advisory services and other corporate and financial transactions. Lah represents private and public companies, investors, private equity firms and investment banks in corporate transactions spanning numerous industries, including financial services, entertainment, technology, consumer products and healthcare.

Additionally, Lah serves as business unit leader of Manatt's transactional resources team and as a member of Manatt's diversity subcommittee.



DARIEN LEE
Senior Associate
Clearlake Capital Group

Darien Lee joined Clearlake amid the COVID pandemic and spent her first year integrating into the team while working entirely remote. She has taken on a leadership role at Clearlake, where she helps lead efforts for both the new associate training program and the associate recruiting program.

Lee is actively involved in the firm's investing efforts in the industrials sector and has become a trusted resource to several of Clearlake's portfolio company executive teams. She has also helped close over 20 transactions during her time at the firm, including new platform investments and add-on acquisitions. She has also organized Clearlake events focused on enhancing female associate development, while serving as a mentor for young women at the firm.

Where You Need Us

Barnes & Thornburg congratulates its own **Carolyn Hunt** for being recognized in the Women of Influence: Finance issue. We proudly celebrate women in the legal profession.



Carolyn Hunt
Partner

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP

btlaw.com



Congratulations, 2025 Women of Influence: Finance

We are proud to celebrate **Edythe Repoff** and **Kimberly Schugart**, whose dedication and leadership embody New Omni Bank's mission of **enriching lives through understanding**.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to excellence and to our community.



Edythe Repoff
President, Chief Operating Officer

Kimberly Schugart
SVP, Chief Financial Officer

About New Omni Bank

Since 1980, New Omni Bank, N.A., has been a trusted financial partner for Los Angeles businesses. We offer tailored solutions in treasury management, business lending, and deposits to support growth and cash flow management. Backed by local expertise and a global network, we provide the personalized banking your business deserves.

newomnibank.com



MKT8002-2025 (EN)

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE



MICHELLE NGUYEN
Senior Managing Director
First Foundation Advisors

At First Foundation Advisors, Michelle Nguyen manages a book of clients of over \$300 million and is the youngest senior managing director at the firm. She is skilled in managing investment portfolios and high-net-worth client complexities such as wealth preservation, tax planning, legacy planning, and maximizing portfolio growth given the appropriate asset allocation and risk tolerance for the firm's clients.

Nguyen recently joined the board of Options for Learning, a nonprofit which offers free and low-cost, high-quality childcare, and early learning services. Prior to joining the board, she was a former USC board of governor, former president of the LA Estate Planning Council, and former board member of the LA LGBT Association and LA Center of Law and Justice Leadership Council.



CHRISTINA OH
Partner; Deputy CFO and Treasurer;
CFO, Secondaries and Infrastructure
Ares Management LLC

In her current role with Ares Management, Christina Oh oversees critical financial operations and contributes to strategic financial planning and management. Previously, Oh held the position of chief financial officer of the Ares Private Equity Group, where she played a pivotal role in managing the financial aspects of the firm's private equity investments. Before joining the firm in 2007, she gained extensive experience as a senior associate at Deloitte and Touche LLP, specializing in auditing financial services institutions, including investment companies and broker-dealers.

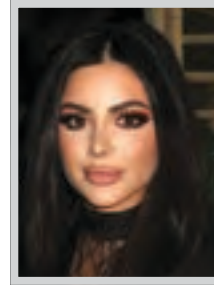
Beyond her professional responsibilities, Oh serves on the board of trustees for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society - Southern California Chapter, a non-profit organization dedicated to finding a cure for MS.



HEATHER QUINN
Financial Advisor
Fortuna Wealth Management, Legacy
Strategies and Insurance Solutions

Heather Quinn's ultimate goal is to help individuals live their lives to the fullest potential while ensuring the security of their families and the longevity of their financial resources. As a financial advisor, she is an expert in tax efficiency, risk management and optimized wealth accumulation, skillfully guiding her clients through the complexities of managing their income and optimizing their benefits.

Quinn enjoys helping people identify their most important goals and help them devise a roadmap for getting there. She follows a consistent investment and financial planning philosophy which ensures that all plans are well-tailored regarding risk tolerance, asset allocation and long-term planning. This alignment helps clients make informed decisions that are in sync with their overall financial goals and risk appetite.



TIRUE RAFAYELYAN
Chief Business Development Officer
Rockwell Capital Group

As the chief business development officer at Rockwell Capital Group, Tirue Rafayelyan is responsible for identifying new business opportunities, cultivating strategic relationships and partnerships, driving revenue for clients through strategic activations, and overseeing the onboarding of new clients. With over a decade of experience delivering exceptional value to clients that meet and exceed their expectations, she leverages a deep understanding of financial operations to help organizations optimize performance, navigate regulatory landscapes and achieve long-term success.

Prior to joining Rockwell, Rafayelyan spent over a decade at Paychex as a senior business consultant. She is a two-time winner of Paychex's Diamond Club Circle of Excellence Award, which is awarded to only the top trusted business advisors in the field.



JENNIFER RANDLE
Chief Operating Officer
MaC Venture Capital

Jennifer Randle is a results-driven leader with extensive experience in accounting and finance. With a proven track record in managing high-performance teams, improving operations and driving cost reduction, she excels in optimizing internal controls and ensuring regulatory compliance. Additionally, she has expertise in managing D&O, EPLI, general liability, workers' compensation and benefits.

Randle is MaC Venture Capital's first ever COO, bringing her operational and financial expertise to support LA's largest seed stage fund in further growth and success. She brings a strong finance and accounting background, previously serving as the EVP of Finance & Operations for The Chernin Group (TCG). Additionally, she has an extensive background in the venture capital space with management experience across various firms.



Congratulations to the 2025 Women of Influence: Finance

Hillary Savoie, Chief Banking Officer
SMBC MANUBANK

In recognition of your innovative leadership and transformative vision for commercial business finance.



WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE



EDYTHE REPOFF

President; Chief Operating Officer
New Omni Bank, National Association

Edythe Repoff has been instrumental in shaping New Omni Bank's growth and community impact through her transformative leadership as president and chief operating officer. Her strategic influence has extended across every facet of the bank, serving as a member of the board of directors since 2011 and actively contributing to critical committees, including the Asset Liability, Directors' Loan, Risk Management and Compliance, and Corporate Governance committees.

Under Repoff's guidance, New Omni Bank has grown from \$150 million to \$550 million in assets, a testament to her ability to drive sustainable growth. She has been instrumental in securing nearly \$50 million in Tier 1 Capital through a mix of public and private funding, empowering the bank to expand its lending capabilities and better serve the community.



KIM RIETFORS

Director, Investment Services
Fortify Capital Wealth Management & Insurance Services

Since joining Fortify Capital in 2003, Kim Rietfors has been instrumental in the financial planning practice's remarkable growth to \$500 million in Assets Under Management. As the director of investment services, she oversees the investment operations department, managing portfolio construction, attribution analysis, asset movement, and the implementation of planning and distribution strategies. Her expertise ensures that client portfolios are optimized to achieve their financial goals.

What sets Rietfors apart is her client-centered approach. Her strategic oversight in implementing planning and distribution strategies ensures both comprehensive and seamless service integration, driving the firm's success and positioning it as a leader in the field.

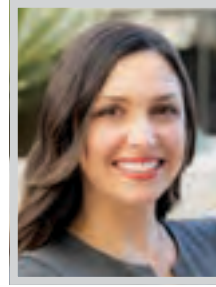


JACQUELINE RUSSELL

Senior Vice President; Market Executive
Banc of California

Jacqueline Russell is a senior vice president and market executive for Banc of California's Specialty Banking Group. She provides banking services to legal fiduciaries, law firms, property and community management companies, government agencies, third-party escrow and 1031 exchange qualified intermediaries.

Russell describes her role as "solving problems for clients who don't fit in a box" and from this point of view, created Banc of California's contractual escrow product in 2019. This niche offering within specialty banking administrates escrow funds for complex situations, such as M&A, investment pools, business litigation or even class action administration. Russell routinely leads the bank in bringing in noninterest-bearing deposits, which are critical to a bank's profitability and ability to lend.



NATALIE RUTLEDGE

Private Wealth Service Advisor
Strategic View Advisors

At Strategic View Advisors, Natalie Rutledge is deeply involved in the creation and maintenance of financial plans, helping to ensure that all clients receive sound, well-considered advice that is in their best interest. As a result, clients are empowered to comfortably make informed decisions that align with their overall financial goals, risk appetite and long-term objectives.

Rutledge entered the financial services industry in 2018 after more than a decade in the hospitality industry and brings with her a wealth of client service and leadership skills. Rutledge is also a member of the Northwestern Mutual Women's Council, which is dedicated to fostering a diverse, inclusive and supportive environment where women can thrive both professionally and personally.



MICHELLE SANTONE

Director of Finance, West Region
Colliers

Michelle Santone's career is a remarkable testament to dedication, expertise and leadership in the field of commercial real estate. With three decades of experience, her strategic vision, strong leadership and comprehensive financial acumen have played an integral role in driving the success of Colliers.

In her current role, Santone serves as a key partner to executive leadership, overseeing the financial operations, management reporting and project support for more than 33 offices across the West region. Her work includes supporting brokerage operations by ensuring seamless integration between the financial and operational elements of the business. She plays a vital role in shaping the region's financial goals, from annual budgets to monthly reporting.




**CONGRATULATIONS
KARA BOCCELLA ON
BEING RECOGNIZED
AS A WOMAN OF
INFLUENCE IN
FINANCE BY THE
LOS ANGELES
BUSINESS JOURNAL.**

Kara S. Boccella is the Founder and Managing Partner of Serenus Wealth Advisors, a partner-owned, independent RIA firm dedicated to serving as a trusted partner to high-net-worth clients nationwide. She has spent over 30 years advising executives, entrepreneurs, legal professionals, and high-net-worth individuals and families in all areas of wealth and investment management—including estate, insurance, legacy, retirement, and tax planning. Ms. Boccella manages approximately \$1.3B* and has consistently grown assets under management (AUM) organically, driven primarily by client referrals. Serenus was founded in Santa Monica in July 2024 and has since opened an office in New York, NY.

serenusadvisors.com • (310) 708-1706

The 2025 Los Angeles Business Journal (LABJ) Women of Influence: Finance was awarded in February 2025 and is an annual award that recognizes women in Los Angeles for "exceptional leadership, knowledge, skill and achievements in banking across the full spectrum of financial responsibility". Neither Serenus Wealth Advisors nor Kara Boccella paid a fee to the LABJ to be included; however they did pay a fee for promotional use of the ranking. The women are nominated for the award by completing a questionnaire, and recipients are chosen by the LABJ. Third-party ratings may not be representative of any one client's experience and should not be viewed as a recommendation or endorsement.

* as of 1/31/2025



LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

BANKING & FINANCE SPOTLIGHT

ALIGN YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR EXTENSIVE **BANKING & FINANCE** PORTFOLIO

The **Los Angeles Business Journal** recognizes the crucial role the banking and finance industry plays in the community of business. Don't miss these opportunities to strategically market your business to key decision-makers.

LISTS

Executive Compensation
Largest Public Companies
Local Banks
Fastest Growing Private Companies
Largest Private Companies
Financial Institutions
SBA Lenders

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE

Women in Finance
Investment Bankers
Banking
Private Equity, Investors & Advisors
Thriving in Their 40s

SPECIAL REPORTS

Banking & Finance Quarterly
Who's Who in Finance
Fastest Growing Private Companies

SPECIAL EDITIONS

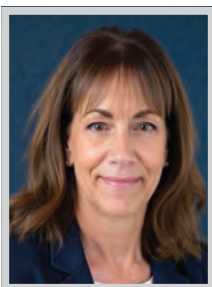
Money Issue
Wealthiest Angelenos
2026 Book of Lists

EVENTS

Economic Insights
DE+I Symposium & Awards
Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards
CFO Awards
Cybersecurity Breakfast

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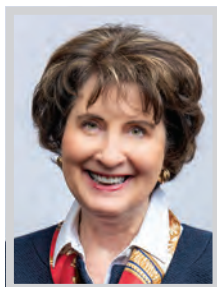
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**HILLARY SAVOIE**

Managing Director, Chief Banking Officer
SMBC MANUBANK

Hillary Savoie is the chief banking officer at SMBC MANUBANK, where she oversees a \$3 billion commercial portfolio. She has been the driving force behind SMBC MANUBANK's transformation from a community bank (formerly Manufacturers Bank) into a trusted commercial lender specializing in franchise finance, commercial real estate, diversified industries, and trust and estate services.

Savoie joined the bank, headquartered in Downtown Los Angeles, in 2023 with a mission to elevate the client experience by aligning business divisions by industry vertical, standardizing roles and responsibilities, and implementing digital automation to drive efficiencies. Her strategic initiatives have positioned SMBC MANUBANK as a premier banking choice for commercial businesses.

**KIMBERLY SCHUGART**

Senior Vice President;
Chief Financial Officer
New Omni Bank, National Association

Kimberly Schugart has significantly impacted New Omni Bank growth and its community-oriented mission through her expert leadership in finance. Since rejoining the bank's management team in 2018, Schugart has taken on crucial responsibilities, from financial planning and analysis to strategic planning and corporate finance, positioning the bank for sustainable growth and resilience.

One of Schugart's standout accomplishments is securing nearly \$40 million through the US Treasury's Emergency Capital Investment Program in 2022. In 2023, she capitalized on market volatility surrounding the US debt ceiling to restructure the bank's investment portfolio, doubling profits on \$80 million in US Treasuries by securing extraordinarily high yields on these fixed-income securities.

**ADRIANNA SMITH**

Managing Broker
First Choice Business Brokers
Los Angeles

As the co-owner and operator of First Choice Business Brokers Los Angeles, Adrianna Smith has successfully executed small business transactions in diverse industries, with a focus on deals under \$50 million. She made the bold decision to leave a stable corporate role and venture into the uncertain world of business brokerage with her business partner, Lana Hout. Together, they built a thriving business, defying expectations and establishing themselves as leaders in the business brokerage industry.

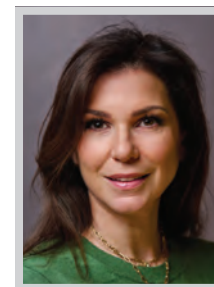
Smith's track record includes listing over \$156 million in businesses for sale and working with more than 250 small businesses. Her achievements have earned her national recognition, including 14 prestigious awards such as Top Sales Associate Nationwide and features in prominent business outlets.

**ROSE SORENSEN**

Partner
Snell & Wilmer LLP

Rose Sorensen's law practice includes mergers and acquisitions (M&A), divestitures, reorganizations, commercial finance, private placements, venture capital, corporate governance, telecommunications services, joint ventures, licensing, and entity structure and formation.

Sorensen's background includes serving as general counsel of a private cable operator and internet service provider with operations throughout California, Arizona and Texas, which helped shape her unique and balanced pragmatic approach in advising businesses on the complexities and functional considerations of their operations. As a result, she also serves as a trusted advisor to many of her clients including high-net-worth individuals, family-owned businesses, entrepreneurs, multi-national corporations and nonprofits.

**SINDY SPIVAK**

Senior Vice President, Community
Development Bank; West Region Executive
Bank of America

With over 30 years of commercial real estate and finance experience, Cindy Spivak leads a team of more than 20 community development bankers who provide financial solutions to create and preserve quality affordable multi-family housing developments across the West Region.

Over the past two years, Spivak's team provided \$675 million in financing to create or preserve 800 affordable housing units for working families, lower-income and vulnerable individuals such as seniors, veterans, and formerly homeless people. Over the past five years, the team has also provided more than \$2.1 billion in construction financing and low-income housing tax credit equity in collaboration with public and private partners to create and preserve over 3,100 affordable homes.

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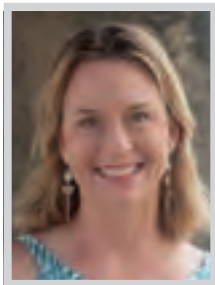
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WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: FINANCE

**KAREN TATMAN**

Founder; CEO
KMT Wealth Management

Karen Tatman is the founder and CEO of KMT Wealth Management, an SEC registered investment advisory firm that adds value to their client's financial lives through empathy, expertise and an evidenced-based framework. In 2023, Tatman took a leap and left her corporate role to start up her company to create more space to do what she loves - serving clients as their personal, trusted advisor and sharing her expertise to make a difference in their lives.

Tatman has carved out a niche client base by offering holistic wealth services for clients with \$10 million and more in investable assets. Under her leadership, KMT wealth management excelled in 2024. Clients committed new assets under management totaling over \$175,000,000 in the past 12 months.

**ADEY TEFAYE**

Senior Vice President; Head of Community Reinvestment Act Department
City National Bank

Adey Tesfaye has nearly 25 years of experience in the financial services industry, specifically in CRA. With a passion for creating affordable housing solutions for low- and moderate-income individuals, she has financed the construction and permanent loans for over 10,000 affordable housing units, managing nearly \$1 billion in portfolio assets.

In recent years, Tesfaye has leveraged her expertise to advise smaller banks, helping them incorporate community investment and lending into their business models. She joined City National in 2024 and is dedicated to advancing the bank's Community Reinvestment Act goals by collaborating with internal and external stakeholders, including community groups and local governments.

**GARIMA THAKUR**

Global Treasurer
Creative Artists Agency

Creative Artists Agency (CAA) global treasurer Garima Thakur is a seasoned executive with extensive expertise in global treasury management, capital markets, corporate finance and risk management. With a distinguished career spanning multiple industries, she has consistently delivered strategic leadership and financial acumen at the highest levels. Since joining CAA in 2021, she spearheads financial, capital and risk strategies to support the agency's growing global operations.

In the last 18 months, Thakur has successfully led multiple debt capital market transactions to support the company's growth, strategy and M&A, and reduce cost of debt with an optimal capital structure. Throughout her career journey, she has held key treasury management positions at esteemed organizations.

**ERIN VOISIN**

Managing Director,
Wealth Management Services
EP Wealth Advisors

From intern to managing director, Erin Voisin has built an accomplished career in the financial services industry since 2005. In her current role for EP Wealth Advisors, she oversees the financial planning, tax, estate and retirement plan services.

Starting with three members, Voisin's team has grown to an impressive 65 members in just nine years. Helping team members evolve into directors and associate directors has been a rewarding part of her career, with the knowledge that her personal career progression creates opportunities for others to grow in addition. Voisin is actively involved in various initiatives, including participating in the Financial Planning Association's (FPA's) pro bono financial planning days and serving as an FPA Pro Bono for Cancer volunteer.

**ALYSSA WEINBERGER**

Senior Managing Director;
Chief People Officer
Lido Advisors, LLC

Alyssa Weinberger became the first female partner of Lido Advisors, successfully running the operations and marketing team, ultimately leading to her current role as senior managing director and chief people officer. In addition to her executive position at Lido Advisors, she also serves as president of Lido Consulting Group, LLC.

Weinberger created the annual family office investment symposium, now in its 19th year, which is a national conference that brings together family office attendees interested in networking with their peers and learning best practices in the family office arena. In 2020, she also created and produced "Lido Live," a monthly educational webinar series geared toward the family office and high net-worth investment community.

Women Investment Advisors Still Face Barriers to Advancement

A new report from VersaFi, a leading non-profit supporting women in the finance sector, reveals that women continue to face significant barriers to advancement in wealth management, a field where men still hold 80-85% of advisory roles. But a dramatic rise in the amount of wealth controlled by women, a looming shortage of skilled talent and changing client preferences are fueling a new urgency to reverse the trend.

"The wealth management industry is undergoing a seismic shift, including a rising demand for talented women advisors," said Tanya van Biesen, president and CEO of VersaFi. "Women are earning and inheriting more wealth than ever before, and are projected to control nearly half the wealth in this country by 2028. At the same time, studies consistently reinforce that women tend to prefer working with women advisors. For an industry already expected to lose almost four in 10 advisors to retirement in the next decade, advancing women is more important than ever."

According to the Women in Wealth report, two key challenges continue to hold women investment advisors (IAs) back. The first, persistent bias and sexism, remains deeply embedded across the industry. The proof? More than six in 10 women IAs surveyed (61%) say they lack women role models; almost half experience insufficient mentorship (47%); and more than four in 10 say they have experienced bullying and harassment (44%).

The second challenge relates to inequitable succession planning, particularly around

the transfer or sale of retiring advisors' client books, often a key opportunity to grow one's practice. Notably, while nearly eight in 10 (79%) of women IAs agree that transparent and accessible book purchasing opportunities are key to retaining women in wealth management, less than a quarter (23%) believe they have the same opportunity as their male counterparts to purchase a retiring IA's book.

While the wealth management industry has taken a variety of proactive steps to advance the number of women staying and progressing in the field in recent years, progress has been slow. Women in Wealth offers three recommendations to advance women IAs in the current environment, to address the upcoming talent shortage and ensure the sector continues to thrive.

1) SUPPORT ADVISOR TEAMING PROGRAMS

Wealth management organizations should proactively involve more women in team-based advisory practices, a collaborative approach that can help eliminate workplace cultural barriers, facilitate mentorship opportunities, and enable better work-life balance.

An overwhelming majority of women IAs surveyed for Women in Wealth recognize the value of advisor teaming, agreeing that it enables resource sharing (92%), offers more diverse skills and expertise for clients (90%) and improves work-life balance, reducing burnout (87%). Yet while the practice is growing, it is not embedded inclusively across the

'Studies consistently reinforce that women tend to prefer working with women advisors. For an industry already expected to lose almost four in 10 advisors to retirement in the next decade, advancing women is more important than ever.'

industry. While eight in 10 women IAs say that advisor teaming is crucial for retaining women in the industry, less than a quarter (24%) believe their firm is doing an excellent job supporting advisor teams.

2) DRIVE BEHAVIOR CHANGE WITH 360-DEGREE FEEDBACK

Research repeatedly shows that implementing self-evaluations and anonymous 360-degree feedback promotes fairer reviews of employees, along with more accountability - fostering a respectful culture that supports all employees and helps dismantle problematic behaviors.

Organizations should involve employees in both giving and receiving feedback, to help individuals align their behaviors with team and organizational goals, and promote a culture of respect, inclusivity and continuous improvement.

3) IMPLEMENT TRANSPARENT SUCCESSION PLANNING POLICIES

To drive more equitable succession planning, organizations should establish clear and transparent guidelines on how books will be distributed. The guidelines should include clarity around considerations related to client revenue, IA skills and expertise, individual capacity, relationship strength and geography, among others. Such a move will help level the playing field for women.

"Firms and organizations that prioritize attracting, retaining, and advancing women advisors will lead the way into the future, and benefit from stronger client loyalty, increased referrals, and top-tier talent," said van Biesen. "Those that fail to address changing client dynamics and demands for talented women advisors risk being left behind."

To learn more, versaifi.ca.