

# WOMEN IN BUSINESS

An Orange County Business Journal Special Report & Custom Content

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# Winning Execs Don't Rest on Their Laurels

## \$1B Cancer Center Underway; Military Wins; Spanish Drug Investment

Orange County's business community last year celebrated the Business Journal's 25th annual Women in Business Awards luncheon at the Hotel Irvine, where **Aston Martin Americas President Laura Schwab** delivered the keynote address.

The winners, selected from 200 nominees, have not been resting on their laurels, even in the era of the coronavirus.

Here are updates on what the five winners have been doing.

—Peter J. Brennan

### Avatar Partners

Shortly after **Marlo Brooke** won the Business Journal's award for co-founding Huntington Beach-based **Avatar Partners Inc.**, she was accepted into the **Forbes Technology Council**, an invitation-only community for world-class CIOs, CTOs, and technology executives.

"Marlo was vetted and selected by a review committee based on the depth and diversity of her experience," said a company press release on the subject.

Brooke, a **California State University-Long Beach** grad, decided to start the company in 2003 "to serve those who serve us and protect us" after the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

The 50-person company develops technology software and products primarily for military and defense applications.

The software allows Navy mechanics to look at airplanes using a pair of smart glasses, and a phone or tablet, and troubleshoot issues or see if maintenance needs to be performed. It then gives the user a step-by-step guide for how to fix it.

Brooke, who by her own admission cusses like a sailor, which she blames on her military customers—last summer won contracts with both the Air Force and Navy.

Avatar is supplying an augmented reality

(AR) quality assurance solution for the U.S. Navy for aircraft wiring maintenance for the Naval Air Systems Command's Boeing V-22 Osprey aircraft.

Then the Air Force is using Avatar's solutions, based on techniques from X-rays to ultrasound, to help inspectors find the smallest imperfections and take corrective measures needed to keep equipment working safely.

The company has found new interest in its products because of the coronavirus and is looking for employees with a variety of skill sets.

"As a company that specializes in immersive reality and augmented reality, we have seen increased interest for virtual collaborative products that remotely connect dispersed workers," Brooke said in a June interview with the editor of Military Simulation & Training Magazine.

"While (Southern California) is a mecca of gaming and virtual reality skill sets, we need a wide variety of skill sets, including effective design and storyboarding, business and performance analysis, mechanical skills, and the ability to translate procedures into high-impact virtualized solutions that support the social and emotional needs of employees."

Avatar is supplying an augmented reality



**Marlo Brooke**  
President  
Avatar Partners

### City of Hope

As president of the **City of Hope Orange County**, **Annette Walker** is orchestrating a \$1 billion project to build one of the biggest, and scientifically advanced, cancer research centers in the world.

Located at the Great Park Neighborhoods in Irvine, the project is being overseen in conjunction with developer **FivePoint Holdings LLC**.

She took a big step forward in May after it completed the acquisition of property at the city's FivePoint Gateway office campus.

City of Hope, a research and treatment center for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases with its main campus in Duarte, paid \$108 million for a 190,000-square-foot, four-story building at the Irvine site, and 11 acres of adjacent land.

The Irvine campus will include a comprehensive cancer center at the existing building it bought, as well as a future acute care cancer hospital and other facilities.

"We are 'all in' for the region, fulfilling a promise that will deliver pioneering research and lifesaving treatment," Walker said.

The deal has numerous ripple-down effects on the local business community.

City of Hope will be making a hiring push for the new facilities, while also bringing

employees down from Duarte. Area universities could partner with City of Hope.

While the larger campus near the Orange County Great Park is being built, Walker in January opened a building in Newport Center for City of Hope's first outpatient facility in Orange County.

Walker, a mother of six and grandmother of 12, is well known in Orange County healthcare circles, also picked up two more prestigious Business Journal awards this year.

Walker's role in developing the Irvine project also earned her the Business Journal's Businessperson of the Year award for healthcare.

City of Hope addressed the coronavirus on a number of fronts, including the preclinical development of a vaccine.

Walker was one of the annual OC 50 featured in the May 25 print edition of the Business Journal, which highlighted area executives making a difference in the community during the pandemic.

"We'd like this spirit of collaboration to continue because frankly cancer and other serious issues aren't going away after COVID-19," said Walker, who is keynoting this year's virtual Women in Business event on Oct. 28.



**Annette Walker**  
President  
City of Hope  
Orange County

### Bioniz Therapeutics

**Bioniz Therapeutics Inc.**, an Irvine-based biopharmaceutical firm that began in 2010, in January announced a deal with a Spanish pharmaceutical company that could ultimately result in a \$540 million sale of one of its main drug products.

Barcelona-based **Almirall S.A.**, a pharmaceutical company focused on dermatology, made a \$15 million upfront payment to Bioniz for exclusive global rights to BNZ-1, an inhibitor that is being tested for its ability to fight a type of lymphoma that manifests in skin.

"We are super excited," Chief Executive **Nazli Azimi** said at the time. "It's a very sweet deal for the company and investors."

In July, Bioniz reported "encouraging interim clinical data" from its Phase 1/2 open-label clinical study of BNZ-1 in patients with refractory Cutaneous T-Cell Lymphoma (rCTCL).

"Together with our investigators, we are excited to see the potential clinical benefit of BNZ-1



**Nazli Azimi**  
Founder, CEO  
Bioniz Therapeutics

in highly refractory CTCL patients," Azimi said.

Azimi said her company—whose board includes former **Allergan** CEO **David Pyott** and **Masimo Corp.** CEO **Joe Kiani**—has other products in its pipeline called BNZ-2 and BNZ-3, which are aimed at stomach illnesses.

"The beauty of the deal that was very important was it didn't require the full acquisition of our portfolio," Azimi said. "We will continue with

other programs."

Azimi, a native of Iran who arrived in the U.S. in the early 1990s, spent a decade at the U.S. National Institutes of Health, where she completed her postdoctoral immunology program. Her board of advisers includes **Robert Gallo**, who became famous in 1984 when he co-discovered HIV as the cause of AIDS.

Azimi has authored more than 40 peer-reviewed, scientific publications and holds more than a dozen patents, including the Bioniz intellectual property patent estate.

### FivePoint Holdings

The webpage of **FivePoint Holdings LLC** (NYSE: FPH) points to what it is doing: \$55 billion in projected economic activity, 288,000 jobs projected to be created during construction, 23 million square feet of commercial space built or approved, 10,500 acres of planned opened space and 40,000 homes built or approved.

Hence, Chief Operating Officer **Lynn Jochim** has been quite busy in the past year:

■ Working with **City of Hope** for the start of a \$1 billion project to treat cancer, the biggest healthcare project currently moving ahead in Orange

County (see Annette Walker entry, this page).

■ Making the largest office sale in Orange County in the past three years by selling the two largest buildings at Irvine's FivePoint Gateway office campus for \$355 million in August to Washington, D.C.-based **PRP Real Estate Investment Management**.

■ Building hundreds more homes at Irvine's Great Park Neighborhoods, including some under a new fee-building arrangement with **Aliso Viejo's New Home Co.** Sales remain brisk at the Irvine development during the pandemic.



**Lynn Jochim**  
COO  
FivePoint Holdings

### Systems Source

**Systems Source Inc.**, which supplies desks and chairs to commercial offices, found a surprising niche during the coronavirus.

"We set up a lot of work from home programs with furniture for employees," founder and CEO **Rosemarie Smith** said. "A lot of wonderful employers spent money for their employees to get furniture."

Systems Source built a website where employees could order products for their homes. It also set up a COVID-19 department to help employers replan their work sites and introduced new products like hand sanitizer dispensers and screens to separate desks.

It had a successful 2019, reporting revenue

climbed 10% to \$207.4 million and its employee count increased 7% to 227.

The coronavirus will "definitely" cause a drop in revenue this year, she said, adding that the company had to lay off "more than a few but less than a third" of its employees.

It was deemed an essential business because its clients include pharmaceutical companies supplying coronavirus tests. Some of its clients are doing well during the pandemic, such as **Microsoft** and **Amazon**.

"We were very fortunate that we had a great backlog" at the start of the coronavirus, Smith said. "We will definitely survive this."



**Rosemarie Smith**  
CEO, President  
Systems Source





## A Shared Vision for a Better Future

*"It was an honor to be recognized in 2019 alongside a group of women who are blazing new trails in their industries and are passionate about giving back to this community."*

*Serving as a judge for this year's Women In Business Awards further ignites my passion for collaboration and building relationships – and reinforces that we share the goal of creating a better future for all."*

- Lynn Jochim, Chief Operating Officer, FivePoint

FivePoint applauds the *Orange County Business Journal* for shining a light on women who are excelling in the workplace.

**FIVEPOINT.**

With a shared mission to accelerate the future of healthcare delivery, FivePoint and City of Hope are collaborating to bring a world-class comprehensive cancer center to the FivePoint Gateway campus in Irvine.

The \$1 billion investment by City of Hope will one day become a regional hub for a larger health care campus with blue-chip physician groups, wellness specialists, and pioneering research. Leading the initiative are FivePoint Chief Operating Officer Lynn Jochim and City of Hope Orange County President Annette Walker, co-recipients of the Orange County Business Journal's 2019 Women In Business Award.

Together, FivePoint and City of Hope have a vision to provide equal access to vital care for all in Orange County.



**FIVEPOINT.**









# Women are primed to rebuild Orange County's economy

Women-led businesses are an economic force, fueling innovation, growth and job creation.

Over the last 50 years, the number of female-led businesses has exploded. According to the JPMorgan Chase & Co. Institute, today women represent nearly 40% of all small business owners in the United States, up from just 4.6% in 1972.

Orange County has been there every step of the way proudly creating women-led businesses.

And with the right support in today's climate, not only will women continue to lead the way, they will also rebuild Orange County from this year's economic crisis.

## So what comes next?

JPMorgan Chase has expanded Women on the Move (WOTM) – our commitment to support female employees, clients and consumers. It has three main objectives: expand women-run businesses, improve women's financial health and empower women's career growth.

WOTM serves women-owned and led businesses at all stages of development, from startups to global enterprises, by providing greater access to capital, networking, expertise and advice. Lending to women-owned businesses is a key priority of the program.

The events unfolding around the world this year have highlighted inequities everywhere. As a firm, inclusivity is central to the work we do. Doing “first class business in a first class way” drives everything we do. Our commitment to integrity, fairness and responsibility are foundational principles and, to be clear, we know there's more work to do.

Our firm has made a commitment to extend \$10 billion in credit to women-owned businesses. We are just getting started and plan to do much more.

We need more women-led businesses and we are excited to support women's success across Orange County as we rebuild a stronger and more inclusive economy.

Learn more about our Women on the Move initiative at: [jpmorganchase.com/WOTM](https://jpmorganchase.com/WOTM)



JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

Women on the Move



# College Planning in A Pandemic: 5 Questions to Ask Now



Whether your child is just beginning the planning process, an entering freshman or a returning student, getting ready to send them off to college is traditionally an exciting time for both of you. But with the current pandemic wreaking havoc on well-laid plans for the current academic year, compounded by rising tuition and, in many cases, declining household income, that excitement has been clouded over by a host of questions you might be having trouble answering.

Here we offer some guidance to help you and your child decide on the best path forward in these unprecedented times and the best ways to pay.

## 1 How is the coronavirus changing the college experience?

Although the pandemic should not be the driving force behind your child's ultimate choice of a college, the all-around environment of college life is difficult to come by this schoolyear as colleges struggle with social distancing restrictions that affect both classrooms and dormitories.



Dang

For many students, especially incoming freshmen, the higher the percentage of online instruction at their choice of college, the greater the number electing to sit out this schoolyear. In fact, according to higher education market research firm, the Art & Science Group, this could be the biggest gap year ever, with roughly 1 in 6 high school seniors saying they were making alternative plans for attending college this fall. The good news is that deferring admission for a year is not only acceptable, but encouraged, by more and more colleges.

## 2 How do we choose the right school?

Despite any aspirations you have for your child to attend a particular college — like your father's Ivy League or your own alma mater — the ultimate goal is an education that leads your child to a successful and happy future.

Speaking from decades of experience advising clients throughout the college planning process, Steve Sherline, Managing Director and Head of Private Wealth Management for Union Bank in Southern California, says: "Studies show that the most important factors for a successful education are related to how engaged the student is with professors, projects, mentors, and extracurricular activities and organizations. It can really pay off to find a school that provides an all-around environment where your child can be both motivated and comfortable."

This might well include a four-year college, but alternate avenues to consider are two-year community colleges along with internships or apprenticeships. This track might be especially appropriate, for instance, if your child has deferred this schoolyear due to the coronavirus. Alternatively, depending on your child's career plans, a vocational or trade school might be more suited to both their needs — and your pocketbook.

"Bottom line," says Steve, "there's no advantage in paying for a four-year education when experience in a particular field might be all that's required — or even desired."

## 3 What is the best way to pay for college if need-based financial aid is off the table?

If your household income does not allow your student to qualify for need-based

financial aid, one of the best ways to save early for college is a tax-advantaged account. Some of the most popular options for college savings include 529 plans, Coverdell Savings accounts, and Education Savings Bond Programs. As far as how much to save, you can use this gauge as a starting point: if you want to cover 50 percent of your child's college costs, try to save at least \$2,000 every year in your designated college fund. To cover 100 percent of college costs, you would need to double your savings each year.

Although time-consuming, it can be well worthwhile to search for scholarships, merit aid and grants to ease some of the sticker shock. A great source is the Peterson Guide to Cash for College, which lists thousands of grants and scholarships for students of all types. The key is to start the application process no later than the early part of your child's junior year of high school.

## 4 What is the return on investment for my child's education?

One easy way to put your child's college education into perspective is to compare tuition with how much money they stand to make after graduation, and then factor how many years they would need to work to break even on the investment. This is also a good exercise to help them take at least a first cut at whittling down their list of candidate schools and fields of study.

Begin by talking about their aspirations and career goals, then estimate how much money they can realistically expect to earn out the gate based on those projected goals. To research salary ranges for specific job roles in particular markets, you can refer to websites like Glassdoor.com and PayScale.com.

"Studies show that post-graduate salaries can vary widely depending on major," Steve points out, "but not so much on whether the graduate went to an elite private school versus a public state university."

## 5 Should my child help pay for school?

There are plenty of ways your child can contribute to funding their college education. One of the more common is student loans, especially now that they are available at historically low interest rates. You will want to think hard though about whether your child will be able to realistically absorb and pay off any student debt in post-graduate life or be left with an anchor of debt for many years to come.

"I think from a responsibility standpoint," offers Steve, "it is really important to have your kids assume some 'skin in the game' when it comes to the cost of their college education, especially given the statistics that a third of students won't even graduate and nearly 60 percent will take up to six years to earn a bachelor's degree."

## We can help

For more information, contact Laura Dang at [laura.dang@unionbank.com](mailto:laura.dang@unionbank.com) or visit our [unionbank.com/private-banking](http://unionbank.com/private-banking) to learn more about how we can help you better understand and evaluate the many options for a rewarding college education available to you and your child.

*The foregoing article is intended to provide general educational information about college planning and is not considered financial or tax advice from Union Bank. Wills, trusts, foundations and wealth planning strategies have legal, tax, accounting and other implications. Clients should consult a legal or tax adviser.*







## Our People Are the Foundation of Our Success

At Ingram Micro, we're committed to helping the world *Realize the Promise of Technology*. This vision rings a similar tune with the goal we have for our people—helping all our associates realize their full potential.

Our people make us who we are. They are the foundation of our success and, in turn, we are committed to providing an inclusive and engaging workplace and culture where everyone is encouraged to bring their whole and best self to work, every day. Each member of our global team—35,000 and counting—offers unique insights shaped by individual experiences, backgrounds, lifestyle choices, physical traits, varied perspectives and more. We not only recognize and respect those differences—we believe they're essential to our continued success. Bringing our differences together helps make us stronger as a company and as a community.


Cultivating and preserving a culture of inclusion, diversity and fairness is a cornerstone belief at Ingram Micro, and we strive to equip every team member with the resources, education and partnerships required to support our sustained efforts towards a workplace that celebrates every individual's unique contributions. When our associates feel valued for who they are, they are more inclined to bring new ideas and innovation to the forefront.



"Our efforts have already resulted in a stronger, more collaborative workplace, both locally and globally," said Scott Sherman, executive vice president, Human Resources at Ingram Micro. "We constantly strive to do more and have recently incorporated additional inclusion topics into our learning and development curriculum, while also supporting and promoting the evolution of employee resource groups across our organization. Earlier this year we began specific senior executive listening, learning and education sessions with associates to accelerate our efforts inside and outside our organization. Another example is our Women's Leadership Forum, which provides our women associates with the tools, resources and opportunities to develop new skills and accelerate their own career progression. This group began as a local initiative and has since turned into a global effort."

We are making progress, but know we have the potential to do and achieve much more.

Great things happen when people from varying backgrounds and cultures work together in an open and collaborative environment. At Ingram Micro, we strive to ensure that all our associates feel valued, welcome and comfortable showing up as their true selves. We look forward to continuing to be an employer of choice in Orange County and throughout the world as we build further on our vision of helping every Ingram Micro associate realize their full potential!



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## How to Support Women Employees During a Pandemic

By Manishi Parikh  
Wells Fargo Commercial Banking

As the market executive for Wells Fargo's Commercial Banking division in Orange County, I lead a team of employees whose main goal is to serve our customers and the community. Over the past few months, we have been called to find new ways to serve our customers, all while navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. Like other businesses, we've made big transformations. We moved to working remotely. We digitized many of our processes, and we formed new ways to collaborate as a team.

All of that said, it's equally imperative to find small ways to help lift each other up. Here are a few tips for business leaders to support female employees – or anyone on the team, actually – because in today's world, people of all genders play roles that need special support from their leaders.

**Offer concrete support for caregivers.** Many women – and men – are taking on more responsibility than ever before. Parents are serving as teachers, often 'working' both jobs at the same time. As a company, Wells Fargo has made special accommodations to support caregivers during this environment, including giving 20 days of subsidized back-up child care and priority placement and reduced tuition rates at certain child care organizations. It makes me proud to work for a company that institutes policies like this. We must show our support by offering tangible resources for our teams.

**Build a safe environment.** As leaders, it is also our responsibility to help team members feel safe bringing their whole self to work. For instance, having kids at home during the day has been a new 'norm' for many working parents. I've been on conference calls where kids can be heard in the background. I like to make sure my team knows that it's okay – we are all doing the best we can with the

situations we are in. Make sure you are fostering an environment that is accepting of the issues employees are feeling today.

**Don't forget that lifting up other women is just a start.** When we consider supporting other women, we sometimes forget that there are others who are experiencing many of the same challenges women have faced in the workplace.

It's important to reach beyond gender and think of things such as race, ethnicity, age, veteran status and sexual orientation. Physical ability, religious beliefs and primary language are also important, among many others. The more intentional we are about identifying ways to lifting up those who need support, the better we can represent our community, and the more likely we are to attract and retain customers who identify with those within our company.

Remember that supporting women and diverse segments starts with the actions and behaviors set by leaders. As we wrap up the year, make this an intention, and your team will thrive.

*Manishi Parikh is the Market Executive for Wells Fargo Commercial Banking in Orange County. Reach her at [Manishi.G.Parikh@wellsfargo.com](mailto:Manishi.G.Parikh@wellsfargo.com).*



Parikh

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## Girl Scouts Congratulates Orange County's 2020 Women in Business Honorees and Nominees

Girl Scouts of Orange County applauds the 2020 Women in Business award recipients and nominees. Now more than ever, girls need powerful female role models across industries — inspiring women, like those highlighted in this issue, who show them there are no limits to what they can dream and achieve. This year's exceptional businesswomen are an inspiration to every girl and the nearly 18,000 Girl Scouts across Orange County.

Studies consistently show that one of the most effective ways to boost a nation's economic output, enhance productivity, and improve the overall vibrancy of society is to invest in the leadership capabilities of girls and women. We must have the best and brightest men and women at the table to innovate and problem solve. But women are underrepresented in many fields vital to our nation's growth and prosperity. Changing these statistics starts with giving girls exposure to a wide range of experiences and role models who inspire them to develop lifelong leadership skills.

Girl Scouts prepares girls to thrive when they enter the workforce. Through its unparalleled leadership development program, Girl Scouts brings out the best in girls from every social, cultural, economic, and developmental sphere. While girls are learning about **STEM, the outdoors, entrepreneurship, and important life skills**, they are also discovering new ways to improve our world and make their communities stronger, kinder, and better for everyone.



### Girl Scouts Works!

- Girl Scouts are 20 percent more likely to be digital leaders, compared to non-Girl Scouts.
  - 70 percent of Girl Scouts say they got the opportunity to build their skills or try new outdoor activities because of Girl Scouts.
  - Girl Scouts are twice as likely to be community problem solvers and participate in civic engagement.
  - 91 percent of Girl Scouts want to be entrepreneurs in the future!
- Learn more at [girlscouts.org/research](https://girlscouts.org/research).

### Join the Promise Circle and pave the way for our next generation of female leaders.

When Orange County's talented and diverse young women enter the workforce, we must ensure that they are equipped with resources and support to raise their voices and find solutions to the challenges our nation and our world face. Together, we can build a future where every girl grows up with the confidence to bravely step into a lifetime of leadership.

Girl Scouts of Orange County's Promise Circle is a new opportunity to join a community of donors who demonstrate their commitment to a better tomorrow by investing in girls through an annual gift at one of several levels in the circle. When you join as a founding member, you invest in our future female leaders — talented, passionate, and courageous girls who are poised and ready to make our world a better place — for the long term. Learn more at [girlscoutsoc.org/promise](https://girlscoutsoc.org/promise).



# Congratulations

to the 2020 Women in Business honorees and nominees!

Orange County's nearly 18,000 Girl Scouts thank the 2020 Women in Business honorees and nominees for showing us there's no challenge girls cannot overcome, no goal we cannot reach.

You inspire us to become the happy, healthy, problem-solving, barrier-breaking change-makers our world needs.



Join, volunteer, or donate at [girlscoutsoc.org](https://girlscoutsoc.org)









**SeneGence** was founded on the idea to offer superior products and an opportunity for women to be independent and successful in business, regardless of age, background, or education.

Twenty years later, the SeneGence line has developed into over 100 lip colors, a full line of long-lasting cosmetics, anti-aging skincare, haircare, and, as of 2019, a Men's Collection.

**SeneGence.com**



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# How people work is forever changing.

Businesses are meeting that challenge in the cloud.

## Top 5 Reasons to Migrate to the Cloud.

In these changing times, successful businesses are thinking and operating differently. From physical workstations and remote office locations to new IT infrastructure investments and network maintenance – all of it is being reevaluated in this new virtual paradigm as businesses look to operate more efficiently and cost effectively.

Traditional office settings have rapidly migrated into virtual environments. Employees are moving into work-from-home stations. Business meetings and presentations are almost completely conducted online. And with more virtual activity comes the need for a fast and secure cloud-based solution that ensures businesses run more efficiently than ever before.

Moving to a cloud-based solution can feel like a daunting task, but in reality - it's relatively simple. Partnering with the right cloud services provider takes the guesswork and heavy lifting away.

That partner is Cox Business Cloud Solutions. To help you better understand what's involved, our team has compiled a list of the Top 5 things to consider when making a decision on cloud migration.

## 1 Enabling Your Mobile Workforce

With more employees working remotely than ever before, many companies have struggled to equip themselves properly. Workflows are different. Secure access to company data from various locations also presents challenges. Truth is, the sudden shift to remote work has fundamentally changed how businesses operate and left them looking to new solutions for how best to move forward without hurting productivity.

Cloud services help companies of all sizes find accessible, affordable ways to conduct business remotely. Instead of piecing together a convoluted process, often based on outdated, insecure on-premises hardware, the cloud enables teams to connect securely via a virtual desktop environment and continue their typical work process.

The cloud aids your business to function as efficiently as it would if everyone were still working traditionally from one or more office locations. This is critical not only during a pandemic when things are unexpectedly shut down, but also during any kind of business interruption - be it storms, tornadoes, natural disasters or even cyber attacks affecting your business infrastructure. Migrating to a secure cloud environment protects your critical data and gives you options for how you want to keep your business up and running.





## 2 Quickly Scaling Your Network

Every business is different and moving your data to the cloud isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Cox Business Cloud Solutions provides customized services to best fit the scale and needs of each individual business. Your cloud migration plan will take into account critical workloads, data and applications, potential obstacles and a desired timeline for implementing tailored solutions. The beauty of the cloud is that it's easily scalable.

Cox Business Cloud Solutions provides a robust combination of enterprise-level services including Managed Cloud Security, Disaster Recovery, Data Backup, Virtual Desktop Environments, Software Defined Wide Area Network (SDWAN), and Enterprise Grade Infrastructure. Our team will work with you to identify the services that fit your business needs. We will also design and implement migration and monitoring strategies while also providing industry-leading customer support to ensure a safe transition for your business data.

## 3 Securing Your Critical Data

If there's one thing businesses worry about most with regard to sensitive data, it's security. Most companies don't want to allocate IT funds elsewhere when they are focusing department resources on continually updating, patching and assessing office systems and also protecting against outdated cyber security measures that could threaten the entire business.

Cloud solutions are inherently more secure than on-premises solutions and cloud providers manage security issues in the background more efficiently with little to no adverse effect to workloads. By utilizing the cloud, software is more easily kept up to date, backups can be made more readily and recovered faster, and documents and access controls are easier to manage. According to a RapidScale study, 94% of businesses say they actually saw an improvement after implementing cloud security solutions.

Cloud solutions can improve the level of your security with Tier 3 data centers that have biometric scanning, security guards, and around-the-clock monitoring along with fast threat detection response using a Unified Security Management platform. In addition, all of your documents are safe and accessible with full redundancy and fully managed firewalls and encryption protection, providing you peace of mind that your business is always protected.

## 4 Realizing Cost Savings and Maximizing Profitability

The simple fact of the matter is that building and maintaining IT infrastructure is costly, as is the real estate and accompanying

insurance that infrastructure requires. Expensive hardware, software, and licensing for all devices are just the beginning. Allocating resources to IT for setup, maintenance, security and management tools all add up.

Cox Business Cloud Solutions can help reduce your costs across the board. The cloud allows lower capital spending on facilities and onsite servers while reducing the overall IT budget. Many companies that move to the cloud downsize their data centers or eliminate them entirely. It supports more regular technology upgrades, reduces ongoing maintenance and staff time, and shifts the burden for time-consuming tasks, like patches, upgrades and infrastructure expenditures to cloud service providers.

Our Cox Business Cloud Solutions support team supports your IT team, as well as your end-users – everything from device troubleshooting to application integrations to building out any new data center requirements. Not only can you reduce IT expenses by reducing physical PC costs, you can also layer in our Cloud Desktop as a Service (DaaS), which is a pay-as-you-go subscription – meaning one monthly charge, which makes budgeting simple.

## 5 Save Time and Valuable IT Resources by Choosing the Right Partner

There are lots of reasons cloud migration makes sense, but moving forward ultimately requires finding a trusted cloud services partner who listens to your needs and translates that into a strategic migration plan that fits your unique business needs.

Cox Business is a trusted provider of business technology services and our Cloud Solutions team is among the best in the industry. Our solutions will grow with your business and ensure you have the support of certified professionals for your IT staff and end users available 24/7.

Contact us today to learn more about migrating your business to the cloud so that you are fully prepared for whatever the future may bring.

**COX** | Cloud  
**BUSINESS®** | Solutions

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## Women in the Workplace: A Strategic Priority

In a global economy with an increasingly tight yet diverse workforce, employers must create workplaces that suit the needs of diverse populations. And women are a big part of the equation. In fact, according to a recent economic blog update by RSM Chief Economist Joe Brusuelas and one of RSM's Industry Eminent, Laura Dietzel, women now outnumber men in the workforce (50.04% to 49.96%). There are 109,000 more women than men in the American workforce, excluding agricultural jobs, which foreshadows what we at RSM believe will be a significant period of change in wages, benefits and the way companies of all sizes work.

And yet, certain questions in the fourth quarter of RSM's 2019 RSM US Middle Market Business Index (MMBI) uncovered that only 27% of executives indicated that their organizations support gender-equality causes, and 46% reported that they are focused on women's issues and empowerment. Without a stronger focus on women, these businesses will miss out on the benefits driven by this shift in the workforce and the diverse perspectives women bring to business.

A formalized inclusion strategy can enhance a company's ability to attract and retain high-performing women. At RSM, our 11 employee network groups help ensure that all of our 11,000+ employees nationwide feel a sense of belonging at our firm. One of these groups – STAR (Stewardship. Teamwork. Advancement. Retention.) – is focused specifically on women. And while it's geared toward women, STAR is open to anyone at RSM who is interested in issues important to this segment of our workforce. Members receive regular communications from STAR leaders and are invited to participate in various events across the firm. We also make leadership opportunities available to STAR members, so they can learn and practice important workplace skills in a friendly and supportive environment.

What else can employers do to help women succeed in the workplace? Each company has a unique culture that shapes the way its people interact, so activities focused on women in the workplace should be tailored to each company's culture. Some we've found successful at RSM include:

- **Create a formalized inclusion plan.** This might include a focused recruitment strategy that targets diverse populations, with an emphasis on women. Employers should regularly review talent pipelines, and monitor attrition and promotion rates for women, and make adjustments where needed to ensure that they can attract and retain key female talent.
- **Place an emphasis on leadership.** Provide leadership mentoring programs for high-performing women to help them build their internal networks, create a sense of community and enable your company to address leadership issues with the female perspective as part of the equation.
- **Provide flexibility.** Help employees manage the demands of both their professional and their personal lives. While flexibility benefits all employees and their employers, it's particularly helpful for women, who tend to shoulder more of the responsibility for activities on the home front.
- **Offer educational and networking opportunities.** Implement programs around self-advocacy, networking opportunities and access to other women leaders to foster additional and inspiration that might not be found elsewhere in a corporate setting. RSM recently hosted a women's leadership event where we focused on teaching women how to build their personal brands, boost their self-confidence, fine-tune their negotiation skills, develop pools of allies and

sponsors, and become self-advocates. While these topics are relevant to all of our professionals, there are differences in how women approach these things and in how they're perceived when they do. Openly acknowledging these differences and discussing how to address them makes women more confident in their careers.

- **Be creative.** Continuously look for innovative ways to talk about gender inclusion. At RSM, for example, we offer our STAR ENG "Women's Words of Wisdom" video series, which provides tips and insights on a variety of topics important to STAR members. These aren't expensive, professionally produced videos, but simple brief videos shot with personal phones that allow us to quickly and easily share information and insights to help women succeed.

With women now accounting for more than 50% of today's workforce, providing a welcoming and inclusive work environment for this portion of the population is clearly a business imperative. Take the steps needed today to keep your company competitive in the future.

**Dara Castle** is the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area Offices market leader and is the national leader of RSM's government contracting practice. As the market leader, she is responsible for the culture, growth and strategy of the four Washington area offices and developing employees to have deep industry expertise and to be first choice advisors to the middle market, globally. As the leader of RSM's Women's Initiative, Castle focuses on the retention and advancement of RSM women through the STAR employee network group. This work includes leading the strategy and development of programs and initiatives that address gender diversity in RSM's workplace, workforce, community and marketplace.



**Yudit Freda** is a senior manager in RSM's State and Local Tax Practice. Freda is a senior leader in RSM's National Abandoned and Unclaimed Property Practice and also leads RSM Orange County's Women's Network. Freda has more than 15 years of public accounting experience. Her clients have included leaders in the industrial and consumer products, financial services, manufacturing, and entertainment industries.

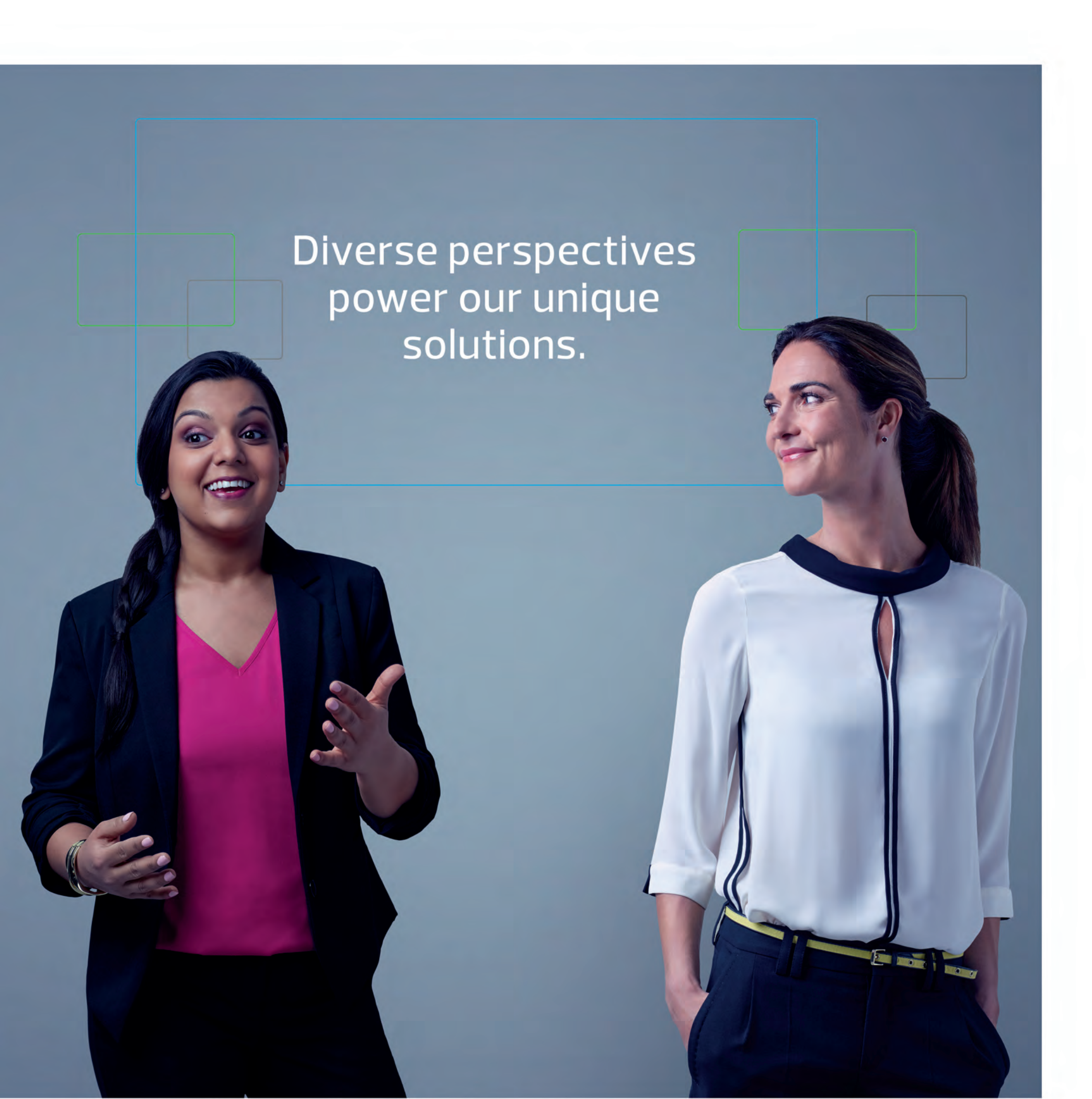


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## City of Hope Newport Beach Nurse Practitioner Understands Patients' Breast Cancer Journeys

SURVIVOR LINDA BUCK CALLS ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WHEN DELIVERING COMPASSIONATE, WORLD-CLASS CARE



"Patients can ask me anything. I know what it's like. I have the book knowledge **but I also have the personal experience.**"

-Linda Buck, Nurse Practitioner  
City of Hope Newport Beach

When Linda Buck began working as a nurse practitioner, she made it a habit to spend about an hour with each of her new breast cancer patients, discussing the ins and outs of their treatment. She spoke with an innate knowledge that transcended her clinical expertise—she's a breast cancer survivor who'd been on their same journey, too.

"I'd tell them, 'I want you to know this about me so you'll feel truly free to express yourself. You can ask me anything. I know what it's like,'" Buck said. "I have the book knowledge, but I also have the personal experience. That was very meaningful. Some patients would start to cry when I told them, because it made them feel like, 'She gets it.'"

Buck practices at City of Hope Newport Beach, where she's involved in almost every aspect of her patients' breast cancer care, from answering questions about side effects or medication refills to reviewing scans or going on rounds. And she's happy to share advice when needed.

"I frequently tell people that what they are feeling and experiencing is normal," she said. "They need to allow themselves to have their feelings, no matter what they are. I try to reassure patients their emotions are valid, and that helps them to relax and then move forward when they can."

Those breakthrough moments inspire Buck. "It's amazing to see the growth that can come out of a person's journey," Buck said. "To be with them and see them gain inner strength that changes how they present themselves to the world makes me think, 'Wow, I need to stretch myself some more.'"

Buck's own breast cancer diagnosis required a lot of stretching. An oncology nurse for three decades, she discovered she had early-stage HER2 overexpressed breast cancer in fall 2010, during the first semester of her nurse practitioner program. Buck navigated surgery, an intense four months of chemotherapy, and a year of maintenance while also keeping up with her coursework.

"The fact that I was in graduate school helped me," she said. "I had a lot of support from friends and family. It helped me stay focused on what I needed to do and not get lost in what was going on with my health at the time."

Buck recently marked her one-year work anniversary, but City of Hope has been part of Buck's career for many years. It's where she earned her first chemotherapy certification and found many learning opportunities. That's why it's special for her to be part of City of Hope's expansion into Orange County.

"Patients who live in OC don't have to drive for hours to get the kind of care we offer at City of Hope," she said. "The Newport Beach location is beautiful and calming. It may sound unusual to say a person can relax while they're getting chemotherapy, but we have everything to help make that possible. We have chairs that vibrate for a little massage, and open windows where you can see outside; you're not stuck in a closed doctor's office. Our patients are grateful to have access to a wide range of services in one location and be able to put long commutes for treatment behind them."

While Buck spends most of her working hours with breast oncologist Wade Smith, M.D., and breast surgical oncologist Hang T. Dang, D.O., she has also supported the location's physicians who specialize in other forms of cancer. She found the opportunities to be "a beautiful learning experience."

"City of Hope Newport Beach physicians are highly trained cancer specialists. They have a broad network of colleagues to consult with. And many of them are clinician-scientists whose research is leading to breakthrough treatments," Buck said. "The resources our patients have access to are almost endless, unlike anywhere else I know of in the Orange County area."

The opportunity to offer support is especially meaningful to Buck. "It's a privilege and an honor to build relationships with patients and their families, because patients have a choice who they are going to see, and they keep coming back to us. Cancer, its treatment and survivorship, is not like having a one-time procedure where it's repaired, you're done, and you never see the surgeon again," Buck said.

Buck believes that nursing nourishes relationships – it's in the nature of the profession, she said. And, grounded in the professional and personal wisdom Buck has gained as a practitioner and a survivor, it's evident that building common bonds helps her offer the best hope for patients.

**City of Hope is a safe place for world-class cancer care.**

To make an appointment at City of Hope Newport Beach, please call (949) 763-2204 or visit [CityofHope.org/OC](https://www.cityofhope.org/OC)



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## The Power of Financial Confidence Among Women

By City National Bank

The year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment, the landmark change to the U.S. Constitution that granted women the right to vote. The amendment was the result of tireless activism by women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and Susan B. Anthony – names now synonymous with the women's rights movement.

But the passage of the amendment holds more than just political importance. It was a moment that has rippled outwards over the past 100 years, allowing successive generations of women to obtain more education, fight for higher wages, accumulate greater personal wealth and move closer to equality.

Today, women earn the majority of college degrees and have done so since the early 1980s, according to the National Center for Education.

Women contribute \$7.6 trillion to the United States gross domestic product annually and lead the way as entrepreneurs, owning more than 9.9 million businesses in the U.S. with 8.4 million employees.

Women also influence how money is given. According to a survey by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), commissioned by RBC Wealth Management, 81 percent of women see it as important that both their wealth plan and legacy align.

Carolyn Finer, senior investment strategist for City National Rochdale, has worked in the financial industry for 30 years and has noted the changes in how women participate in wealth planning decisions.

"Over time, I've seen women become much more engaged than they were at the beginning of my career. Whenever we're speaking with a couple, we always want to engage with both. But now, we see more and more women taking the lead," said Finer.

In most cases women outlive men, putting them in sole control of family wealth and legacy before it passes to the next generation.

Yet, despite this progress towards equality and economic power, Finer said there's always opportunity to increase education and financial confidence among even the most powerful people, including women.

### What Affects Women's Financial Confidence?

With their findings outlined in an article in The Atlantic, researchers saw differing levels of financial confidence when comparing a man and a woman with the same educational background and a similar financial literacy level.

"Though research shows us that men are more confident when discussing finances, we're seeing more and more clients who are strong, independent women. It's just that women seem more apt to say I don't know, but I want to learn. I would say this is its own type of confidence, though, and should be encouraged among everyone," said Finer.

A lot of issues with financial confidence may stem from the cultural narrative surrounding women and money, but making money a more common conversation for women can and has increased women's confidence in making financial decisions, Finer added.

"I disagree with the notion that women don't understand how to handle money. They have so many responsibilities...they're accustomed to taking on many different roles and making important decisions. Finances is just one of them, and financial confidence comes from having a project or platform to exercise that knowledge," she said.

### Knowledge is Power

Perhaps as a result of having more of those tools available, younger generations are reporting an increased financial confidence.

For example, according to RBC's *The New Face of Wealth* survey, 72 percent of Millennial women said they are their household's primary decision-maker for financial planning, compared to less than half of Baby Boomer women.

What's more, 78 percent of Millennial women said they've had more opportunities to generate wealth than people in prior generations.

"I have a female client who gave her Millennial daughter the opportunity to be an active participant in the establishment and maintenance of a private family foundation. This family inherited a substantial amount of wealth and with that



comes a lot of responsibility," said Finer. "They were eager to instill confidence in the next generation."

### Conversion is Key

Despite all the progress made over the past 100 years, there's always more work to be done. Work that could, in essence, make the world a more equal place.

"It's important to work together and have financial or investment conversations early and often with the right participants," said Finer. "As more and more women are involved in the family conversations, their voice is key." In these uncertain times, City National encourages you to review your investment portfolio with your advisor. Contact our financial professionals today to ask questions and receive help with your wealth planning needs.

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# LUGANO DIAMONDS TOASTS ACHIEVEMENT WITH CHAMPAGNE DIAMONDS

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From its very first sparkle, champagne is often preferred for celebrations of all kinds – an elegant choice that marks life's special occasions. In honor of this year's Women in Business nominees, Lugano Diamonds presents exquisite pieces featuring champagne diamonds – each one uniquely created to inspire with the rarest and most extraordinary designs.

Cheers to another successful year!

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## Exquisite Sparkle

Set in 18k rose gold, this dazzling bracelet exemplifies the meticulous detail and creativity in a Lugano work of art. More than 25 carats of champagne round diamonds and rose cut diamonds are surrounded by nearly 11 carats of round brilliant collection VS diamonds, creating a magical ring of sparkle. Simply exquisite.

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## Baubles of Bubbly

As mesmerizing as the bubbles in a champagne glass, this enchanting Champagne Bubble Bracelet is gracefully effervescent as it shimmers with nearly 42 carats of champagne round diamonds. Set in 18k rose gold and sparkling with perfection, this bracelet will beautifully stand the test of time.

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## Regal and Refined

Bubbling with perfection, Lugano's Champagne Diamond Earrings showcase more than eight carats of breathtaking champagne round diamonds surrounded by an additional two carats of champagne round diamonds. Set in 18k rose gold, these shimmering earrings will light up her life.

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## Beauty and Grace

Celebrate all you are with this shimmering Rose Cut Diamond Necklace. Elegantly set in 18k rose gold, this captivating strand is both versatile and glamorous, weaving nearly 36 carats of wondrous champagne diamonds into a wearable work of art that celebrates Lugano's superior craftsmanship.

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## Spellbinding Brilliance

The enduring romance of moi et toi comes together to symbolize the intertwining of souls in this beautiful ring featuring champagne and white diamonds. An exquisite three-carat pear-shaped champagne diamond joins with a one-carat pear-shaped brilliant diamond. Set in 18k rose and white gold, this timeless piece is further accented by more than two carats of additional diamonds. Perfection personified.





## The Merage School Reaches Gender Parity in Master's Programs: 50% of Students are Women

By Sydney Charles

The UCI Paul Merage School of Business has officially reached gender parity throughout its master's programs—50% of master's students are women—for the 2019-2020 school year. Of the 593 students enrolled in MBA and specialty master's programs, 297 are women. Notably, 51% of Master of Finance (MFIN) students and 72% of Master of Public Accountancy students are women. In addition, according to an article in the *Financial Times*, the Merage School has nearly reached the same milestone within faculty; about 47% of full-time faculty members are female. *The Financial Times* ranks the Merage School as #1 in number of female faculty.

According to Professor of Accounting Joanna Ho, these statistics are indicative of the School's proven dedication to diversity and inclusion.

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***"Reaching gender parity sends an important signal to the academic community and the business community at large."***

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She said, "I joined the faculty back in 1986, when we only had 23 faculty members. Even then, about a quarter of the faculty were female—a significant achievement. Over the past 34 years, we've increased to almost 50% female faculty, something we should all be very proud of."

Reaching gender parity sends an important signal to the academic community and the business community at large.

Burt Slusher, director of recruitment and admissions of business specialty master's programs, explained, "Gender parity helps us shape our vision for where the school and our students are going. This is going to impact the future of business leaders that will graduate from our School, and we are committed to not just reaching but also maintaining gender parity across our programs."

A commitment to diversity ensures that women feel welcome at the School.

"I appreciate being a part of an environment that promotes diversity of thought," said Alaina Mcclue, MIE '20. The female entrepreneurs in my cohort are inspiring forces that will move mountains in the future. I look forward to seeing all the great heights the women of the Merage School will reach in the coming years.

Representation of women and other underrepresented minorities in business is fundamental for the success of the Merage School.

"Women need female role models," said Ho. It lets them know that they can take on leadership roles in their career and that powerful women are the norm, not the exception. This is true for both men and women that study at the Merage School."

"When you have a more diverse group in a class, you have different ideas, backgrounds and cultures," agreed Slusher. It's important to have a lot of seats at the table to represent diverse backgrounds."

For more information about The Paul Merage School of Business and our programs, please visit [merage.uci.edu](http://merage.uci.edu).

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# Orange County's Women of Impact

## Empowering Leadership & Improving Lives



Orange County United Way is leading the fight for equity in Orange County by doing everything we can to remove barriers, close gaps, and level the playing field for everyone who lives here.

This year, more than ever, our work has been made more impactful thanks to the strength of the Orange County women supporting our mission—community members, business leaders, and visionaries who are focused on enabling disadvantaged children with opportunity, building self-sufficiency for struggling families, and having humanity for our neighbors experiencing homelessness.

### Women's Philanthropy Fund: A Force for Good

One of the most powerful voices of philanthropy in Orange County, the Orange County United Way Women's Philanthropy Fund is a group of nearly 100 influential and passionate women who create long-lasting social and economic change by advancing United Way's mission in challenged neighborhoods across the county. Together, the Women's Philanthropy Fund members are a diverse group of change-makers united in their vision to help empower our community.



With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, the annual Women's Philanthropy Fund Breakfast—an inspirational fundraising event—was quickly transformed into a successful virtual event with celebrity guest speaker Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Attracting over 800 attendees, the event raised \$440,000 for OC families and children facing poverty and housing instability in challenged neighborhoods, a critical area of focus in the wake of the pandemic.

The Women's Philanthropy Fund is also quick to respond to community needs. Twenty-six incredible members collectively donated over \$270,000 to Orange County United Way's Pandemic Relief Fund to support homelessness prevention for families impacted by the pandemic, help

*“I've been a donor to the United Way for over 30 years, and one of the reasons is that United Way puts your money to work in the community where you live and work—I feel that's really important.”* —Lisa A. Locklear



Lisa A. Locklear, Women's Philanthropy Fund member and Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Lisa A. Locklear, Women's Philanthropy Fund member and Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Inc., said, “I gave to the Orange County United Way Pandemic Relief Fund because it reminds me we're all in this together as we fight the effects of COVID-19 in our community.”

Lisa was also an inspirational force at Avanir Pharmaceuticals, with her colleagues raising \$22,000 for the Pandemic Relief Fund in just a matter of weeks as part of their workplace campaign. And the company generously doubled employee contributions, bringing the total to \$44,000.

students in need of remote learning supplies and books, and provide meals for seniors, frontline workers, and for individuals experiencing homelessness staying at shelters.

### Women United: Stepping Up for Those in Need

With more than 400 members, Orange County United Way's Women United is an energetic group of Orange County women with a common purpose. Through their collective generosity, a slate of events, and a shared commitment to philanthropy and volunteerism, they're building relationships while making a difference.

The members of Women United have not only contributed to the Pandemic Relief Fund, but they have also been working together to donate meals to five transitional living shelters across Orange County since the pandemic began. These meals have supported over 180 people.

And that's not all—already, Women United has committed to supporting an additional three shelters before the year comes to an end.

*“What I love about being part of Women United specifically is that it allows me to show up in a real way for my community, even when I can't physically be there. Women United provides numerous programs for our members; volunteer events, networking events, education events. But I know that at times when I'm too busy to be involved, I'm part of a network of women and staff members at United Way who are working to affect structural change in my community.”* —Nisha Verma



Nisha Verma, Women United Co-Chair and Labor and Employment Attorney, Dorsey & Whitney LLP (center) volunteering with fellow Women United members Michelle Moreno, 3M Meguiar's (left) and Suzanne Wisdom, Automobile Club of Southern California (right), to provide hygiene products and donated purses for a local women's shelter.

### Empowering Women of OC

In its fourth year, Women United with Bank of America will again be hosting a 3-part Local, Global & Me series. These events aim to empower the women of Orange County and bring together powerhouse panelists and networking opportunities for local women in business and philanthropy.

This year's first virtual Local, Global & Me event took place on October 1, 2020, and focused on positive psychology and resilience with guest speaker Dr. Zelana Montminy, author of *21 Days of Resilience*.

### Join the Women of Orange County United Way

We invite the women of Orange County to join us as we look to the future in helping our community overcome the challenges of the pandemic and work to ensure every student has the opportunity to graduate, every individual can live a healthier life, every family can achieve financial stability, and everyone has a safe place to call home.

Whether it be through donating time, money, or simply lending a supporting voice, we welcome all women who are passionate about our community and want to be a part of a powerful and vibrant coalition of women who empower one another.

To learn more about Women United, contact Amanda Hastings at [AmandaH@UnitedWayOC.org](mailto:AmandaH@UnitedWayOC.org) or 949.263.6141. To learn more about the Women's Philanthropy Fund, contact Brigitte De Kruyf at [BrigitteD@UnitedWayOC.org](mailto:BrigitteD@UnitedWayOC.org) or 949.263.6160.



# WOMEN'S <sup>2020</sup> PHILANTHROPY FUND MEMBERS



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Senior Attorney,  
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**SUSAN DEGRASSI**  
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**THERESE DEGROOT**  
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**DELIA DELGADO**  
Real Estate Investor



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Council Member,  
Newport Beach City Council



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**DIANE DRAKE**  
Community Volunteer



**LAURIE DUBCHANSKY**  
Founder/CEO,  
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**KARI DURHAM**  
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Skyworks Solutions, Inc.



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Partner,  
PwC



**ARTYN GARDNER**  
Community Volunteer



**LOREEN GILBERT**  
Founder and President,  
WealthWise Financial Services



**KRISTEN GRIGGS**  
Community Volunteer



**DONNA HANSEN**  
Managing Director-Chief Administrative Officer and Global Head of Tax,  
Colony Capital, Inc.



**MICHELE D. JOHNSON**  
Partner,  
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**LAUREN JOHNSTON**  
Community Volunteer



**ROCHELLE KARR**  
Director of Corporate Social Responsibility & Alumni Relations,  
O'Melveny & Myers LLP



**JACQUELINE KELLEY**  
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**SARAH LAKE**  
President,  
Newport Assets, Inc.



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Ernst & Young LLP



**LISA LOCKLEAR**  
Vice President & Chief Financial Officer,  
Avanir Pharmaceuticals



**HEIDI LYNN**  
Managing Director,  
Bank of America



**MELINDA MASSON**  
Co-Founder & CEO,  
Lifestyle of Giving



**PAULA MATTSON**  
Director,  
Southern California Edison



**ROSE MERGELMEIER**  
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**NANCY B. MEYER**  
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**RENITA MOLLMAN**  
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**ANN MORRIS**  
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**SUSAN D. MORRISON**  
Retired Financial Services



**DR. ADEY NYAMATHI**  
Founding Dean and Distinguished Professor, UCI Sue & Bill Gross School of Nursing



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Managing Director,  
Miracle Mile Advisors LLC



**DIANA OWEN**  
Chief Financial Officer,  
Seaview Investors



**SUE PARKS**  
President & CEO,  
Orange County United Way



**LAILA PENCE, CFP**  
President,  
Pence Wealth Management, LPL Registered Principal



**LISA PERRINE**  
CEO,  
Cibola Systems



**BECKI PROCSAL**  
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**SHIRLEY QUACKENBUSH**  
Managing Director,  
Private Wealth Advisor,  
The Quackenbush Group, Merrill Lynch



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ADR Office of Michelle A. Reinglass & Judicate West



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Chief Financial Officer,  
RxSight, Inc.



**KIRSTEN VALENTA**  
Community Volunteer



**JENNIFER VIA**  
General Manager,  
Irvine Manufacturing, Alcon



**DANIELLE VOOSHIN**  
Investment Advisor,  
Miracle Mile Advisors LLC



**GABRIELLE WIRTH**  
Partner,  
Dorsey & Whitney LLP



**JEANNETTE WISTNER**  
Partner,  
KPMG LLP



**TRACY WOOD**  
Community Volunteer



**ANNE MICHAELSEN YAHN**  
President,  
Anne Michaelson Design, Inc.

## MEMBERS NOT PICTURED

KRISTEN ALLISON

CATHLEEN BACKLEY

MARSHA JENNINGS

DEBE LUCKI

TINA NORTON

PEGGY PENJOYAN

TRINKA ROWSELL

DENISE SCHULER



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## Insights from CEO Joni Rogers-Kante

It is my honor to serve on the Judging Committee for the 2020 Women in Business Awards, selecting the most influential female business leaders of today. Ladies, it's time – we are creating the new normal.

No one can tell you in advance how hard it is to run a business, or make decisions for thousands of people, or give you solutions when they do not yet exist. It's about learning on the job one day at a time. For women, I think our toughest challenge is developing what I call "emotional muscle." That is learning how to protect ourselves from the emotional toll of having to make really hard decisions. We're used to solving problems where everyone wins, like sharing two cookies between three kids. In business, that's not always possible, and it takes time to adjust to that.

Being an entrepreneur during a pandemic and times of uncertainty is tough. Choosing to be an entrepreneur means that you embrace the challenges and are prepared to be innovative.

Market Reports indicate that 50% of privately owned business have closed and will never re-open. Despite months of grim economic headlines, the beauty and skin care industry has stood out as a rare bright spot. In fact, SeneGence® has launched over 70 products since January, including several new shades of LipSense® and our newest skin care product, Advanced SenePlex+® Renewal Serum with Retinol.

Direct selling may be the future when other options of yesterday are no longer available. At SeneGence, we offer a great brand, additional income, flexibility, and a sisterhood that supports women of all backgrounds to come together in support and love.

The savvy consumer today demands added value for their dollars spent. Conversations about popular products are far more extensive and not limited to the product itself. "Well-rounded" means the product not only works, but it exceeds expectations in performance, as does our SeneGence Cosmetics and SkinCare.

Additionally, consumers want their purchases to contribute to the benefit of society or advance a cause that is important to its users. In our case, our nonprofit organization, The Make Sense Foundation®, supports women and children in need, and a percentage of sales of select products benefit the Foundation.

Our plans are to grow both our domestic and international business. SeneGence is currently in 17 countries and we have planned expansions in 2021. In January 2020, we launched in Hong Kong, and we opened a new facility in Vancouver, Canada in February 2020. The best way for readers to support our company is to visit [SeneGence.com](http://SeneGence.com) and click on "Find the Nearest Distributor", try our products, fall in love, and spread the word! If you want products and a career path that



really works, come aboard. We have a very exciting ride ahead!

### Q&A with Joni Rogers-Kante

#### 1. Can you tell us a bit about your backstory? What led you to this particular career path?

I spent the first 15 years of my life on a farm in the small town of Sapulpa, Oklahoma. My first job was at age 16 in California with Sav-On Drugs. Being something of a girly-girl, I loved the magic and sparkle of the cosmetic aisle most of all! I earned several promotions within the chain store, but I knew the corporate life was not right for me. A friend introduced me to Mary Kay cosmetics, and it all came together. The sky was the limit with selling products I loved and the freedom to work hard. Eventually, having a son and working from home with direct sales was the perfect avenue to provide for him and me. From there, starting SeneGence was a big, but inevitable, leap based on two simple ideas: *to offer women products that really work and to offer careers that really work by selling those products.* I can honestly say it is as true today as it was twenty years ago.

#### 2. What are the biggest challenges faced by women executives that aren't typically faced by their male counterparts?

This question goes to the heart of why I started SeneGence. For many of us, family is a big part of our lives and wanting to spend time with kids or perhaps aging parents shouldn't be considered a privilege. For women who work outside of the home, juggling work and family is a tougher act than for men, simply because the role of nurturer and caretaker falls to us, naturally. With SeneGence, I want to continue leveling the playing field so that more women – and also men – can design the work schedule they need so they don't have to give up income for time with the family.

#### 3. What is your favorite product you have launched in 2020?

I have to say the Advanced SenePlex+ Renewal Serum with Retinol. Going through the development of this product was so exciting and it was satisfying to see the amazing results we got back from the clinical study performed with the serum! Real women and real results – this is what we strive for! Every woman should have this product in their nighttime routine.

#### 4. We understand that your premier product, LipSense Liquid Lip Color, just received the Beauty "ICONS Award" by SHAPE Magazine. What is your favorite shade?

We have over 100 shades of LipSense and I love so many of them, but I would say my go-to color is Pink Champagne!

Joni Rogers-Kante is the founder and CEO of SeneGence, a billion-dollar network marketing company and global leader in luxury cosmetics with a mission to empower women since 1999. [www.SeneGence.com](http://www.SeneGence.com)

*Joni's mantra: "Choose to Live Life in Love and Abundance—and Then Work for It!"*





# How We Got Here: 4 Keys to Professional Growth & Development

By Jenny Dinnen & Katie Rucker

We used to look at high-level business professionals and wonder if we had what it takes to be in that position. Here we are at the helm of our family business, and often reflect on our former selves – wondering what we'd say to them if given the chance.

First off, we would say "you got this." Believing in yourself is the most powerful growth driver. Then we would share some important practices that continue proving their worth daily.

## Build a strong network of support

We have been blown away by the support and encouragement from other women in business. Further, we've been humbled to find their support isn't only business oriented; it extends to all areas of life.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither was our incredible network of women. It took time and energy that in all honesty – as sisters, wives, and mothers - we didn't have. Still we put in the effort and that effort has been returned in ways we could never have imagined.

## Be willing to ask for help

It seems a common trait among women in business is the desire to be self-sufficient. Especially when climbing the career ladder, it's easy to see asking for help as a sign of weakness. This couldn't be further from the truth. This outlook based on our experiences as young professionals and as business owners who are empowering others to rise in their careers.

Asking for help shows a sense of vulnerability, humility, and teachability which are signs of a person who wants to learn and grow. In doing so, you become the best version of yourself and move ever closer to those pivotal moments of progress.

## Stay resilient in the face of adversity

To grow we must be willing to take risks and move outside our comfort zone. This requires strength, bravery, and the resilience to stand tall after falling short.



In business and in life, the way we respond to adversity is more important than the way we respond to success.

One's true character is revealed when faced with difficult times, so treat difficult times as opportunities to shine rather than reasons to give up.

## Be bold and find your voice

Many people, regardless of age or gender, have difficulty communicating how they're feeling, what they want, or when they need something. This leads to unmet expectations and frustration on both sides. When you have a new idea – share it. When you need time off – ask for it. If you feel things should change – say it. Your voice is unlike anyone else, so it's extremely valuable. Don't hold back.

A photograph of two women, Jenny Dinnen and Katie Rucker, standing together and smiling. Jenny is on the left, wearing a black sleeveless top and a striped skirt. Katie is on the right, wearing a black sleeveless top and a red belt. They are both looking towards the camera.

# MacKenzie

On behalf of our entire team,  
we'd like to say congratulations to  
the Women in Business nominees.

Your strength, grace, compassion,  
and generosity have been an  
inspiration throughout our careers.

**Jenny Dinnen**  
President, Sales & Marketing

**Katie Rucker**  
President, Operations





## Illumination Foundation: Illuminating Women in Business & Leadership

By Erika L. Silver, Ph.D

Founded by two men in 2008, it is the women at Illumination Foundation (IF) who have become the shining stars. This Orange County-based nonprofit makes its mission to disrupt the cycle of homelessness, and since July 2018 alone, Illumination Foundation has provided more than 780,000 shelter bed nights, and housed close to 1,700 people throughout Orange, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties. A key element fueling its impact is the teamwork of its entire staff and the supportive attitude of its leadership.

Illumination Foundation is unique as a nonprofit working to alleviate homelessness; it doesn't focus on just shelter or healthcare or housing, but integrates all three into its model of care—from shelter nights to recuperative care to permanent supportive housing—and its staff works diligently to promote its core value that housing is healthcare.

At the helm of four vital departments are women who have made it their personal missions to step up and do what they can to alleviate the problem of homelessness. From their desk duties managing budgets and schedules to leadership development to one-on-one interactions with board members and clients alike, these women have what it takes to keep Illumination Foundation running smoothly.

According to Paul Leon, CEO and Founder of Illumination Foundation, it is as if these women “are each running their own nonprofit under the umbrella of Illumination Foundation. If I didn't have them, we would be a quarter of our size and our impact. I could leave this organization in the hands of any one of them, and I know we would continue to be in great hands.”

**Contact info:** [www.ifhomeless.org](http://www.ifhomeless.org) or email [Tcampbell@ifhomeless.org](mailto:Tcampbell@ifhomeless.org).

### Deby Wolford, Director of Housing Services

Deby Wolford arrived at Illumination Foundation in October 2019, after 15 years with Colette's Children's Home. She started as an intern and worked her way up until, ultimately, she was Program Manager for all of Colette's housing programs. As Director of Housing Services at IF, Deby oversees the family emergency shelters, rapid re-housing programs, permanent supportive housing, micro-communities, and the staff at both Multi-Service Centers (in Stanton and Anaheim).

Deby thrives on the opportunity to make connections with IF's clients and see that they get the help they need, from beginning to end: “Making that connection with one child, one parent, one individual is why I do what I do. I love having 100 balls in the air, but it's the connection to the people we serve that makes our work meaningful.”

“My own experiences give me the capability to empathize and relate to the clients we serve, but at the same time not stand for excuses. I know it's hard to get back on your feet, but I also know it's possible. The experience I bring to Illumination Foundation is my strength, but my compassion is more important. I'm really grateful for the opportunity to work at Illumination Foundation. When you are surrounded by people you admire who are supporting you, you can go to places you never imagined.”

### Terry Campbell, VP of Marketing and Communications

Terry Campbell first joined the Illumination Foundation family in 2017 when she was hired as a contractor to produce OC Chef's Table, IF's annual event to raise funds specifically for their family emergency shelters and for children experiencing homelessness. Having co-founded and run a marketing company of her own, Terry has the wide range of skills necessary to successfully run a marketing department.

She chose to move from the commercial to nonprofit sector to be able to give more back. “I am grateful,” Terry says, “to help bring solutions for homelessness into the public eye and help educate about a problem that affects so many people in so many ways. There is a lot of judgment, bias, and myth around the social issues surrounding homelessness, but it's inspiring to see so many people care about the issue so deeply.”

“I particularly see that level of care among the staff here at Illumination Foundation. There is a lot of talent in this company, and everyone here chooses to work for a nonprofit, and they choose to work for the homeless. This speaks to our mission and the culture of the company. We are often encouraged by the Executive Team to run our department as if it's our own business. We are encouraged that if something is going to contribute in a positive way to the population we serve, then go for it. I love being around people that I can learn from, and I want to make a difference in people's lives.”

### Yvette Ahlstrom, VP of Orange County Operations

Yvette Ahlstrom has been with Illumination Foundation since November 2010—almost from its beginning. Yvette gained her strong business acumen through her hands-on experience with staff and clients, by managing budgets that have grown exponentially year after year, and she is extremely proud that the housing department came into existence under her guidance.

“IF is very good at recognizing talent, cultivating that talent, and helping those individuals rise to leadership levels,” Yvette explains. “I am the perfect example of how you can start at the bottom, and with hard work and service, you can be elevated.” As Vice President of OC Operations, Yvette oversees the OC recuperative care program; the shelters and navigation centers; and all



From L to R: Elizabeth Saldana, Deby Wolford, Terry Campbell, Yvette Ahlstrom

logistics, expansion, and planning for Illumination Foundation. Most recently, this has also included six OC Project Roomkey sites, providing shelter in the wake of COVID-19 for vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.

“Everyone at Illumination Foundation is here because they are passionate about the act of service, Yvette continues, “and everyone is appreciated for the gifts that they bring that contribute to the service of the whole. We are a family, and we care about each other deeply, and we take care of each other and our clients. I am proud to be a part of that work ethic.”

### Elizabeth Saldana, VP of LA and IE Operations

Elizabeth Saldana began working with nonprofits in 2007 when she joined Giving Children Hope (GCH) in Buena Park, where she worked until 2015. Before coming to Illumination Foundation in 2019, Elizabeth worked for the Community Action Partnership of OC, where she oversaw their Orange County outreach and Central Valley operations.

“Working at CAP OC,” Elizabeth explains, “created an opportunity to run operations for a large geographical area and to manage large-scale contracts, worth over \$13 million in more than 10 counties. These challenges gave me the invaluable experience that I now draw on every day for the large contracts I oversee at IF and the hundreds of clients we serve.”

A graduate of the Management Development for Entrepreneurs program at UCLA's Anderson School of Management, Elizabeth understands the nuances of business development, client service, and leadership. “One of my main responsibilities with IF,” Elizabeth continues, “is staff training and development. I'm really focused on our Guiding Principles, and with my management and leadership team, I'm always pushing them to be the best version of themselves.”

“Illumination Foundation is innovative in its approach to disrupting the cycle of homelessness, and we are always looking for ways to help our clients. We are all here because we believe in the mission, and we know that what we are doing has a lasting impact.”





# ILLUMINATION FOUNDATION

DISRUPTING THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

## Illuminating Women in Leadership and Business

Founded in 2008, the mission of Illumination Foundation is to disrupt the cycle of homelessness. In 2019, the impact Illumination Foundation had on homelessness was immense:

- 288,559 safe shelter nights of stay were provided
- 2,624 people were served by Illumination Foundation
- 1,191 homeless clients received recuperative care services
- 596 families and individuals were housed in Illumination Foundation programs
- 174 individuals were diverted from entering the cycle of homelessness

As leaders within Illumination Foundation, these four women are illuminating what it takes to combine business acumen with social entrepreneurship and a heart for giving back. They manage the four major business segments within the company that have delivered exponential growth year-over-year.

Meet some of the **fearless female leaders** behind Illumination Foundation.



**Deby Wolford**

Director of Housing Services

*"We all get lost along the way at times. It is a privilege to be a part of a team that helps others find their way back home."*



**Terry Campbell**

VP of Marketing & Communications

*"It's inspiring to be able to tell the stories that can change a person's heart and mind about homelessness. This job has made me a better person and has impacted the way I see the world and my fellow human beings."*



**Yvette Ahlstrom**

VP of Orange County Operations

*"I am grateful every day for the opportunities to serve the most vulnerable of our community in ways that truly make a difference. I am a better person because of the people I work with and those we serve. My eyes have been opened, and my life has been changed forever."*



**Elizabeth Saldaña**

VP of LA & IE Operations

*"I am humbled to be part of a team creating life-changing opportunities for the most vulnerable. My desire is to continue creating partnerships and awareness for the benefit of individuals and families experiencing homelessness."*





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## Q&A with Michele Vercoski Partner of McCune Wright Arevalo, LLP



Leading the firm's Orange County office and contingency commercial practice group, Partner Michele Vercoski has obtained substantial and significant results for her clients. One of her many accomplishments is belonging to the elite group of lawyers admitted to the United States Supreme Court and arguing a business issue on her case before nine justices.

### What does it mean to you to lead the firm's O.C. office and contingency commercial practice group?

It means a lot to me. I have always been drawn to fighting for the underdog against the bully. In my litigation career, I have focused my practice on taking cases where I am fighting for consumers and smaller businesses that are being taken advantage of by Fortune 500 heavyweights. What excites me about my present leadership position is having the freedom to carefully choose which clients I think we can best serve and use my passion to make a difference. I am also committed to the advancement of women in the workplace, business and in society. This position allows me to help other women lawyers and women entrepreneurs to have a fair chance in their workplace and business endeavors.

**Briefly describe your experience in the United States Supreme Court.** The experience was surreal. Less than 20% of the lawyers who have appeared before the Supreme Court in recent years have been women, and I was acutely aware that I was one of a very small number. Still, there was something extraordinary and symbolic in standing before the justices, engaging in this type of competitive, verbal battle. It is the crown jewel of oral advocacy and I am so glad I had the opportunity to go for it.

**How do you enjoy spending your time outside of the firm?** I love to run competitively. I often come up with great solutions or strategies for my cases while running, because it really allows me to clear my head and connect with my thoughts. I also love cooking and spending time with my three amazing children.

**What advice do you have for other women in business?** Take risks and be persistent. Rise up to challenges and do not be afraid. As women, good work and hard work is simply not enough. We must take the next step and ask for what we want and most importantly, we must support other women. Nothing happens unless you put yourself out there and take that chance. Be fearless!

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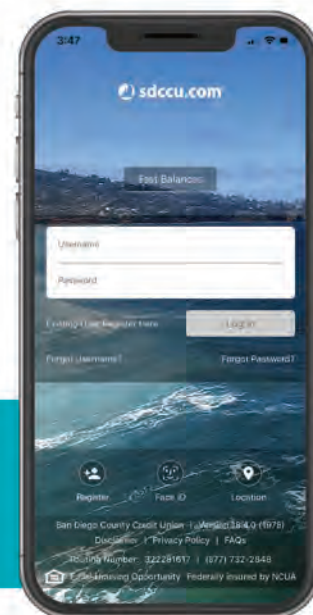
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# Scharrell Jackson Joins BPM LLP as Principal/COO

BPM is proud to welcome nationally-recognized chief operating officer Scharrell Jackson to the Firm. A prominent Orange County business professional with over 35 years of operations, accounting and finance experience, she continues to drive BPM's expansion plans in Southern California and beyond.

Aside from her strong business acumen, Scharrell is passionate about creating a winning culture and environment where employees thrive and grow.

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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

### Olivia Duane Adams, Chief Customer Officer

*Alteryx Inc., Irvine*

Olivia Duane Adams is the chief customer officer and co-founder of Alteryx, and one of only a handful of female founders to take a technology company public. Adams' vision for diversity and leadership in the creation of the world's leading data science and analytics community is a key factor in the company's 22-plus year success. Under Adams' leadership, the Alteryx Community has grown both on- and offline, serving as an incubator for empowering women in business via the Alteryx Women of Analytics initiative and inspiring citizen data scientists to understand the thrill of solving via self-service analytics. Adams is proud to be a founder of a company that has seen significant growth while also emphasizing a culture of diversity. Alteryx was recognized by The Org as one of the top 23 tech companies with the most gender diverse executive teams, with 33% of executive leadership being female. In a tech world where only 29 percent of executives are female, taking the company public in March 2017 was an incredible business feat, and what's more impressive is that Alteryx has had the top performing tech IPO of the last two years, according to recent Bloomberg data.



### Brateil Aghasi, CEO

*WISEPlace, Santa Ana*

Brateil Aghasi has led the transformation of WISEPlace to lead the efforts in alleviating homelessness for unaccompanied women in Orange County. She is a visionary leader who is focused on bringing real solutions to alleviate homelessness for vulnerable women, so they do not have to face adversity alone. As the CEO of WISEPlace, she is leading the path towards a 'Housing First' approach with a \$21 million dollar building partnership with Jamboree to build 52 units of permanent supportive housing with a full array of wrap around services such as case management, counseling, and employment support. This is the first housing development in WISEPlace and Orange County's history to build supportive housing for unaccompanied women in OC. Under her fearless leadership, WISEPlace has increased the number of women served by 183% as well as 53% financial growth. She is also a dedicated volunteer and serves on Boards for CSUF and UCI.



### Lourdes Ahn, CEO

*Upshoot, Costa Mesa*

Lourdes Ahn is the CEO of Upshoot, a healthy lifestyle startup headquartered in Costa Mesa, CA, that is on a mission to make plant-powered nutrition accessible to everyone. Ahn has 20+ years' experience transforming brands and people from the inside out. She is a c-suite executive, culture creator, and change management expert who specializes in turning vision and mission into impactful programs and products that benefit people as well as the planet. She has architected organizational and cultural change blueprints for diverse national and international multi-million-dollar brands in the bioplastics, natural foods and direct-selling industries. She has built Upshoot from the ground up through passionate high-performance teams, science-backed and proven programs, and quality tested nutrition products that are improving how people perceive and consume plant-based foods as well as reduce their carbon footprint. In less than a year, she launched a national company that has innovated four plant-based products (Shake, Smoothie, Super Drink, and Soup), built a strong network of distributors, established a growing customer base, and transformed eating habits.



### Jessica Aliotti, Financial Advisor

*Northwestern Mutual, Irvine*

Jessica Aliotti joined Northwestern Mutual – West Los Angeles as a financial advisor in 2014, and currently runs her practice in Orange County. An expert in tax efficiency, risk mitigation, and wealth preservation, Aliotti is passionate about helping others realize their vision of a sound financial future. Her greatest professional achievements can be measured by the impact she has on her clients' lives and financial security. In 2016 & 2018, Aliotti was recognized as the #1 ranked Northwestern Mutual advisor as compared to her peers in the Western Region of the United States. She was #2 in 2017 & 2019, and was ranked #7, nationally, in 2018. She works with her clients at every stage of life, helping them to understand both their needs and their potential. Her specialty is in working with sales executives, physicians, tech professionals, and athletics coaches to find the solutions that work best for their unique needs.



### Jodi Allen, Global Chief Marketing Officer

*Behr Paint Company, Santa Ana*

Jodi Allen joined Behr Paint Company in 2014 as the first global chief marketing officer bringing more than two decades of diverse experience from highly-competitive industries. Allen is responsible for all consumer marketing including brand, digital, social, creative services, visual merchandising, innovation and research & insights across all brands at Behr Paint Company. When Allen started at



Behr Paint Company she created the first-ever integrated marketing department developing new marketing strategies and omni-channel campaigns resulting in the highest market share in the history of the company. She also launched the first social platforms and campaigns across all brands including BEHR, BEHR Pro, and KILZ resulting in the highest Share of Voice on Pinterest and above benchmark media performance on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. By developing a licensing strategy for the company, Allen was also able to successfully launch a paint partnership with Magnolia Home by Joanna and Chip Gaines from HGTV's #1 show Fixer Upper.

### Courtney Aloviz, Owner

*Sugar 'n Spice, Balboa Island*

Courtney Aloviz co-owns Balboa Island's iconic Sugar 'n Spice shop. As the original frozen banana shop, founded in 1945, the beloved sweet treat destination is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year. Prior to taking the helm at Sugar 'n Spice, Aloviz spent nearly 25 years in Hollywood, glamming up TV stars, models and movie moguls such as Donny Osmond (she was his personal makeup artist for 7 years) Greg Kinnear, Brooklyn Decker, Jerry Seinfeld, Jason Alexander, and Shannon Elizabeth. Not to mention she was an in-demand makeup artist for popular shows like The Voice, General Hospital, Days of Our Lives, and various other shows on ABC, NBC, and CBS. Today, she finds so much fulfillment in bringing the Sugar 'n Spice experience to locals and vacationers alike, not only through their location on Balboa Island, but via their catering truck and contactless delivery solutions that recently launched.



### Priscilla Alvarado, Accounting Supervisor, Craft Services

*Swinerton, Irvine*

Priscilla Alvarado has been instrumental in building and developing the entire Craft Services Support team for Swinerton company-wide. She always invests time and effort into training and developing her teammates and making sure they have what they need to be successful. Swinerton utilizes Workday, an on-demand financial management, human resources and planning software. Alvarado has been critical to optimizing Workday for Swinerton's admin and craft employees. Her willingness and ability to dive in and figure things out has been vital to getting Workday to where it is today. She is solutions-oriented and always focused on how to move forward even in the face of numerous challenges. She embodies the phrase, "Where there's a will, there's a way!" She can execute on many fronts all at once and still achieves results within the time she commits to.



### Tamara Anderson, Founder/Event Director

*Culinary and Cannabis, Irvine*

Culinary and Cannabis founder Tamara Anderson, an Irvine resident, opened her life up to cannabis through her late son's battle with a rare genetic condition. The discovery of cannabis as a viable option during his health battle allowed Anderson to dedicate her life to educating the general public about the potential health benefits of incorporating cannabis into a person's daily life. This especially includes those dealing with significant pain or those who are struggling to find helpful, natural options. As a registered nurse, she created the Culinary and Cannabis concept which focuses on health, wellness and education through alternative uses of legal cannabis by means other than smoking. This idea brings together health care professionals and advocacy groups along with food and drink experts within the community for special events. These gatherings aim to remove the stigma associated with medical marijuana treatments by exploring its many culinary possibilities. Under Anderson's leadership, Culinary and Cannabis has previously hosted events around large-scale gatherings like the Academy Awards, the Grammys, the ESPYs and Coachella Music Festival and, most recently, produced the Halloweed Soiree in October 2019. Learning how to cook with cannabis, incorporating luxurious skincare products and immersive spa treatments are a few of the creatively paired medical ideas and culinary concepts that others have enjoyed.



### Corinne Anderson Schoepe, Director, Global Brand

*Fluidmaster, San Juan Capistrano*

Corinne Anderson's career trajectory and contributions to the higher levels of the organization have skyrocketed within her nine years at Fluidmaster. She started in finance, rotated through the various disciplines, and spent the majority of time in financial planning and analysis. She later moved to marketing, where she successfully launched the Perfect Fit tank lever line, which was the fastest new product development project completed at the company over the past decade and is now a \$4 million line. She instituted a brand management discipline, creating standards and guidelines as well as completely overhauling all global packaging in less than a year. She has oversight of the European marketing activities and product launches. She also drives the strategic brand direction globally and international business development and co-leads strategic planning. She is also actively promoting a culture of collaboration and innovation. On top of all of that, she also sits on the board of Fluidmaster.





# Your success inspires — your determination empowers



We are proud to celebrate all the achievements of women past, present, and future. When women succeed, everybody wins.

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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

### Suzy Arriola, President/CEO

*Suzy Arriola and Associates; EXP Realty, Rancho Santa Margarita*

Suzy Arriola has been an influencer and a Lady Leader in Orange County for over 15 years. She is a former three time nominee of Women in Business. She helps all clients no matter their price point. She has travelled the world, is an international speaker, and trainer in real estate and business. She was at NASDAQ in January 2020 for the closing bell ceremony for her company. She has been awarded for her production every year since becoming licensed. She gives back to her communities, serves on boards and believes in paying it forward. She enjoys her children, husband of 25 years, and any activity outdoors. Her motto is "To be a voice when someone doesn't have one."



### Karen Bannister, Founder/CEO

*Karen K. Bannister International LLC, Irvine*

Certified as both a life coach and image consultant, Karen Bannister has taken her 25 years of corporate experience and funneled it into her passion, and found her purpose to help people realize their dreams and reach their full potential. She has spent her career supporting, advising and advancing members of the C-suite, and has always found a sense of joy and accomplishment in that work. Last year she launched Karen K. Bannister International LLC, and developed a unique and transformative program that combines executive coaching and personal image branding to create cohesive messaging and presentation. She is a published author, host and producer of two podcasts, a corporate trainer, VP of communications and president-elect of her professional image association, member of the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce, and creator of both the Transformative Image Program(TM) and KKB Soft Skills Academy(SM), which offers both on-line and in-person training.



### Madhu Basu, CEO

*Madi Solutions LLC, Brea*

Madi Basu's entrepreneurial debut was rooted in her steadfast passion for nature, a clean and healthy environment and sustainable living. Being inspired and motivated by other dedicated entrepreneurs' philosophies and biographies, Basu seeded the company in 2017. Ever since then, and being a small part of the vast and growing green economy, she has been working very hard to promote and provide better and sustainable product choices in the USA. Basu started her career at Export Import Bank, and spent her first couple of formative years learning the ropes of best practices in global trade, international logistics and supply chain. Subsequently, she consulted in procurement, manufacturing, customer relationship management and financials for a number of years. Madi Solutions' commitment toward sustainability goes much beyond promoting earth-friendly sustainable products within the USA. The company places a lot of importance on research, and is at the forefront in innovating newer and better sustainable choices for consumers.



### Ana Battung, Global Director

*Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Garden Grove*

Ana Battung has been with Hyatt Hotel Corporation for 15 years and has worked at several properties in Southern California. Throughout her career she has led several teams that were nominated and were recipients of Hyatt Sales Teams of the Year and she has received recognition as HyPerformer for Hyatt Hotels and Resorts in 2018 due to her excellence in performance and achievement in production. In her current role, she oversees the Global Inclusion and Diversity sales efforts for Hyatt Hotels and increased revenues by 105% and continues to build strong partnerships within this space. In 2019 Battung was nominated for the Leadership of the Year award in which colleagues and hotel associates recognize those within the company for their leadership and contribution to the company. She actively communicates with all seven of Hyatt's Diversity Business Resource Groups and formed the global Hyatt Diversity Alliance which discusses best practices and aligns efforts to be more inclusive and diverse to all guests and groups.



### Margaret Bayston, CEO/Executive Director

*Laura's House, Ladera Ranch*

As CEO and executive director of Laura's House, a nonprofit authority on breaking the cycle of violence, Margaret Bayston has helped over 55,000 victims in Southern California and beyond escape domestic violence. Under her leadership, Laura's House will reach a key milestone in 2020 - bringing to life Orange County's first multi-service wellness collaborative that will help fulfill an unmet need for a one-stop unified resource for survivors and all those touched by domestic violence. To make this vision a reality, Bayston kickstarted a campaign to help Laura's House raise \$10 million in funding with the goal to open the new center in summer 2020. For over 25 years, Bayston has helped lead and initiate a variety of successful prevention and education programs. Key initiatives include the launch of



Laura's House H.E.A.R.T. program which currently provides 80 high schools in Southern California with teen dating violence prevention and education workshops and the nonprofit's technology training program, which educates law enforcement and local businesses about the use of AI and digital impersonation technology to commit cyber abuse.

### Andra Berezney, Vice President of Construction

*Branded Group, Anaheim*

Branded Group's vice president of construction, Andra Berezney manages customer relationships with a sincere commitment to consistent communication, superior service, and innovative solutions for retail construction needs. She oversees the growing construction department, leads the customer team, and builds relationships with customers, vendors, and construction teams, as well as delivers customer projects on time and within budget. With more than 15 years of experience managing client accounts in the construction and facility industries, Berezney utilizes her extensive expertise to assist Branded Group clients to "Be Better." She oversees Branded Group's growing construction department, ensuring that projects are completed on time and on budget. In addition to leading her construction team, Berezney has acquired over fifteen high volume accounts through the purposeful connections she has made in our industry.



### Kimberly Bernatz, Managing Director

*CIBC Private Wealth Management, Newport Beach*

Kimberly Bernatz joined CIBC Private Wealth Management in August of 2018 as managing director and head of the Newport Beach office. She brings a wealth of industry experience to her role and since she grew up in Orange County, is instrumental in continuing to expand the firm's presence in Southern California and Arizona. For more than 20 years, Bernatz has worked with high net worth individuals, families and non-profit organizations to provide tailored investment management, wealth planning and trust services, always striving to build trusting and enduring relationships by putting the client at the center of everything she does. Prior to joining CIBC Private Wealth Management, Bernatz was a senior vice president and director of wealth management advisory services for First American Trust, FSB and a vice president and business development officer at Northern Trust.



### Kim Bibb, Realtor

*Villa Real Estate, Newport Beach*

Kim Bibb, Villa Real Estates co-founder and top agent, has been the icon of luxury real estate in Newport Beach for over twenty years. Bibb has dominated the Newport Beach market, selling hundreds of fine coastal homes while setting new high-water marks for exceptional properties on the Oceanfront and Bayfront. Bibb is the unparalleled expert in the sought-after Peninsula Point submarket, where she resides and has transacted more than \$875 million in sales; over \$111 million since January 1, 2018, alone. In addition to achieving many sales records, selling numerous one of a kind estates & making multigenerational family properties her expertise. Bibb is known for setting the gold standards for market intelligence, innovative marketing, and client service in coastal Orange County.



### Maureen Bissonnette, Associate Principal, Marketing

*Ware Malcomb, Irvine*

Beginning her career Ware Malcomb began in 1998 as a marketing assistant, Maureen Bissonnette soon became an invaluable member of the team through her unwavering dedication, exceptional leadership abilities and marketing savvy. Bissonnette is an outstanding strategist, strong communicator and inspiring leader focused on continuous improvement. Embracing new challenges and continuously finding ways to evolve have long been trademarks of her persona. A member of Ware Malcomb's Leadership Team since 2008, Bissonnette is one of four female principals for the firm. As associate principal, marketing, she oversees the firmwide marketing program and corporate marketing team for the firm's 25 offices across North America. In addition to media and branding efforts, Bissonnette continues to elevate the marketing program through creation and execution of winning strategies for all major pursuits. Bissonnette has played a key role in the company's transformation from a regional to an international design firm. Through her vision, creativity and futuristic focus, Ware Malcomb's marketing program has reached tremendous heights over the past two decades. Bissonnette was instrumental in launching Ware Malcomb's online presence and solidifying its digital marketing strategy. Such efforts were recognized with 13 national marketing communications awards for the firm's social media program and innovative website.



### Destin Blais, Founder

*B&A Professional Grant Consulting, Irvine*

In 2005, Destin Blais founded B&A to provide superior grant consulting services to municipalities. Starting with one city and one grant application, the company now provides services to over 80 government agencies in multiple states. Over the past 15 years, approximately 1,500 grant proposals have been developed under Blais' leadership requesting nearly \$2.0 billion in grant funding. The company is 100%



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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

virtual, 100% flexible scheduling, and has a client retention rate of 98%. B&A is a "pace setter" in the grant industry and in 2018 developed and launched a Cloud-based grant management software program to help clients manage grant awards and associated projects. The company thrives and is successful due to its attention to customer service and attention detail. Within Orange County and through B&A's efforts, \$164.1 million in grant funding has been awarded to 17 different Orange County cities and the County of Orange, almost \$11 million annually.

### **Ashley Bleckner, Certified Financial Planner/Advisor** *Ellevest, Capistrano Beach*

Ashley Bleckner established Ellevest's thriving Southern California presence and contributed to the rollout of Ellevest Intentional Impact Portfolios — a way for Ellevest Private Wealth clients to invest their money in companies that meet Ellevest's criteria for doing the right things by women - and redirecting their money away from companies with products, policies, and practices that may harm them. Her mission, put simply, is to get more money in the hands of women - both by helping them take financial control, and by giving them innovative social impact investing options so they can use their assets to power real change. Bleckner and the team continue to innovate the financial services industry, after hearing from many women (and seeing the data to back it up) that the current investment industry wasn't serving them. Since Bleckner was recruited by Ellevest to spearhead their Southern California presence, she's built a robust book of powerful women clients (and their allies), hosted several educational events alongside Ellevest CEO Sallie Krawcheck, and leveraged her expertise and enthusiasm as a Certified Financial Planner to give back to the community.

### **Amber Bonasoro, Director of Marketing**

*Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties, Newport Beach*

Amber Bonasoro oversees the marketing, development, and creative direction of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties. With annual sales of \$12 billion and 3,000+ agents, the company is internationally recognized as a Berkshire Elite Brokerage. She has held her California real estate salesperson license since 2006 selling luxury and coastal properties up to \$30 million throughout SoCal. In 2015, she created a Marketing Coordinator training program in Orange County to collaborate with offices and share information with agents. It was successfully implemented in San Diego, Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara regions. Bonasoro continues to manage the program across all three regions. Bonasoro previously worked as the director of marketing and advertising for the Canaday Group and RE/MAX Fine Homes. During her seven years at the company, she helped launch the franchise RE/MAX Fine Homes in Laguna Beach, Newport Beach, and Huntington Harbour. She attended national conventions and completed Broker/Owner training at RE/MAX's corporate headquarters in Denver, CO. She is a founding member of OCYPN (Orange County Young Professionals Network), she has held leadership positions and created a Playbook, used nationwide, to launch local YPNs.

### **Noemi Bonessio, Founder/CEO**

*METAseismic, Irvine*

Dr. Noemi Bonessio founded and created an award-winning company called METAseismic which is the first startup aimed at integrating metamaterial technology into seismic protection systems. METAseismic is a University of California Irvine Applied Innovation startup developing cost-effective mechanical metamaterials to protect buildings and valuable objects from earthquakes. Dr. Bonessio is the inventor of the metamaterials that are the core technology of METAseismic. Narrow layers of these metamaterials can be placed underneath any equipment to absorb up to 90 percent of the vibration energy from a ground shaking, thus leaving the equipment unaffected. The impact of METAseismic technology goes well beyond the Southern California community. METAseismic products can impact 30 percent of the world population, which is exposed to seismic risk every day. Recent awards include the 2018 "Most Disruptive Award" from Tech Coast Angels, the nomination for "2018 Woman Breaking Barriers" from Connected Women of Influence, CA and the 2018 "Visionary of the Year" award from the University of California Irvine, ANTreprenuer Center.

### **Marla Borokoff, CEO**

*Balloonzilla, Irvine*

Established in 2011, Balloonzilla is the premier boutique where balloon art is at the height of sophistication. Paired with designer services, they create balloon decorations for all events. Balloonzilla's, Marla Borokoff, has been the vehicle that has created an opportunity to be the Trendsetter of the Year with the Association of Bridal Consultants, and she does several speaking engagements, specializing in empowering women in their



entrepreneurship. The company is 100% woman owned and proud to be in an industry that is primarily built by strong hard working women.

### **Sheryl Bourgeois, Executive Vice President of University Advancement**

*Chapman University, Orange*

Dr. Sheryl Bourgeois provides strategic and fiscal leadership to Chapman's award-winning Office of University Advancement. The 110-member team she leads is responsible for the following institutional matters: marketing and communications; fundraising and development; parent and alumni engagement; donor relations and stewardship; events; and career and professional development. Her portfolio also includes critical aspects of board governance and long-range planning. A member of Chapman's senior administrative team for 22+ years, Bourgeois has played an integral role in the University's growth from a regional college of less 2,200 students into a nationally-ranked, research (R2) institution with Phi Beta Kappa status and a student body of nearly 10,000 studying in 12 schools and colleges. During her tenure, more than \$600 million in philanthropic support has been generated — including Chapman's largest, historic gifts and pledges - resulting in the naming of six schools/colleges; three institutes; donor-funded endowment growth of 41 percent; and more than 3.6 million square-feet of space being acquired, constructed and/or renovated.



### **Ruth Brajevich, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives**

*Ware Malcomb, Irvine*

Ruth Brajevich is vice president, strategic initiatives for international design firm Ware Malcomb. Brajevich is an excellent strategist, innovator and inspiring leader. A member of the executive team for over 16 years, she provides guidance to company leaders throughout the firm and has played a key role in Ware Malcomb's transformation from a regional firm to an international, Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Company. Since joining Ware Malcomb in 1998, Brajevich's role has expanded beyond marketing to include branding, human resources, leadership and organizational development. She helped launch the WM Branding studio, WM 4.0 Continuous Improvement program, WM Active, companywide mentoring and leadership development programs. Brajevich oversees strategy for the WM brand, marketing, communications, learning & development, and culture initiatives for Ware Malcomb. She leads organizational development and strategic initiatives, including strategic planning and leadership development. Due to Brajevich's efforts, Ware Malcomb has been honored as one of OCBJ Best Places to Work for two years in a row and a Hot Firm by Zweig Group in 2018 and 2019.



### **Michelle Brown, Real Estate Agent**

*The Agency, Corona del Mar*

Michelle Brown recently joined The Agency in Corona del Mar following 16 years with two other area brokerages. She thrives on the ultra-competitive market selling residential real estate in many desirable coastal and inland communities. As a 25-year resident of Corona del Mar and active investor in the community, Brown offers her clients a unique insider's perspective related to market knowledge, property values, sales trends and exemplary quality of life. With nearly \$400 million in sales, Brown and her partners, Dana Christensen and Cara Farley are recognized as a trusted and talented real estate group. Brown's past experience includes many years working for The Irvine Company as director of marketing for Fashion Island and a lead member of the development team for the Irvine Spectrum Center. Brown also created a consulting firm and implemented marketing strategies for many well-known retailers and a Forbes 50 pharmaceutical company.



### **Kira Bruno, CEO/Founder**

*FORTIS Resource Partners, Irvine*

Kira Bruno founded FORTIS Resource Partners in 2007 under the premise of serving others and this is reflected in the company and the life she leads. The FORTIS mission reflects her personal ideals of building trust, positively impacting others and providing the highest level of service to the professional and non-profit community. Her role as an executive woman business owner has been made easier through her 30+ year career that has encompassed great success in building companies and strong relationships, leading and developing others in industry, and coaching and mentoring. Each week she can be found working directly with Orange County company executives and family run enterprises, to help them achieve the strategic hiring goals of their organizations. Bruno is an active participant with Financial Executives Networking Group (FENG) supporting high level finance executives through their transition and networking efforts. In addition, Bruno is involved with the CSUF Family Business Council, facilitating peer groups for 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation family business owners, and with the UCI EMBA program, mentoring EMBA students. Bruno is a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach and Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder Centered Certified Coach. She also has a Hogan Assessment Systems, License for Personality, Performance & Leadership Development.





## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

### Dana Butler-Moburg, Executive Director

*J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center, San Juan Capistrano*

For the past 22 years, Dana Butler-Moburg has been the executive director of J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center in San Juan Capistrano. She brings an extensive background in nonprofit management and administration to The Shea Center with an emphasis in community organization, development, communications and board management. The Shea Center is dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs. During her tenure, The Shea Center has grown from a \$335,000 annual budget and \$475,000 in net assets to a \$5 million annual operating budget with nearly \$18 million in net assets. The Shea Center is one of the largest therapeutic equestrian centers in the U.S. In the past six years, The Shea Center has doubled in size while increasing client services to over 15,000 hours each year reaching over 1800+ clients with 31 full-time staff and 13 part-time and contract staff and nearly 700 annual volunteers.



### Leslie Calhoun, President/CEO

*Optivest Inc., Dana Point*

Early in her 13-year career history with Optivest, Leslie Calhoun eagerly took increasing responsibility until she was independently operating the company. She spent the remaining years being mentored by the founder learning the nuances of business development, vetting investments, providing solid financial advice and offering diversified and durable investment portfolios to high net-worth families nationwide. On December 31, 2018, Calhoun bought the firm from the retiring founder and is now sole owner of Optivest, Inc. which manages over \$500 million of client assets. Calhoun represents a double minority, being both a female financial advisor and a female financial industry CEO. A priority for Calhoun was to preserve the firm's culture of caring deeply for the staff of the company who make it possible for the firm to serve its clients. She also wanted to preserve the values on which the firm was established; that Optivest exists to serve others and thereby donates the first 10 percent of gross revenues to the Optivest Foundation, a 501(c)3 which supports charitable initiatives worldwide.



### Rita Carter, Studio Principal, Higher Education Practice

*Little, Newport Beach*

Rita Carter started at Little in March 2017 and immediately demonstrated her natural capacity for effective leadership, innovative thinking and genuine care for the community in her role as senior designer. Within six months, she was promoted to design principal, where she currently leads the firm's Higher Education Practice for the California region. From her fourteen-years of experience, she believes project success arises from cultivating personal relationships with her clients through open communication, superior service, and a passionate commitment to design excellence. As an architect and humanitarian, believes in leaving the world a better place through the power of human-centered design. Carter received her Bachelor of Architecture from California State Polytechnic University and her Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University.



### Laura Catalino, Senior Vice President of Investor Relations

*M360 Advisors, Ladera Ranch*

Laura Catalino's career began with traditional financial services companies, however, in 2015 she joined M360 Advisors, an alternative asset advisor whose core strategy invests in a niche commercial real estate segment of private credit, an opportunity that married her expertise in financial services with her personal passion for real estate. Shortly after Catalino joined as senior vice president of Investor Relations, the strategy launched. Since then, she has been responsible for introducing the strategy to family offices, wealth managers and other accredited investors. In less than three years since the launch, the firm has grown to more than \$650 million in gross assets under management. The strength of Catalino's achievements is borne in the relationships she's built. Some wealth managers who started with six clients investing in the strategy now have as many as 28 clients invested with M360, a testament to the work Catalino has done to educate the market.



### Rashmi Chaturvedi, President

*KAYGEN, Irvine*

Rashmi Chaturvedi is the co-founder and president of KAYGEN. With over 22 years of industry experience working for large multinationals such as Disney, she has been instrumental in providing Data Driven solutions to customers globally to achieve their Digital transformation objectives. KAYGEN's Data First approach has enabled customers to digitally transform their customer experience, operations and business processes leading to increased productivity, and profitability. Their spectrum of solutions includes Enterprise Data management and Governance, Cloud and Enterprise Applications, Advanced Analytics, Data Privacy, Security Risk and compliance and IT staffing solutions. With expertise in Information technology



for over 25 years, Chaturvedi has led KAYGEN through a major transformation. She is involved in strategic planning to take the company to the next level. Under her direction, the company has gained industrial recognition as an industry leading Oracle Platinum partner. She has also been instrumental in turning around the company's revenue from 20% to 140% over a period of three years.

### Kitty Cheung, CFO

*Red Digital Cinema, Irvine*

Kitty Cheung is the first female CFO in the history of Red Digital Cinema and during her time she has streamlined business activities and led efforts to maximize operational efficiencies with approximately \$10 million in cost reductions in 12 months. In addition, she has breached the gap between finance and customers and has built out a finance and IT team while cleaning up issues. Cheung has also put processes and structure in place to allow the business to pivot from a start-up mode to a growing company. She has developed and mentored team members by investing in their professional development and providing them with opportunities to advance their careers and personal goals.



### Mary Cheval, Principal, Interior Architecture & Design

*Ware Malcomb, Irvine*

Mary Cheval brings over 34 years of interior architecture and design expertise to Ware Malcomb, a leading international design firm providing planning, architecture, interior design, branding, civil engineering and building measurement services to commercial real estate and corporate clients. As one of ten females on Ware Malcomb's Irvine leadership team, Cheval leads the overall growth and management of the Interior Architecture & Design Studio for the Irvine office and provides Strategic Facilities Planning & Workplace Strategy expertise. Cheval is a proven leader in creating and executing innovative design solutions while ensuring meticulous attention to detail from concept through completion. Cheval consistently goes above and beyond for her clients and team. She is fiercely dedicated to surpassing challenging goals and expectations and cares deeply about the personal and professional development of her team. As a result, she is well respected within the design community and is creating a positive impact for the next generation of women leaders. Cheval's expertise with workplace strategy, delivering human centered, evidence-based design solutions are instrumental to Ware Malcomb's project success, including Thales Avionics, Karma Automotive, and Toyota Financial Services.



### Gina Chironis, President/Chief Executive Officer

*Clarity Wealth Management, Irvine*

Gina Chironis is the CEO of Clarity Wealth Management, a fee only Registered Investment Advisory firm. Chironis formed Clarity Wealth Management in order to deliver a wealth strategy service that manages the financial complexities in her clients' lives. She works with a select number of families and their related businesses. As a fiduciary advisor, she acts as her client's personal CFO to coordinate and implement a plan to enhance wealth, minimize taxes and protect assets. Chironis is currently vice chair of the California CPA Personal Financial Planning State Committee. Her 2020 goal is to help her clients understand more about sustainable investing, including the direct benefits to helping reduce carbon emissions and climate change. Chironis has been a Certified Public Accountant for over 20 years and holds the Personal Financial Specialist (CPA-FPS) designation awarded to CPAs who have demonstrated expertise in wealth management. This credential can only be awarded to CPAs. Her focus is in tax, investments, and financial planning.



### Dana Christensen, Real Estate Agent

*The Agency, Corona del Mar*

Dana Christensen, a founding partner of the BROWN and CHRISTENSEN group with nearly \$400 million in sales, is an area resident and highly trusted residential real estate professional representing buyer and seller clients along the gorgeous coastal communities. Christensen recently joined The Agency following a long tenure at another local brokerage. Christensen and her real estate partners Michelle Brown and Cara Farley conduct business with a strategic formula to generate the greatest return on their clients' investments. Prior to transitioning to the residential real estate business, Christensen held high-level director positions in the areas of general management, marketing, tourism and public relations with premier Arizona-based shopping center developers and owners.



### Robin Christenson, Chief Financial Officer, Founder

*Blinking Owl Distillery, Santa Ana*

Robin Christenson launched the first distillery in Orange County, CA, overcoming a tremendous barrier to entry. She has led the financial and operational planning and management through the extreme challenges of a start-up company in a heavily regulated industry. The company averaged 65% annual revenue growth over three years utilizing innovative solutions to provide diversified revenue streams. In addition they raised over \$4.5 million through Seed and Series A rounds along with SBA funding



## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

by effectively translating passion, mission and a compelling financial story of the business; Received national accolades and awards for the superior quality of their organic California grain based spirits, sealing our reputation as a major industry competitor; and leveraged strategic relationships with the media and prominent legislators turning a recent difficult regulatory situation into heaps of positive press, brand awareness, brand loyalty and law maker support. The company operates with unyielding commitment to sustainable practices and organic California farming.

### Nicole Christopherson, Broker/Owner

*NMC Realty, Rancho Santa Margarita*

Nicole Christopherson founded NMC Realty in 2014. NMC Realty is an experienced boutique brokerage that offers all of its clients a full service experience from beginning to end. Notable buyers and sellers entrust NMC Realty to guide them through every step of the real estate process, and be assured all objectives are being met with exceeded expectations. Known for her congenial spirit and exceptional customer service, she is dedicated to making the process of buying and selling a smooth and pleasurable experience for her clients. Her outstanding communication skills and ability to address concerns regarding such issues as relocation and schooling are a tremendous benefit to her clientele.

While working in exclusive estate neighborhoods or seasoned tracts throughout Coto De Caza and Ladera Ranch, she is able to provide current first hand knowledge from previous clients and transactions.



### Vicki Clements, Vice President, Sales and Client Management/ Chief Operating Officer, Southern California and Nevada

*Cigna, Irvine*

Vicki Clements has a track record of excellence in the health services industry dating back to 1986. During her 34-year career, she has held multiple positions with Cigna. Prior to 2017, she oversaw customer service operations and led a high performing customer engagement team. In 2017, Clements became chief operations officer for Cigna's Southern California and Nevada markets. She drove innovative approaches to improve quality, affordability, customer experience and provider experience. Clements has operationalized three health system alliances that are transforming health care delivery - with St. Joseph Hoag Health (Orange County), Scripps Health (San Diego) and HealthCare Partners (Los Angeles). These alliances are bringing a new level of affordable care to 120 employers in Southern California. In January 2020, Clements assumed additional leadership responsibilities as vice president, sales and client management for Orange County and San Diego. She oversees all sales and service operations for employers with 500 to 5000 employees.



### Stephanie Courtillier, Founder

*Integrus Women, Rancho Santa Margarita*

Since its 2017 inception, founder Stephanie Courtillier has led Integrus Women to grow across three pillar principles: Personal Development, Professional Development and Philanthropy. To honor these principles in 2019, Courtillier built on 2017-2018 initiatives to realize support for over 300 women in the Orange County area through personal and professional skill-development trainings; completed the first year of a three year partnership with Esperanza y Futuro Orphanage in Guatemala to provide sustainable empowerment and mental health programs for thirty young teen mom orphans; and honored diversity and inclusiveness for twenty percent of Integrus Women community members through in-kind memberships and mentor support for low-income/underserved community members. A recognized leader in Orange County and beyond, Courtillier continues to practice and iterate on her intentioned vision for Integrus Women.



### Amy Creager, Principal and Architect

*Brion Jeannette Architecture, Newport Beach*

Amy Creager has worked for 30 years at Brion Jeannette Architecture, starting off as an office assistant and now a principal. She studied a variety of design disciplines, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Art from Long Beach State University, before deciding to become an architect. While attending college Creager had a variety of part-time jobs, including one memorable one with Brion Jeannette Architecture (BJA). She interned with BJA and worked in a couple of other architectural firms before returning to BJA full-time in 1990. At that point Creager was confident of her career path and began to focus on working toward her architectural license which was secured in 2006. She was an early member of the USGBC-OC championing green building practices in Orange County, Brion Jeannette Architecture has designed green sustainable since its inception.



### Kristin Daher, President/Founder

*Powerhouse Communications, Santa Ana*

Since founding Powerhouse Communications four years ago, Kristin Daher has not

only made a name for the agency in the Orange County PR community but has built Powerhouse's reputation as a premier national firm specializing in the restaurant, CPG and franchise industries. Under Daher's leadership, the agency delivers an imaginative approach to media relations, communications strategy, and social media for clients including Wienerschnitzel, Mountain Mike's Pizza, Gloria Jean's Coffees, Juice It Up! and It's A Grind Coffee House. In 2019, Powerhouse's work received the top honor of "Best in Show," for the second time in the past three years, at the annual OCPRSA industry awards. Daher also joined the California Restaurant Association Foundation board of directors where she provides strategic counsel to increase awareness of the non-profit. With a huge emphasis on company culture and building a healthy, creative environment for her employees, Daher has designed a colorful workspace for her staff to grow and thrive. Her drive to succeed pushes the agency and its personnel to new heights each and every day.



### Erin Darafeev, President

*IMD Furniture, Garden Grove*

Erin Darafeev comes from a generational family of furniture makers. You could say she has sawdust in her veins, breathes design, and is one of the last true furniture makers in the USA. Having grown up in the furniture business, stepping in to lend a hand came naturally. She worked alongside her family in their Southern California manufacturing plants while also continuing her education in mechanical engineering, business, and art. Prior to working in furniture design and manufacturing operations, Darafeev spent 15 years working in marketing, sales, and business consulting for small businesses, non-profit and political organizations. In early 2018, Darafeev ventured out on her own to form IMD Furniture and purchased the assets and rights to the IM David brand from the Ginsberg family. The 54-year-old American business has always had a solid reputation for building long-lasting consumer and commercial grade hospitality furniture, with a dealer network spanning the lower 48 states. With a renewed vision, passion, drive and commitment, the tradition of building high-quality, custom hardwood dining and game room furniture will continue to flourish in Southern California for decades to come.



### Jennifer Davis, SVP, Business Development

*TMC Financing, Irvine*

With over 20 years of banking experience, Jennifer Davis is based in LA county and spearheads TMC Financing's mission in Southern California. As senior vice president of Business Development, Davis is responsible for educating business owners, commercial mortgage lenders and commercial real estate brokers about the SBA 504 program and other lending opportunities. Under Davis' leadership, TMC has gained significant market share in Southern California. In fiscal year 2019, Davis helped 71 small businesses receive financing they need to grow their businesses. These businesses received over \$76 million in SBA financing and are expected to create or retain over 800 jobs in the region. Davis' efforts in Southern California helped TMC become the number one Certified Development Company in the entire nation. Prior to joining TMC Financing, Davis held multiple positions at Bank of America, her extensive background in banking has helped her expertly structure deals for small businesses and lender partners. On many occasions, Davis has gotten SBA approvals on deals previously denied when submitted by other CDCs.



### Terry Dear, Vice President, Software Engineering

*Stretto, Irvine*

With more than 30 years of technology industry experience, Terry Dear oversees operational and development aspects of IT at Stretto, including product management, application development, and enterprise/business/data architectures. As a member of Stretto's executive management team, she drives technology initiatives across the organization and has played an integral role in the integration of numerous third-party banking systems into the company's technology platform. Having joined the company more than 10 years ago, Dear has successfully guided her team of software engineers and product owners through several company transitions with a "servant leader" philosophy, empowering those who report to her who in turn serve her and the organization. She possesses the unique ability to translate technology concepts into a business context in communicating with her team, executive management and clients. Tech in Motion selected Dear as "Best Tech Manager" at the 2019 annual Timmy Awards ceremony for her outstanding management skills and expertise.



### Sherry Delaney, Principal, Chief Operations Officer

*New Market Wealth Management, Irvine*

Sherry Delaney co-founded New Market Wealth Management in 2014 to provide a level of private client service largely missing in the industry, save for family offices. It was important to her that New Market Wealth Management meet the highest standards in ethics and transparency, and in five years, the business grew from zero clients to roughly 90 families and over \$200 million in assets. Today the firm services



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families across the US and in Europe. Delaney was instrumental in forming the firm's strategic partnership with Cliffwater LLC, a \$70 billion institutional advisory firm based in Los Angeles and New York, and she single-handedly created the firm's Retirement Services Division. Delaney has a diverse background that spans all sides of the financial services industry, including marketing, sales, operations, portfolio management and more. At New Market Wealth, Sherry built, integrated and now oversees all firm operations-from technology, systems, marketing and compliance to client management-and she is a key member of the firm's Investment Policy Group. Last year, she established the Retirement Services Division at New Market Wealth and has built a clientele of corporate 401(k) plans. Prior to the founding of New Market Wealth, she ran the retirement division nationally for Alliance Capital and was involved with that firm's purchase of investment manager, Sanford C. Bernstein.



### **Sara D'Elia, CEO/Principal** *The REMM Group, Tustin*

Sara D'Elia, formerly president of Mesa Management partnered up to purchase The REMM Group in 2013. She is a dedicated and compassionate leader who effectively communicates her vision, empowers her team, and runs her company with integrity. D'Elia also holds a Certified Property Manager (CPM) designation; the CPM designation demonstrates one's expertise and integrity to those who matter most-employers, owners and investors. D'Elia has over 25 years of experience in the industry. She also served as IREM Orange County's 2013 chapter president and has created and redeveloped new programs during her presidency. As CEO, D'Elia has led The REMM Group in remarkable growth both in revenue and in development of a vibrant corporate culture. The REMM Group has added over 45 multifamily properties to their portfolio in five years of D'Elia's stewardship. Additionally, D'Elia and her partners have created a corporate culture that includes giving back to the community and their industry. She supports her team members to achieve their own goals through mentoring, training, and encouragement.



### **Carol DeNembo, Vice President of Marketing** *Mountain Mike's Pizza LLC, Newport Beach*

Carol DeNembo is vice president of marketing aka "Lead Pizza Queen" of Mountain Mike's Pizza, a leading family-style pizza chain known for its legendary crispy, curly pepperoni and Mountain-sized pizzas. DeNembo was one of the first additions to the superstar leadership team when the brand was acquired in 2017 and operations moved from Northern California to Newport Beach. Since coming on board, she has made huge strides in modernizing the 40+ year legacy brand with over 220 units up and down the west coast. DeNembo leads systemwide marketing initiatives providing vision and strategic direction as Mountain Mike's continues to expand into new territories. Most recently, she spearheaded digital initiatives including an overhaul of the brand's website, integrating online ordering and launching a functional mobile app. She also played an integral role in designing the updated restaurant prototype which will be unveiled at two new Orange County locations in Spring 2020.



### **Deborah Dickson, President**

*Smith Dickson, An Accountancy Corp., Irvine*

From her beginnings as one of the few women working at the "Big 8" CPA firms, Deborah Dickson, CPA, CFF, MAFF progressed to form Smith Dickson, An Accountancy Corporation in 1982. Dickson remains the only woman to found and manage a "Top Accounting Firm" in Orange County, as ranked by the Business Journal. As the founder, CEO, and president of Smith Dickson, An Accountancy Corporation, Dickson has grown the firm from a one-person practice with no formal office to a thriving company with sophisticated CPAs on staff. She has carved out a niche specialty, a Forensic CPA Litigation Support practice, in a very tough and competitive field. She has shaped this into one of the most well-known forensic CPA and expert witness accounting teams in California. Clients include leading national and boutique law firms such as Sheppard Mullin, Allen Matkins, and Buchalter, attesting to Smith Dickson's expertise and success in this field.



### **Linda DiMario, EVP**

*Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce, Irvine*

Following more than four years in senior leadership roles at the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce, first as senior director then vice president of Economic Development and Tourism, Linda DiMario was named executive vice president of the Chamber in 2017. Her newest role reflects her contributions to the growing reputation of the Chamber and its role in Irvine by effective organizational decision making and expansion of local, regional, and global business development initiatives. DiMario works with the CEO, Chamber Board, the Hotel Improvement District, the Economic Vitality Council and its volunteer leadership and hard-working Task Forces and very talented Chamber professional staff to influence



and grow a healthy economic environment to which they can attract new business, foreign direct investment, fuel start ups, enhance the Chamber's profile and help existing businesses grow and thrive.

### **Marie DiSante, Founder/Firm Managing Partner**

*Carothers DiSante & Freudenberg LLP, Irvine*

Marie DiSante has been successfully defending companies in labor and employment law matters for over 30 years. In addition, she has been at the helm of her firm since its inception in 1994 as the firm managing partner where she focused on her ingrained value of inclusion that resulted in women and minority attorneys making up 60 percent of the firm. Not only does she have a successful law practice and manage a firm of over 50 attorneys with five offices spanning California, she has a solidified reputation for aggressively defending her clients, for advocating for women in law and leadership positions, for advocating for animals and for being an irreplaceable asset to the Orange County business community. Recently, SuperLawyers® included her in the Top 50 Attorneys in Orange County for 2020. She has also been listed as a Southern California Super Lawyers® from 2014 to 2020.



### **Caroline Djang, Partner**

*Best Best & Krieger LLP, Irvine*

Caroline R. Djang, an Irvine-based partner of Best Best & Krieger LLP, is a zealous advocate for her clients who is respected by the bench and bar for her integrity and efficiency in managing all areas of bankruptcy and insolvency, from comprehensive counseling to litigation services. The leader of BB&K's Bankruptcy practice group, Djang has extensive experience representing debtors, creditors, trustees and committees on contested matters and in adversary proceedings. This year, she was appointed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the United States Trustee to serve as a Subchapter V trustee in Chapter 11 cases filed under the Small Business Reorganization Act of 2019. Selected for her business acumen, mediation skills and deep understanding of bankruptcy law, Djang will be among the nation's first trustees to administer cases filed under the most extensive reform to the federal Bankruptcy Code in 15 years.



### **Samantha Dorey, Partner**

*Everett Dorey LLP, Irvine*

Samantha Dorey is a founding partner of Everett Dorey LLP, a full service civil litigation firm based in Orange County that represents multi-national corporations, non-profits, cities, public agencies and school districts in all aspects of litigation. As a leading litigation firm in California routinely retained as trial counsel in complex and challenging cases throughout the state, Dorey has shaped a firm of exceptionally talented litigators with diverse cultural and personal backgrounds, with particular focus on creating an environment that empowers female attorneys. 75% of leadership positions in the firm are held by women. Dorey has created a modern twist to the traditional ways of running a law firm by asking questions and recognizing talent at all levels. She understands that the key to the firm's success does not rest on the shoulders of a few, but on the ability to collaborate, empower others, and foster a team environment.



### **Shawn Dougherty, Newport Beach**

*EXOIO, Newport Beach*

Founded by Shawn Dougherty in 2017, EXOIO is a hands-on venture studio that provides early-stage consumer brands with expertise, resources and access to a curated network of investors and retail connections. EXOIO assists with product design, direct to consumer / ecommerce strategy, supply chain / logistics, talent acquisition and preparation for raising capital. Shawn Dougherty is the co-founder of mophie, an Award-winning designer and manufacturer of premium portable power and storage solutions for the rapidly growing mobile device market. Dougherty co-founded the business in 2005 and by 2016, it had grown to be a \$250 million dollar company, selling products in 30,000 global retailers in 130 countries.



### **Lauren Doyle, Associate Attorney**

*Tredway Lumsdaine & Doyle LLP, Irvine*

Lauren Doyle is an associate at TLD Law where her practice is focused on corporate counseling, mergers and acquisitions, business succession planning, and estate and tax planning. Doyle works in TLD Law's Irvine office, and provides legal services to individuals and business clients throughout the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. Doyle has assisted clients in selecting and forming entities, negotiating and drafting capital structure agreements, including stock buy-sell, shareholders, partnership, operating and subscription agreements. She has worked on several large M&A transactions, from negotiating and drafting the letter of intent and purchase agreement, to conducting due diligence, and managing the closing. She also provides day-to-day business operational





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advice, including issues with corporate governance, contract drafting, and employment issues. Doyle has assisted clients in a variety of industries, such as technology, medical, construction, engineering, accounting, fashion, restaurant, and design industry.

### Rhonda Ducote, President/Principal

*Apriem Advisors, Irvine*

Rhonda Ducote has climbed the ranks in the financial industry over a 25-year period from a client service representative to Apriem's president. Her leadership has propelled the firm to over \$750 million in assets under management and opened two new offices in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties. She brought industry-changing initiatives that gained Apriem nationwide recognition not just as a top financial advisory firm but also an outstanding small business, and one of the most civic-minded companies. Through Apriem's service offerings, she brings a focus on helping the underserved demographics of women, blue-collar workers, and nonprofits. She is the legacy builders chair, launching the "Million Dollar Match" Campaign for Southern California Hospice Foundation to secure funding for Heavenly Home, the first hospice house in Southern California. Her industry experience with her passion for people has set her apart as a respected leader, advisor, mentor, and coach.



### Tia Dwyer, Chief Operating Officer

*Think Together, Santa Ana*

After spending the first decade of her career teaching and administering the after-school programs in the Lawndale School District, Tia Dwyer joined Think Together in 2009 as the director of summer learning. She quickly became the Orange County general manager, at the time Think's largest regional operation. Subsequently, she became chief of program & operations where she oversaw six regions across California; and had responsibilities for all program content as well as data & evaluation. Two years ago, Dwyer became Think's first chief operating officer which included oversight of human resources which is a large issue at Think Together given their 2,700 employee base. In addition, she oversees all business development efforts across the state. More than 90 percent of the organization reports to Dwyer. Think Together, a nonprofit organization is what is known as a social enterprise. Think is organized as a nonprofit, operates for a public purpose, to improve the educational outcomes for low-income students and students of color – 60 percent of CA, and runs like a business.



### Neda Eaton, President/CEO

*Irvine Public Schools Foundation, Irvine*

Neda Eaton is a visionary leader with a passion for serving the community. For ten years, Eaton has served as president and chief executive officer of the Irvine Public Schools Foundation (IPSF), one of the leading educational foundations in the nation. She is entrusted with ensuring that high-quality enrichment programs in critical areas such as the arts, music, science, math, and mental health and wellness are sustained in public schools. In her role, she is responsible for guiding the strategic visioning and direction of the foundation, program and social enterprise development, day-to-day operations, and implementation of various fundraising campaigns and initiatives. Under Eaton's leadership, IPSF has achieved tremendous success by strategically uniting the business, parent, and community to earn the reputation of the premier educational foundation in California. Since she joined the foundation, IPSF's total annual amount raised has increased by 183 percent, raising over \$6.5 million annually with an operating budget of over \$8 million.



### Lauren Ellermeyer, Co-Founder

*Beyond Fifteen Communications, Newport Beach*

Lauren Ellermeyer co-founded Beyond Fifteen Communications in September 2009 with the goal of disrupting the traditional public relations agency model. The innovative entrepreneur and partner, Leslie Licano, launched the agency with a client-first approach and a new concept for positioning clients past the expected "fifteen minutes of fame." Because of Ellermeyer's vision and commitment to excellence, Beyond Fifteen goes beyond the norms of traditional PR and brings the highest level of media and market attention to its client's brand propositions. As a business pioneer, Ellermeyer has led the agency into new areas of expertise e.g. influencer marketing, experiential marketing, events and SEO by skillfully tying entrepreneurial ideas to results-driven strategies. The agency is setting new standards of PR execution, while redefining the agency/client relationship. Approximately 70 percent of the agency's new clients are actually referred by other clients—causing a domino effect of new client partnerships.



### Jenny Elmore, Regional Vice President

*Robert Half, Irvine*

Jenny Elmore is a regional vice president for Robert Half, the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. In this role, she manages the recruitment and staffing operations for the company's Orange County offices including Irvine, Laguna Niguel

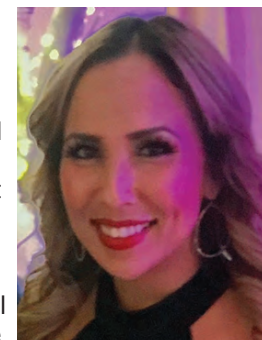
and Orange. Elmore oversees three of Robert Half's specialized divisions - Accountemps/Salaried Professional Services, OfficeTeam and Robert Half Finance & Accounting. Elmore and her teams are dedicated to placing professionals in rewarding jobs with local businesses across Orange County. As a staffing industry veteran, she began her career with Robert Half in 2007 as a staffing manager for the Accountemps division in Cerritos. She has progressed through roles of increasing responsibility ever since, earning the positions of division director and metro market manager. Elmore was promoted into her current position of regional vice president in 2015 over the North LA region and transferred to Orange County in 2018.



### Jennifer Espinoza, Executive Director Human Resources

*Crescent Solutions, Irvine*

Jenn Espinoza has moved through the ranks at Crescent Solutions from payroll manager to executive director of human resources. She has designed, managed and refined the core operating processes within the organization for payroll, billing, Employee Benefits and Well-being, but most importantly has been the number one advocate in driving a positive and engaging culture within the organization. Besides driving Crescent Solutions' core process of payroll and billing on a daily basis, Espinoza has been instrumental in evaluating, selecting and driving efficiencies in Employee Benefits and Wellness on an annual basis, designing and implementing Crescent's ACA compliance program, and managing and executing daily operations such as talent acquisition, employee relations, performance management, compensation, employee communications, onboarding, and unemployment claims management.



### Nicola Evans, Chief Operating Officer

*Afin Technologies, Newport Beach*

In 2012, Nicola Evans launched the app business, SurveyMe, with her husband Lee. Since then, they have transformed the business into Afin Technologies, which encompasses digital brands such as Entertainment, SurveyMe, and Buxbo. Evans has led the acquisition and redevelopment of these brands as well as launched the Buxbo App, soon to be a major player in the offers/deals space. Afin Technologies has grown to over 100 employees in her tenure and continues to grow. In her 20+ year career, Evans has excelled in various aspects of brand management, brand development, and public relations. Although, her greatest victories have come through the founding and development of new businesses, specifically Buxbo. As the co-owner of Afin Technologies, Evans is revolutionizing what it means to "coupon" in the digital age. She has also created jobs in various areas (and countries!), giving back to the local communities.



### Kate Fabian, Senior Group Manager

*Genesis Motor America, Fountain Valley*

Kate Fabian heads up the Genesis Marketing Communications team across North America. In her role, Fabian is responsible for the development, implementation and management of the overall marketing strategy as well as all communications and messaging including: Product and Brand communications, Retail, CRM, Genesis.com, Social and Experiential. Having been part of the Hyundai family for more than 10 years she was a key member of the HMCA team in Australia heading up all the Brand and Product launch communications. She was also one of the founding members of Innocean Australia where she was charged with leading the Hyundai Business. Considered by her peers as a powerhouse creative thinker, Fabian has over 20 years experience in strategic planning and the execution of multiple brand, product and retail communication for blue chip clients and international sporting federations. Fabian is a highly independent thinker with proven industry leadership in the development of multiple award-winning, innovative and strategic brand communications platforms and is motivated by a challenging environment and a relentless determination to deliver results.



### Laura Fabian, Chief Executive Officer

*24 Carrots, Costa Mesa*

Newly-appointed CEO Laura Fabian has been instrumental in the growth of 24 Carrots, a Southern California-based catering and events company. Joining the 24 Carrots team in 2009 as a catering and event planner, Fabian grew the company from \$3 million to \$30 million over the course of 10 years, rising through the ranks and implementing both structure and culture along the way. With initiatives like an event rental program, serving as the EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) Integrator, and giving back to the local community with Chefs to End Hunger, Fabian is one of a handful of female CEOs in the catering industry nationwide, and CEO to one of the most recognized catering companies in the nation.





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### Gail Farber, Orange County Office Leader/ Vice President

*HNTB Corporate, Santa Ana*

Gail Farber, PE was recently named Orange County office leader and vice president for HNTB Corporation. She has over 35 years of transportation industry experience and directs and delivers the firm's infrastructure practice initiatives in Southern California. A successful and collaborative leader, she has led multi-disciplinary cross functional teams across rail, bridges, highways, civil structures and energy. As Department of Public Works for the County of Los Angeles, she achieved a multitude of milestones while advising the Board of Supervisors on all public works matters; managed relations with 800 cities and hundreds of local, state and federal stakeholders; and prepared and implemented the 5-year Strategic Plan. Farber served on the lead design consultant team successfully contributing to the \$1.86 billion Delta Airlines Terminal 2 and 3 modernization projects at LAX and design partner on the Interstate 405 widening/improvement design build project for OCTA. Farber has demonstrated passion, talent and success throughout her career in design, innovation and delivery of the region's most complex infrastructure programs.



### Breawn Felix, Virtual Design & Construction Manager

*Swinerton, Irvine*

Since joining Swinerton in 2014, Breawn Felix has leveraged her previously developed technical skills and education with a fresh new vision within the rapidly growing Swinerton organization. Not only does she lead and train her Virtual Design & Construction (VD&C) team, but she also trains Project Engineers, Project Managers, Superintendents, Architects and Engineers to be equipped with the skills to use a variety of technologies Felix applies to each job. She is also proficient in over 23 different software's including Revit, AutoCAD, BIM 360, and Navisworks, and trains her teammates in excelling at these programs. Since Felix has been with Swinerton, she has managed over 54 different projects totaling over one billion dollars. Radisson Blu Hotel in Anaheim and the Great Park Ice and FivePoint Arena in Irvine (the Anaheim Ducks new training facility) are two recent projects that are iconic for Orange County.



### Trina Fleming, Chief Executive Officer

*WHW, Irvine*

In her newly appointed role as CEO, Trina Fleming is leading WHW toward further growth and its rightful place as a community hub of support for job seekers, agency partners, individuals, businesses, corporations and donors alike. Her highly skilled leadership and depth of experience, serves the organization well as it meets the unique needs of its service population. Fleming, formerly WHW's chief operations officer, has invested 10 years as a behind-the-scenes driving force of steady infrastructure development. She has managed all administrative, technology, facilities, human resources, and marketing functions, including oversight of the organization's Social Enterprise, Deja New. She served as the project owner, executing WHW's two site moves, each time improving the job seeker programmatic experience and bolstering the organization's efficiencies, capacity and presence.



### Kristyann Fournier, General Manager

*Atlantic Aviation, Santa Ana*

Kristyann Fournier is responsible for the safe, efficient, management, operation, maintenance and financial performance of Atlantic Aviation's Fixed Base Operation (FBO) facility and services at John Wayne Airport. Located in the heart of Orange County, Atlantic SNA caters to business and vacation travelers across Southern California. She daily ensures the operations at the FBO are in compliance with all federal, state, county and local authorities and their policies. Fournier takes the lead role maintaining existing business and developing new business by monitoring margins, negotiating fuel and hangar agreements and problem resolution with hundreds of customers and over 70 based aircraft with this number growing by 20% since assuming the role of general manager in 2018. Fournier manages a staff of 45 employees and she, along with her staff, maintain a readiness to handle emergencies including Airport Emergency Procedures and for providing medical aid as required. Fournier is responsible for all aspects of the FBO including proper delivery of services, condition of physical plant, staffing, equipment and maintenance. Fournier's attention to safety detail through the safety observation program, safety committee monthly meetings, daily safety briefings and the safety accountability she places on her management team, are the keys to her success.



### Mandy Fry, President

*Z Supply LLC, Costa Mesa*

In the 7 months since being at Z Supply, Mandy Fry made the following accomplishments with the Z SUPPLY team: Evaluated the four distinct brands, defining a more cohesive brand identity for each by implementing new processes for design and merchandising, as well as identifying each brand's relevancy in the

market. Fry also helped successfully launch three new divisions: an expanded Z LOUNGE collection, Z SUPPLY Girls, and the LA-made Z SUPPLY BLACK. Put in place a Digital Marketing Director to bolster the growth of the company's eCommerce business. In addition she streamlined ERP systems with new processes and a newly appointed COO/CFO. Prior to joining Z Supply, Fry served as global creative director at Billabong. During her 12-year tenure at the company, the brand experienced exponential growth and became a leader in the women's market. She also served as vice-president of Women's at Volcom, co-founded the Amuse Society, and oversaw their design, merchandising, marketing and eComm.



### Dr. Zena Gabriel, MD, FAAD, Founder

*ZENA Medical, Newport Beach*

Dr. Zena Gabriel has over a decade of experience in medical & surgical dermatology, Mohs, & aesthetic medicine. Her results-driven approach & down-to-earth personality has set her apart in the highly competitive world of aesthetics in Southern California. She is the founder of ZENA Medical & has been voted "OC Top Doctor" by her peers. She is an outside-the-box thinker and is known for her fool-proof acne protocol, novel skin cancer therapies, and managing dermatoses at the academic level. Dr. Gabriel has created a unique approach to aesthetic medicine. Her patented "Signature Four" consultation incorporates the four features of radiant skin and she designs a customized, age-appropriate regime and timeline for each patient to follow. Dr. Gabriel has been featured as the medical expert in syndicated Neutrogena commercials and as an expert in seminars alongside major brands like Neutrogena, L'Oreal Paris, Johnson & Johnson, and Allergan. She speaks nationally and internationally as a dermatology expert sharing her expertise around the globe with other physicians and surgeons.



### Eulynn Gargano, Educational Consultant

*FutureWise Consulting, Tustin*

Eulynn Gargano is one of the top Test Prep tutors in Orange County, who works with high school students across the country to achieve their dreams. Gargano firmly believes that all students have a path of purpose waiting to be discovered. Her expertise has been featured in such publications as Teen Vogue, the US News and World Report and the Orange County Register. Gargano began her tutoring career in 2006 and is an expert at identifying a student's areas for improvement and enabling them to look at the test with a knowledge that allows them to bring their scores to the level of the most competitive schools to which they are applying. Gargano believes that test preparation and college counseling are necessary tools in today's admissions process in order for students to leverage their strengths to gain access to the best fit schools. Gargano finds time to give back continuously to her community, serving as an advocate for Human Trafficking Awareness and volunteering with the Junior League of Orange County. In 2015, she created the Junior League Juniors program, designed to create a generation of compassionate children and future philanthropists. Gargano remains Orange County's premier Test Prep tutor.



### Monica Garrett, Founder/CEO

*Margaux Agency, Long Beach*

Founded by Monica Garrett with the mission to create modern websites and strategic visual brand identity for companies, the Margaux Agency is a top social media agency. Passionately, she believes branding is at the forefront of everyone's minds. Companies, businesses, and even entrepreneurs are making use of branding in some way or another. The need for a branded identity must occupy the key position in the strategy for success. With Garrett at the wheel, the Margaux Agency offers that and much more. You can expect quick, streamlined, and simplified solutions that also showcase the uniqueness of your brand. She uncovers and captures the distinctive quality that sets her clients apart from others. That is why Garrett insists on an initial Discovery Session before taking on any project. In these meetings, questions are posed, interviews carried out, and research is done for a complete idea of the client's current identity and online presence.



### Kimberly Gerber, President

*Excelerate, Irvine*

From Verizon to Edison to UCLA, Kimberly Gerber has more than two decades of experience in leading World Class organizations and their executives towards success through her blended coaching, consulting and training approach. Her innovative leadership development programs have helped senior managers think strategically, elevate their presence, finesse their communication and strengthen their impact on teams and organizations. Working with talented and high potentials; 94% of her clients are promoted to senior roles as a result of their work with her. Prior to founding Excelerate in 2002, Gerber





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was a dot.com COO and served as marketing director for Starbucks Coffee and Fleetwood Enterprises. A strong promoter of women, Gerber has held multiple board positions at NAWBO-OC, and is a supporter of WHW, Girls, Inc. and the Girl Scouts.

### **Beth Goldstein, Chief Human Resource Officer** *Coolsys Inc., Brea*

Beth Goldstein joined Coolsys three years ago as executive vice president of human resources, part of the new executive team selected to position Coolsys for growth. Together with the CEO, Goldstein assembled the rest of the executive team who led a transformation of the company, enabling record breaking growth. She was promoted to chief human resources officer in 2019. Prior to joining Coolsys Goldstein held senior human resources positions in other high growth organizations, including Borders Books and Music and Smile Brands, Inc. Immediately prior to joining Coolsys Goldstein owned her own business, a successful consulting practice focused on Human Capital Strategy and Value Creation. Goldstein has been instrumental in positioning Coolsys for growth by developing a culture with employees at the center, a place where employees can work prosper and grow throughout their entire career. In the years since Goldstein joined the company, retention has improved by 50%, beating all industry benchmarks and over 80% of employees report being highly engaged. Goldstein has played a key role in the successful acquisition of 13 companies in the last three years.



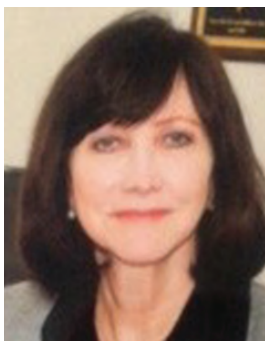
### **Heidi Golledge, Founder/CEO** *Jobot, Irvine*

Jobot is founded by Heidi Golledge, a two-time Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year who has launched and scaled successful businesses both in technology and recruiting. Heidi has co-founded two previous companies. One is a Jobot partner, CareerBliss. The other she had a successful exit for over \$100 million. Jobot is a revolutionary career platform that combines AI and experienced recruiters to fill jobs and provide incredible service to clients and candidates in the process. They believe in building a positive culture based on kindness and results. Jobot is proud of their Get a Job, Give a Job program, every time they place someone in a new job, they help someone in need get a better job by sponsoring education, job assistance and microloans.



### **Jean Gonzalez, President** *South Coast College, Orange*

Jean Gonzalez received a BA degree from the University of Scranton where she earned a General Excellence in the Arts Award and an MA degree in English/Teaching from Kent State University. She holds community college credentials in the fields of English, Office Technologies, and Computer-related Technologies. She has extensive teaching experience in court reporting, computer-related courses and English. She has taught at every level of education from high school through university level, both public and private, and has authored over 20 text books in the fields of court reporting, office automation, business communications, word processing, and programming. Gonzales currently teaches theory and CSR review courses at South Coast College. She is on campus Monday-Friday, passionately teaching and looking for ways to continue to grow the next generation of court reporters, paralegals, and medical assistants for the legal and medical fields.



### **Cindy Goss, President**

*Propel Business Solutions Inc., Mission Viejo*

Cindy Goss is president of Propel Business Solutions, Inc., a full-service branding and marketing firm she founded in 2009. After a successful, executive-level career in technology, staffing and non-profit sectors, Goss' vision was to form a leading-edge for-profit firm, with the "heart" of a non-profit organization. In just over nine years, the firm now serves Fortune 500 companies and operates throughout California, and specializes in branding and marketing for both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Goss considers her greatest achievement to be her ability to influence others in the Orange County business community to embrace social responsibility and share their profits, time, talents to help those in need. Propel Business Solutions today is regarded as a leading-edge, branding and marketing firm that creates national presence and increased market share for their clients. Propel Business Solutions Inc. has achieved major milestones in 2018, as the company tripled its revenue and increased staffing to support an expansion of a new marketing automation division.



### **Sue Grant, Founder/ Executive Volunteer** *The Literacy Project, Newport Beach*

Sue Grant is a 30-year veteran of the nonprofit sector, having served as a founding member of seven nonprofit organizations and on 31 executive boards. She has dedicated her life to fighting illiteracy and serving struggling school-aged children. This year marks her 10th anniversary as Founder of The Literacy Project (TLP), a nonprofit



organization that has served over 8,500 struggling readers across Southern California, raised more than \$3.4 million for the cause and last year crossed state lines with the opening of a new Utah chapter. Her long list of entrepreneurial achievements also includes founding OC Public Relations in 1996 and a 17-year journalism career in which she founded a first-of-its-kind charity calendar. Her passionate career earned her the California Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students Service Award, a founding director position with the Coalition for Reading Excellence in Washington, D.C., a panelist chair at the annual EURead Summit involving 22 countries, and countless editorial features.

### **Jill Griffin, President, Chief Commercial Officer** *Advantage Solutions, Irvine*

Jill Griffin joined Advantage Solutions in 2008 to lead a then \$30 million division within the emerging marketing services group. Since that time, she has evolved with the enterprise to build and lead Advantage Marketing Partners, a \$1.2 billion agency with a suite of services in brand development, consumer and shopper marketing, digital marketing and media, experiential marketing, multicultural marketing and culinary marketing. With a national reach, the company is honored to be an agency of record for many of today's most-recognized brands across retail, packaged goods, technology, apparel, automotive, travel, adult beverage, entertainment and healthcare. Griffin has also led the development of new products and services which have been transformational to shopper engagement in the retail sector. In addition, she has led the M&A efforts to diversify the agency's capabilities as well as the industries it serves.



### **Mary Grace Schmidt Gwin, CEO/Founder** *Mariamor, Orange*

Mariamor was founded by Mary Grace, a native of Orange, CA. With a dream of a career in the fashion industry and an aptitude for making others smile, she has developed a line of inspirational jewelry that she hopes will bring joy and love to the world around her. Over the years, she has added certifications in personal styling, wardrobe styling, and image consulting to her toolkit, and has never wavered in her faith or her belief that each woman is unique and beautiful in her own way. These designs are all one of a kind, just like Mary, and she continues to pour her heart and love into the company as it grows and expands daily. There is a belief that every coin found on the ground is a prayer sent down from a guardian angel, or a "penny from heaven." In 2016, Mary Grace started Mariamor with the intention of spreading love, using these found "prayers" as her medium. Mariamor takes each coin, and turns them into visual and inspirational representations of faith, friendship, strength, and love and hopes that with each inspirational pendant she creates, she can make the world a better place.



### **Candice Hall, Founder/CEO**

*Next Advanced Medicine, Tustin*

Dr. Candice Hall is the founder and CEO of Next Advanced Medicine, a functional medicine practice in Tustin, California. As a trailblazer in preventative medicine, she leads an interdisciplinary team of medical doctors, chiropractors, naturopaths, and nutrition scientists to reverse the root causes of chronic diseases, including: Type 2 Diabetes, Alzheimer's Disease and Cognitive Decline, Thyroid Conditions and Autoimmunity, and Biotoxin Illness. A dynamic practitioner and savvy business owner, Dr. Hall is committed to helping as many people as she can to return to good health and happiness. In 2019 alone, her practice treated over 600 patients from throughout Orange County, helping them regain control of their symptoms, eliminate medication dependency, and develop customized achievable lifestyle changes.



### **Rebecca Hall, President/CEO**

*Idea Hall, Costa Mesa*

Idea Hall, founded by Rebecca Hall, enjoys the reputation and position as Orange County's (OC) agency of choice. While rooted in public relations, Hall identified a gap in the industry and successfully brought marketing, branding, public relations and advertising services together under one roof. Through the integrated marketing model, Hall and her team have been privileged to work with some of the most established commercial real estate businesses in OC, as well as non-profits taking on some of the county's biggest issues - including homelessness and mental health. In addition, the agency has attracted and retained top, local talent through its strong corporate culture where people come first. Under Hall's leadership and guidance, Idea Hall has successfully maintained aggressive growth, averaging +15% YOY, for the last three years. Since establishing the agency in 2003, Hall remains one of the first female heads of an agency and one of the most successful female marketing and PR entrepreneurs in the county. She attributes her success to staying ahead, constantly innovating and developing and maintaining strong relationships.



### **Caterina Hall-Richards, Director of Operations**

*Bracken's Kitchen, Garden Grove*

Caterina Hall-Richards is director of operations at Bracken's Kitchen, a 501c-3



## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

charity dedicated to fighting food insecurity in Orange County. She manages a comprehensive array of services and programs overseeing all day-to-day operations with a staff of 14 and 600 volunteers. She works closely with Founder/Culinary Director Bill Bracken to ensure all programs grow successfully while attending to the needs of their agency partners. Hall-Richards is instrumental in the development of programs, promotional initiatives, and community awareness. She also assists the operations and fundraising teams in the planning, organization, and execution of public and private fundraising initiatives. Hall-Richards was a volunteer chef in the kitchen for two years before accepting her new role in December 2018.

### Kate Hancock, CEO

*OC Facial Care Center, Lake Forest*

Kate Hancock started OC Facial Care Center with one treatment room and grew the company into a seven-figure, revenue-generating company with two locations and celebrity clientele. She has a passion to effect positive change in people's lives through spa treatments. She has donated footwear to kids in the Philippines and to people with medical conditions who can't afford hospital treatments. Her business was named to the INC. 5000's "Fastest-Growing Private Businesses" List, for two years in a row. Hancock and her company have been featured in Forbes, Inc, Modern Luxury and more.

### Jennifer Hannigan, Founder/CEO

*Alliance Resource Group, Irvine*

Jennifer Hannigan founded Alliance Resource Group in 2003 after four years as a consistent top five performer for a prominent national staffing agency. Hannigan's vision was to take the best of both contingent and retained search firms and merge them into a single platform. ARG represents this vision with the high touch, highly consultative approach of the retained industry coupled with the sense of urgency and extensive and broad network of a contingent firm. Born and raised in San Diego, her claim to fame was winning the Metric Marathon in 5th grade. She wandered North and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. A Certified Public Accountant and Deloitte Alum, Hannigan has found her true professional calling running a world class staffing firm.



Under her leadership, Alliance Resource Group has earned a spot of Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing private companies in 2017 and 2019.

### Lata Hariharan, President/ Co-Founder

*Svast Inc., Irvine*

Lata Hariharan is co-founder and president of Svast Inc., leads its global marketing strategy and spearheads alliances with sovereign governments and major corporations. She was the founder and CEO of Resource Leaders, a market intelligence firm which created over 400 business and technology white papers and research reports for her global clients. Her work has been featured in fDi, the investor magazine of Financial Times, Global University Venturing, etc. Her experience in the Healthcare industry includes consulting services to Los Angeles's leading orthopedic surgical center, leading new product development in the health education software sector and providing strategy for automated Utilization Review in the California Workers Compensation industry. Hariharan was the technology leader for the second largest telco, MCI (now Verizon), including leading the BT/MCI merger and MCI/Stentor alliances where she was involved with building the largest Fraud detection system in telecommunications space using artificial intelligence, statistical and advanced mathematical models.



### Gina Heitkamp, CEO

*Gengirl Media Inc., Orange*

Gina Heitkamp is the CEO of Gengirl Media, Inc., and has a passion for entrepreneurship and product commercialization. During her time at UC Irvine (UCI), while working closely with UCI Applied Innovation, Heitkamp and her sister, Jenae, co-founded Gengirl Media, and its cornerstone brand, Middle School Moguls. The brand's purpose is to make entrepreneurship and technology careers accessible to young girls through mass market toys and media. Nickelodeon recently approved the Middle School Moguls brand to premiere as an animated series on the network. The show's characters are based off of Gengirl Media's Middle School Mogul dolls, which were originally created to inspire the next generation of female business leaders and entrepreneurs. Titled "Middle School Moguls," the specials chronicle the ambitions of four new friends striving to create their own companies while attending Mogul Academy, an entrepreneurial school where kid-business dreams come true.



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**OCTOBER 13**

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### Heather Heleloa, Director of Marketing

*THE RANCH Restaurant & Saloon, Anaheim*

Heather Heleloa is the director of marketing at THE RANCH Restaurant, Saloon and Events Center. Named 2020 Restaurant of the Year for the City of Anaheim, THE RANCH is a 53,000+ square foot venue that specializes in upscale dining, private events and live music entertainment. Since joining the team at THE RANCH in 2017, Heleloa has propelled 228% growth in revenue-driven lead generation and amplified public relations efforts to increase earned media by 414%. Her advancement through professional roles demonstrates exceptional marketing savvy within the hospitality industry at large company-owned chains, international franchises, and privately-owned single-unit operators. Heleloa serves as a Board Member of the California Restaurant Association-OC Chapter and course project administrator at her alma mater California State University, Fullerton. She is also active in the Pacific Islander community, honoring her Native Hawaiian heritage as a member of 'Āinahau O Kaleponi Hawaiian Civic Club and the Pacific American Community Cultural Center.



### Olympia Hostler, CEO

*Women Choose Wealth (WCW) & The Lasting Pain Relief Center (LPR), San Clemente*

Olympia Hostler owns and operates two companies Women Choose Wealth (WCW) and The Lasting Pain Relief Center (LPR). In her 30+ years of wealth building consulting & pain relief experience working with over 3,000 people, she has: WCW: Helped business owners create six & seven figure businesses so that they can travel more, work less, live free & give back more - while making the world a better place to live. Most double their income in six months and have more time and money freedom. LPR: helped 1,000s of clients have permanently healed from chronic pain, stress and trauma and gave them back their active, happy lives - even when doctors have said that they would never get better. They and their families became happy and they can work, play and live again. She gives free and sliding scale help to people who are unable to pay, especially veterans and women.



### Anne-Marie Houston, General Manager

*Montage International, Laguna Beach*

Anne-Marie Houston joined Montage International as the first female general manager in the 17 years of operation. She heads up the flagship resort - Montage Laguna Beach with a team of over 600 associates. Over the last 2.5 years, she has overseen a comprehensive resort refurbishment and at the same time driving financial performance to exceptional levels, with the resort operating at its most profitable in 2019. In addition to providing great business success Houston has had great philanthropic success - She led the resort to 50 Hearts of Montage events in 2019, the most in the properties' history, these events included blood drives, supporting local shelters and beach clean-ups and the ongoing support to JShea Foundation. Houston has driven employee satisfaction to an all-time high exceeding the industry average norm. Montage Laguna Beach has had great success in all aspects through the leadership of Anne-Marie Houston and she is an inspiration to all who are fortunate enough to work alongside her.



### Neda Imbimbo, CFO

*BigRentz, Irvine*

Neda Imbimbo joined the BigRentz team in 2014 with a diverse background encompassing financial and operational areas of expertise. As VP of finance & operations for BigRentz, she directs the financial strategy and financial planning for the company while driving operational efficiencies by streamlining processes to drive revenue growth and increase profitability. Throughout her career, she has served in a variety of functions, lending her expertise in financial reporting and public accounting auditing to a number of international corporations, and has also developed and managed a global operations audit process for a tech company. Imbimbo holds a B.A. in Economics and Psychology from the University of California, Davis.



### Shelley Iocona, Founder/Principal

*ON ITS AXIS, Costa Mesa*

Shelley Iocona is the founder of ON ITS AXIS, an innovation services firm delivering product and people solutions. Iocona advises clients on product strategy and planning, utilizing design thinking principles and an evidence-based approach to development. Iocona brings over 20 years of experience in project management, engineering management, and product management to accelerate new products get traction in the market across various industries including healthcare technology, fintech, disruptive HR, and social good. Whether she is working with executive leaders from Fortune 500 companies to develop "intreprenurship" programs that support an ecosystem of product innovation or she is mentoring a founder on market entry and product strategy for an idea stage concept, Iocona is



committed to helping others strategically and efficiently reach milestones. As the owner of a Certified Woman-owned business and a Women in STEAM & venture advocate, Iocona has also committed to her own continued professional development through certification through a wide body of Industry Professional Affiliations.

### Shannon Jenkins, Partner

*TLD Law, Irvine*

TLD Law will be celebrating its 60th year in business next year. Shannon Jenkins has been with TLD Law for 20 of those years. TLD Law is certified through WBENC as a women-owned business. Jenkins was instrumental in making this happen. She has spearheaded women in leadership within the firm, and helped the firm become a member of The National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF) in 2018. Jenkins takes it upon herself to mentor all new young attorneys at the firm and provide them with the tools to be a successful litigator and lawyer. Jenkins is an employment defense attorney. Consistent with the firm's legacy of excellence representing businesses, she works with all sizes of employers and executives in business litigation and employment-related disputes. She guides employers through individual and class action cases, administrative judicial forums including the Labor Commissioner, the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and alternative dispute resolution. She successfully defends sexual and other harassment claims, alleged discrimination assertions, breach of employment, confidentiality unfair competition and trade-secret agreements (including prosecution to protect employer rights), wage and hour disputes, breach of confidentiality agreements, breach of fiduciary duty, wrongful termination and all manner of related tort and contract claims.



### Erin Jensen, PA-C and Founder

*The Treatment Skin Boutique, Newport Beach*

Erin Jensen is a successful business owner, leading expert in aesthetic medicine and is making a name for herself destigmatizing the world of injectables. She travels the country speaking and training for the likes of the Allergan Medical Institute and Galderma. After more than a decade practicing aesthetic medicine, Jensen founded The Treatment Skin Boutique in 2018, opening its first location in Claremont, CA. Following its wild success, Jensen opened a second location in Newport Beach just a year later. Now with a near-cult following, Jensen has a third location slated to open in Orange County in the next few months and a fourth location opening in Q4 of 2020. In managing this fast growth and expansion, Jensen has also been meticulous in setting standards and protocols and personally training all injectors to ensure every client receives the best, most consistent treatment no matter which location they visit.



### Michele Johnson, Partner

*Latham & Watkins, Costa Mesa*

Representing more than 5,000 lawyers and personnel in 32 offices around the world, Michele Johnson last year finished her four-year term as one of nine members of the firm's executive committee, the highest decision-making body of the firm. Less than a month later, she was appointed the global chair of Latham's Litigation & Trial Department. She previously served as the Orange County office's managing partner and was among the youngest partners to hold that title. Johnson is an accomplished securities and trial lawyer and has received prolific recognition for her successes in and out of the courtroom. Recognized as a Leading Lawyer for M&A Litigation by The Legal 500 USA in 2019, and selected as a Top Rated Securities Litigation Attorney by Super Lawyers in 2019, she was recently acknowledged by Law360 as one of "The 25 Most Influential Women in Securities Law," and the Top Women Litigators in California by the Daily Journal. The Profiles in Diversity Journal named Ms. Johnson to its 14th annual "Women Worth Watching" list, which recognizes women in leadership from law firms, corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies in Europe and North America who are "blazing a trail for others to follow."



### Kelly Kambs, Chief Operating Officer

*American Technologies Inc., Anaheim*

In less than one year, Kelly Kambs has made a significant impact at ATI. After fully restructuring operations and creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to streamline efficiencies, Kambs also developed scorecards to monitor the progress of each business unit (office) towards its specified goals. This initiative helped keep each office on track to meet metrics. In addition, she established an X-matrix for strategy deployment to help the Executive Team focus on long-term objectives without losing sight of day-to-day improvements that add up to significant benefits. By focusing on efficiencies, establishing new processes and promoting teamwork across functional areas, ATI realized gross profit gains and a record high run rate in net income in 2019.





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### Tiffany Karlin, Partner and Director of Healthcare Services

*Mueller Prost, Irvine*

Tiffany Karlin, partner/director of healthcare, Mueller Prost, LC (MP) is a well-known, creative, entrepreneurial rising star, innovator, economic driver, strategist, and revolutionist in women's empowerment, women's business initiatives, growth and upward mobility for all. Karlin was the first woman partner to be elected to the MP BODs since 1983, leads the fastest growing division at MP (100%-150% organic growth year after year), the first partner of MP to start and run an offshore office owned and operated by MP, first partner to extend the corporate footprint in California for MP and the first partner to introduce woman-valued leadership and mentoring for young women entering the business arena. Karlin is a voice for the underserved aging community, underprivileged women and children, the homeless and an advocate at the state and federal level for senior living services and ageism in America. Karlin joined Mueller Prost through a merger with them and her company, Accurate Business Results, which she founded at the age of 27 and attributes her success as a leader to the journey and learning from owning and running her own business.



### Hilary Kaye, CEO

*HKA Marketing Communications, Tustin*

Hilary Kaye is founder and CEO of HKA Marketing Communications, an award-winning agency established in 1984. Kaye spearheads business development and works with HKA team members to elevate visibility, strengthen credibility and promote business growth for clients. She recently revitalized the agency's emerging technology practice. Kaye is a known connector, often fostering mutually beneficial business partnerships and uniting for-profit and nonprofit organizations. A former author and reporter, she maintains a passion for business ethics and community service and takes pride in providing highly accountable service to clients and media. In 2015, HKA proudly received the National Philanthropy Day Award in the Small Business category and a Silver Stevie Award in the Community Involvement category. Hilary previously served on the boards of Laura's House, Crystal Cove Conservancy and NAWBO-OC. She is a founding member of NAWBO's Women's Business Institute and member of Women Presidents' Organization and Zonta Club of Newport Harbor.



### Sloane Keane, Chief Executive Officer

*Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire*

Big Brothers Big Sisters chief executive officer Sloane Keane has dedicated the last six years to improving the lives of others in her community. She is an advocate for social change through youth mentorship and has impacted all facets of the organization, from creating new funding strategies that have tripled annual revenue to nearly doubling the number of matches supported through the program. Since becoming CEO in 2018, Keane has continued the growth trajectory for the number of children enrolled in the program by nearly 20 percent since the start of 2018. She has also led the California state alliance of Big Brothers Big Sisters affiliates as chair to participate in its first Capitol Day in Sacramento in decades. Over the last year, she has spearheaded the organization's commitment to developing new partnerships with community organizations and for-profit companies to help local youth prepare for middle-skills jobs with the support of a mentor.



### Robin King, Corporate Development/Relations

*The Shea Center, San Juan Capistrano*

Robin King has brought 20+ years of business development experience to The Shea Center. As a seasoned executive in the for-profit world, King brings her love for people, her knowledge for cause marketing, and her desire to connect the business community to philanthropy all to The Shea Center to broaden the footprint of support and volunteerism. She along with her incredible development team and committee members have raised well over \$2 million for the organization in 2019. As the lead for the Gala & Leaders for Philanthropy, King will no doubt make an even bigger impact next year. In addition, King has been responsible for several millions of dollars of advertising and marketing campaigns over the years. With that said, she has never allowed her success to get in the way of what is truly important, for her clients, colleagues, sponsors and donors. It is most important that King leads by example to elevate corporate culture, and a high level of emotional intelligence.



### Stacie Kitts, Tax Partner

*Haskell & White LLP, Irvine*

Stacie Kitts is a strategic tax professional with over 25 years of experience working in both industry and public accounting. As a partner at Haskell & White, one of the largest independently owned accounting, auditing and tax consulting firms in Southern California, she provides tax consulting and compliance services, as well as leadership regarding the adoption of new technologies. Throughout the firm, Kitts is known as much for her superb financial problem-solving skills as she is for her commitment to mentoring new staff entering the profession. Her clients include high-net-worth individuals and their closely held businesses, spanning a variety of industries such as construction, distribution, entertainment/media, manufacturing, professional services, oil and gas, retail, technology, healthcare, real estate, restaurant and transportation.



### Elena Kornoff, Founding Partner

*Surf City Still Works, Huntington Beach*

Elena Kornoff co-founded Surf City Still Works, Huntington Beach's first distillery, with her husband Josh Kornoff, in 2017. She was integral in fast-tracking Surf City Still Works' operations to go from distilling their first batch in six months to getting the spirits picked up by major resorts including Balboa Bay Resort, Marriott Irvine Spectrum, Disneyland, Huntington Beach Hilton, Huntington Beach Hyatt, Pasea, and sold at Hi-Time Wine Cellars, Costco, Albertsons, VONS, Pavilions, and Total Wine within its first year. The spirits and a new line of canned craft cocktails will also be sold in Walmart and Target in 2020. Kornoff and team's recent cornerstone celebration was inking a lease for a new facility almost 20 times larger than their original space, in which they will have a larger still, new bottling and canning lines to allow them to meet demand, and open a restaurant and speakeasy with the new tasting room.



### Stephanie Krogus, Chief Membership & Advancement Officer

*USA Water Polo, Irvine*

Stephanie Krogus joined USA Water Polo as director of advancement in 2012 helping to overhaul and drastically improve the organization's fundraising efforts. From there she has been promoted multiple times to chief advancement officer and most recently to chief membership & advancement officer. In this role she oversees all fundraising efforts in addition to membership, marketing and communications. She has been a key reason in USA Water Polo achieving record numbers in donations and membership while helping bolster all marketing and communication efforts. Krogus has been a key factor in the growth of USA Water Polo across many sectors including membership and fundraising. In more recent years she has also added important expertise to marketing and communications while continuing to be a crucial voice in the overall success of USA Water Polo. As of the most recent annual report in 2018, Krogus has helped revenue increase more than 3 million dollars while also drastically increasing the number of overall donors to USA Water Polo and the amount donated since the start of her tenure.



### Prudence Kuai, Chief Information Officer

*Alliance Healthcare Services, Irvine*

Prudence Kuai joined Alliance Healthcare Services (AHS) in 2018 as their chief information officer. She is responsible for strategy and leadership relative to information technology as part of the executive team. Since joining AHS Kuai has made a significant impact on the direction and structure of the organization, spearheading multiple projects to improve and automate systems and processes. These projects have involved coordination with both internal and external resources to generate successful results. She has been instrumental in several acquisitions, including up-front diligence as well as post-acquisition system integration. She has earned a reputation for transforming the IT organization into a valued partner of the business units as well as providing outstanding systems solutions to solve complex business issues and to optimize operational efficiency. Prudence is an experienced veteran of the healthcare industry with extensive executive level operations and information technology management experience in payer, provider and pharmaceutical arenas. Prior to joining Alliance Healthcare Services, Prudence held executive positions at Florida Blue, Arcadian Health, TriZetto Group, Wellpoint, and FHP Healthcare.



### Nina Kubicek, Realtor

*Helene and Nina Estates, Laguna Niguel*

Born and raised in Cape Town, South Africa, Nina Kubicek started her real estate



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career at age 20. With a background in finance, Kubicek graduated Arizona State University with honors. Kubicek has risen to the top of the real estate market, making consecutive years Top Ten and President's Club for Coldwell Banker's Global Division. She has worked on several real estate projects including starring on HGTV's House Hunters lending her real estate expertise. Kubicek brings to the table not only a deep knowledge of the real estate industry both locally and internationally but also a background in finance and marketing, lending to a superior edge in the real estate industry. Kubicek works alongside her mother and together they have sold over \$500 million in real estate.



### Lily Lam, VP of Growth

*One Digital, Irvine*

Lily Lam is a principal and regional vice president of growth at OneDigital, a national team of experienced, local employee benefits advisors who create greater value for employers and inspire individuals to become more engaged health care consumers. Lam has over a decade of experience within the health insurance industry. Prior to joining Digital, Lam served as partner and vice president of operations at Benefits Resource. Within her role, Lily is responsible for setting the strategic vision for the company and managing both the Client Service and COBRA teams. Specializing in business development, management and consulting, Lily aligns services to the needs and goals of clients to deliver the best possible solution. With a strong focus on continuous improvement initiatives, she is responsible for developing standard operating procedures and internal processes.



### Gail Landau, Founder/Owner

*Catmosphere Laguna, Laguna Beach*

Gail Landau founded Catmosphere Laguna in 2018 with the mission of serving both as a community cafe and a foster home for adoptable cats and kittens. As Orange County's only cat cafe, Landau has made quite a name for herself in the feline rescue community. She's made it her life's mission to save cats and kittens from euthanasia, increase feline adoptions, and provide improved lives and futures for homeless cats. Since its inception in 2018, Catmosphere Laguna has facilitated over 100 feline adoptions and has even been the catalyst for reuniting a pet owner with her long-lost therapy cat. 100% of the adoption proceeds benefit the medical care, treatment, and well-being of Catmosphere Laguna's cats and kittens. Landau has facilitated over 100 feline adoptions through her non-profit Catmosphere Laguna Foundation. Her cafe has garnered national attention and was named the "#1 Must Visit Cat Cafe in the U.S. by Travel Channel. She's regularly featured on Hallmark Channel's Home & Family Show for their Adoption Ever After segments.



### Tracy Lanyon, Client Manager

*Allied Universal, Orange*

Tracy Lanyon joined Allied Universal in 2010 as a Security Professional and continued to progress her career within the company over the last ten years moving to a supervisor, then operations manager at two different branches then moving to the client manager role. Lanyon continues to prove herself as an emerging leader who strives to be better every day. In Orange County, there are 10 division/portfolio leaders at the same level as Lanyon and she is the only female in that role. Her career progression is truly inspiring. Lanyon currently manages a \$10 million dollar portfolio and has increased revenue in her division by more than \$1 million in the past year. Allied Universal, a leading security and facility services company in North America with more than 230,000 employees and revenues over \$8.4 billion, provides unparalleled security services and technology solutions.



### Xandra Laskowski, Founder/CEO

*OSEA Angel Investors, Irvine*

Xandra Laskowski is a startup consultant with over 25 years of entrepreneurial experience with large multinational tech companies as well as startups as founder, investor, advisor and board member. She has held positions as worldwide commodity manager and national major accounts managerial roles before moving into the Angel Investment and startup worlds. She founded OSEA Angel Investors in 2017, a women focused angel investment group based at the UCI Cove, UC Irvine California. OSEA Angel Investors is an investment partner with Tech Coast Angels, Titan Angels (CSUF) and Angel Syndication Network. Through Xolas, Laskowski provides startup consulting assisting entrepreneurs in producing their "Startup Roadmap". Laskowski is an active angel investor and has invested in partnership with OSEA Angel Investors, Tech Coast Angels, Titian Angels and is an investor in the Cove Fund. She was included in the Orange County Business Journal 2019 OC 500 Directory of Influence, is an accomplished speaker and contributor to publications and industry blogs.



### Lindsay Lawrence, Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer

*First Foundation Inc., Irvine*

Lindsay Lawrence has played an important role in First Foundation Bank's evolution over the past four years. As chief operating officer she manages several teams and drives operational efficiency within the bank. She is responsible for the deposit growth and bank strategy. Her focus is on retail and specialty banking, digital banking, treasury management, relationship banking, enterprise delivery services, and product. When she began at First Foundation in the summer of 2015 as chief banking officer the bank held \$1,869,265,000 in total assets, specifically \$1,266,318,000 in deposits. Under her leadership, First Foundation Bank grew total assets by over 215% to \$6,314,436,000 and total deposits by over 275%, to \$4,891,144,000 in deposits as of December 2019. She holds a vital role in First Foundation Bank's day-to-day operations as well as in the bank's long-term strategy and evolution. As the first female on the executive team for First Foundation Bank, Lawrence led the team in an initiative to strategically align the bank's infrastructure in order to scale efficiently and deliver a unified approach to the bank's client base, which was central to the bank's growth.



### Josephine Lee, President

*The Pointe Shop Inc., Santa Ana*

Josephine Lee started a ballet mobile retail store in January of 2014 after recognizing a need for more accessible and knowledgeable shoe fittings. The Pointe Shop is still the only dance retail store in the United States that solely focuses on pointe shoes. In 2016, she rose above 35,000 contestants from 142 countries to win 3rd place in the World Championship of Public Speaking. Since then, she has traveled all over the world to keynote conferences in places such as Russia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mainland China, UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Sri Lanka and India. She is regularly featured across every major dance media as the leading expert in pointe shoes.



### Julie Leffler, President/Creative Director

*Big Hype Marketing & PR, Newport Beach*

As the owner, visionary leader and creative director of Big Hype Marketing & PR, Julie Leffler has built a powerhouse agency. With her creative and discerning eye, articulate content writing skills, well-nurtured media relationships and her ability to multi-task, Leffler provides a next level dedication to clients, and creates strategic marketing campaigns that make an impact. Leffler is involved in every project that comes through the Big Hype doors, making sure that every product and service is top-notch, up to her high standards, and ensuring that each service the agency provides will be impactful and will lead to achieving the financial and brand goals of each client. Big Hype Marketing and PR is a full-service marketing and PR agency that specializes in traditional and digital marketing initiatives, including branding, website design, graphic design, SEO, SEM, social media marketing and advertising, print marketing, email marketing, public relations and more.



### Katia Levit, Sales Director

*InMode, Lake Forest*

Katia Levit started to work for Inmode in 2018 and is responsible for Sales and Marketing in CIS countries (Russian speaking), about 14 countries. InMode is an aesthetic medical technology company focused on developing products and procedures utilizing the most innovative radio frequency, light-based energy and laser technologies. Their minimally invasive and non-invasive procedures are clinically proven to reduce treatment time, recovery time and deliver real results so people can live their most beautiful lives.



### Crystal Li, Audit Principal

*UHY LLP, Irvine*

Crystal Li has 15 years of diversified public and private accounting experience. She has worked with clients in the manufacturing & distribution, technology, entertainment and financial services industries. Crystal Li joined UHY LLP in 2016 as a senior manager. In the past four years, she has built UHY's only West Coast office in Irvine, California, into a well-regarded firm among the local businesses. Today, Li is a principal and serves as the leader and the forefront contact for auditing and transaction advisory services for a variety of industries. As a member of the UHY China Group, she also coordinates international audits for China-based entities in the United States and United States-based entities in China.



### Jennifer Lipinski, Senior Vice President, Customer Experience Strategy Leader,

*Wells Fargo, Irvine*

As a senior vice president for Wells Fargo Auto, Jennifer Lipinski is responsible for



# congratulations



WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARDS | 2020 NOMINEES



*Irvine Company congratulates the nominees in  
**our customer community***

**Amber Bonasoro**  
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties

**Carolina Weidler**  
H. Hendy Associates

**Crystal Li**  
UHY LLP

**Damaris L. Medina**  
Buchalter

**Deborah Dickson**  
Smith Dickson, An Accountancy Corp.

**Destin Blais**  
B&A Professional Grant Consulting

**Diane Wittenberg**  
Haskell & White LLP

**Dr. Noemi Bonessio**  
METAseismic Inc.

**Elaina O'Mahoney**  
MFour Mobile Research

**Erica Zuniga**  
SAA interiors + architecture

**Heidi Lynn**  
Bank of America

**Janie Tsao**  
Miven Inc.

**Jennifer Povlitz**  
UBS Financial Services Inc.

**Jennifer Strofte**  
Friedman Strofte & Gerard, P.C.

**Jenny Elmore**  
Robert Half

**Jenny Tran**  
Brown & Streza LLP

**Jessica Moon**  
Your Wealth Effect

**Jessica Welch**  
Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce

**Kim Bibb**  
Villa Real Estate

**Kimberly Dwan Bernatz**  
CIBC Private Wealth Management

**Maria Pitol**  
Montrose Environmental

**Marie DiSante**  
Carothers DiSante & Freudenberger LLP

**Maryam Rofougaran**  
Movandi

**Mimi Nguyen**  
KBS

**Mina Maghami**  
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty

**Rachel Valentine**  
Vincit

**Rashmi Chaturvedi**  
KAYGEN Enterprise Solutions

**Rebecca Hall**  
Idea Hall

**Samantha Dorey**  
Everett Dorey LLP

**Samrah Mahmoud**  
Troutman Sanders

**Sherry Delaney**  
New Market Wealth Management

**Stacie Kitts**  
Haskell & White LLP

**Talya Nevo-Hacohen**  
Sabra Health Care REIT Inc.

**Terry Dear**  
Terry Dear

**Tiffany Karlin**  
Mueller Prost

**Vicki Clements**  
Cigna

**Xandra Laskowski**  
OSEA Angel Investors

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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

designing strategies and supporting implementation for improved customer and team member experiences. She focuses on evaluating customer interaction points across the customer life cycle and partnering with various business leaders to enhance these experiences. She oversees the creation of customer communications to ensure they reflect a consistent Wells Fargo voice. Lipinski is also responsible for the design, implementation and support of various customer communication channels, including web, email, mobile messaging, letters and team member scripts. She leads the strategy, prioritization and execution of customer-focused initiatives, and she has a passion for nurturing customer excellence through positive team member engagement. Lipinski also gives back to her community as board chair for Impact Giving, a women's collective giving organization.



### **Jo-E Lopez, Vice President, Business Development** *Snyder Langston, Irvine*

Jo-E Lopez brings twenty years of experience in the architecture and construction industries to her role as vice president and partner for Snyder Langston. In this position she is the second female to achieve executive level at the Irvine-based trusted construction advisor to Fortune 500, mid-size and start-up companies and one of Southern California's largest and most respected builders since 1959. She oversees market sector strategic planning, marketing, public relations, client relations and business development activities for Snyder Langston, Optym and Snyder Langston Residential. Moreover, she is helping to lead a firm with more than \$400 million annual volume. Lopez has helped to build the Snyder Langston brand, Building with Mastery, elevating the status of the now more than 60-year-old firm. She is also one of three company leaders chosen to carry out the future of the firm as part of its in-depth and strategic succession planning.



### **Maegan Lujan, Director, Solutions & Services**

*Toshiba America Business Solutions, Lake Forest*  
Maegan Lujan has more than 13 years of sales and business development experience within the office equipment industry while offering extensive expertise in the areas of digital signage, imaging, print, document and content management. Throughout her career, she has helped solve document-centric challenges from organizations as diverse as small to medium-sized businesses to multinational corporations across a range of industries. Passionate about solving business problems for customers, partners and employers with a focus on strategic partnerships; she employs a consultative sales approach in developing and maintaining client loyalty in competitive markets. Since joining Toshiba America Business Solutions (TABS) in early 2013, Lujan currently serves as director of solutions and professional services within the company's product marketing team.



### **Gail Lynch, Founder**

*Mutt Lynch's, Newport Beach*

Founded by Gail and her husband Dan Lynch in 1975, Mutt Lynch's in Newport Beach is one of Orange County's most iconic beach bars. The award-winning restaurant is located just steps away from the sand on the Newport boardwalk. As Gail enters her 45th year in business, she looks to continue and expand upon the success she's built over the past four and a half decades - including expanding to a second location in 2020. Gail and husband Dan Lynch opened the original Mutt Lynch's location near the ferry dock on the Balboa Peninsula - naming it after Dan's father Emmett Lynch, who was affectionately given the nickname "Mutt" when he served in the Army during World War 1. In 1982, a fire originating in the hotel above left her dream in ruins. Later that year, they were able to relocate to their current location on the oceanfront boardwalk of the Newport Beach Pier. Somehow, the wooden bar from the original location survived the fire and is the focal point of their bustling beach bar today.



### **Heidi Lynn, Director**

*Bank of America, Newport Beach*

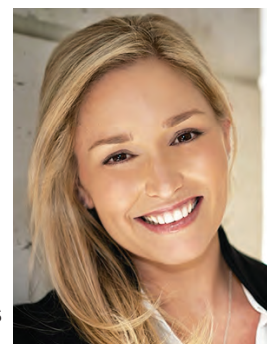
Heidi Lynn is a managing director and private client advisor with Bank of America Private Bank. Lynn works with high net worth clients throughout Southern California who have complex wealth management needs and distinctive priorities. She offers a consultative approach that seeks to advance a client's personal, professional, and philanthropic goals through sound strategy and careful implementation. Lynn works with a select number of multi-generational families, business owners and women in transition, including widows and divorcees. Lynn joined Bank of America Private Bank in 2006. Previously, she worked as a financial advisor with Merrill Lynch for over six years. She lived in Japan for eight years prior to her financial services career.



### **Ria Madrid, VP, Media Strategy**

*XUMO, Irvine*

Ria Madrid leads XUMO's Media Strategy & Operations, cultivating and optimizing ad partnerships across the streaming platform's expansive portfolio of premium content providers. She joined Xumo's Advertising Team in early 2018, and has since been responsible for inventory merchandising across programmatic exchanges, maximizing yield and overall partner success through various revenue initiatives. XUMO currently boasts over 190 linear channels, spanning across 12 genres. Xumo brings its viewers the best in FREE live and on-demand streaming entertainment from traditional TV and digital networks such as NBC Universal, PGA Tour, USA Today, TMZ, ACCDN, Cheddar, and A+E Networks. Within the first 30 days of joining Xumo, Ria identified an area of opportunity to launch a new business unit within the organization that ultimately led to the most lucrative and fastest growing stream of revenue in the company's history. Once established and deployed (within the first 60 days), this line of business generated 70% of companies total revenue and increased overall profit margin by over 10%. Through strategic content/supply partnerships and collaboration with national ad sales team, the company has seen 150% YoY growth.



### **Mina Maghami, Real Estate Consultant**

*Pacific Sotheby's International Realty, Newport Beach*

With 28 years of real estate experience Mina Maghami is pleased to share her affiliation with Pacific Sotheby's International Realty which is truly the only global real estate brand. Maghami has been involved in many different types of transactions, such as foreclosures, short sale, cash and procuring creative financing clients. Graduating with a bachelor of art degree, majoring interior design, has been a tremendous asset in creating value for investment and primary properties, giving Maghami an extra edge in real estate and helps her clients see the potential of any properties that interest them. Through the brand's exclusive media relationships, robust exposure platform and proprietary network, Maghami will be able to appropriately present her clients' properties through the most relevant and high-trafficked media in the world. Maghami has been the recipient of numerous awards including the top one percent of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Luxury Agents Nationwide.



### **Samrah Mahmoud, Partner**

*Troutman Sanders, Irvine*

Samrah Mahmoud is a commercial litigator at Troutman Sanders, a national law firm with over 700 attorneys. Her legal practice is focused on defending clients against class action lawsuits and litigating on behalf of healthcare companies and insurers in coverage and bad faith lawsuits. She has successfully defended clients at all stages of a case and has been involved with several notable class action and high-stakes litigation matters. Mahmoud is currently the youngest partner at Troutman Sanders. A talented litigator, she has notched many notable wins in federal and state courts across the country. In addition to her successful legal practice, she has taught several courses at UC Irvine School of Law. As one of the 60 members of the founding class at UC Irvine School of Law, being able to give back and further the education of others is important to her. Having the ability to help train and shape the minds of future lawyers is a great responsibility, but Mahmoud is able to bring her real-life experience to the classroom, and students benefit from her real-world litigation experience.



### **Colleen Maloy, President**

*David Meltzer Enterprises, Irvine*

As president of David Meltzer Enterprises, Colleen Maloy helps to further the brand of CEO David Meltzer as a public speaker, best-selling author, and business coach. In her previous role as the Director at Sports 1 Marketing, Maloy oversaw the company's internship program, operated as the event coordinator, and served as executive assistant to the company's CEO, among other roles. Her remarkable leadership earned her two Silver 2018 Stevie Awards for Women in Business, in the Female Executive of the Year and Employee of the Year in Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations category, respectively. Maloy is one of the longest tenured employees at S1M and her support of the CEO, David Meltzer, has aided in his award-winning efforts as a speaker, author, and business coach. She won Sports 1 Marketing's Employee of the Year award in 2018, and has won Employee of the Month seven different times.



### **Joi Mar, Managing Director**

*Green Street Advisors, Newport Beach*

The finance industry is scrutinized for its lack of diversity and Joi Mar has done a tremendous job of showing what it takes to excel and help diversify this business. As managing director for Green Street's Real Estate Analytics product, she's at the epicenter of the impressive and growing data platform while leading the training and development of her growing team. Mar's skills are limitless, as she is deeply involved in talent development and





## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

investing in each young individual on her team. She recognizes the importance of diversity in the workplace and sits on the front lines of harnessing women's curiosity in finance. When Mar noticed the absence of women's interest, she spearheaded our *Women in Finance* event- an opportunity for students to network and learn to "Ace the Interview". There are many facets to her that include being a friend, wife, and working mother who continuously leads by example.

### **Dawn Maroney, President, Consumer & Markets**

*Alignment Healthcare, Orange*

With 30-plus years of health plan experience, Dawn Maroney is regarded not only as an expert in the health care sector, but also a pioneer in positioning health care organizations for success in the challenging Medicare, Medicaid and underserved markets. As president of consumer and markets for Alignment Healthcare, Maroney oversees the startup Medicare Advantage company's consumer experience, growth and expansion, in all areas from sales, product development, provider partnership, market expansions and acquisitions. She previously served as Alignment's chief growth and strategy officer and president of all markets. Through her leadership, Alignment doubled its geographic footprint in 2020, growing to serve nearly 62,000 members in California, and earned recognition as one of four "Best Insurance Companies" in the state for Medicare Advantage by U.S. News & World Report. In 2016, Maroney was recognized as one of the most powerful and influential women in California by the National Diversity Council.



### **Kate Marr, Executive Director**

*Community Legal Aid SoCal, Santa Ana*

Under Kate Marr's leadership, Community Legal Aid SoCal has grown from \$8.5 million in revenue in 2017 to almost \$10.4 million in 2019, the staff has grown from 90 to nearly 120, and the organization has expanded its free legal services for low-income residents in areas of law including family security, housing, health, economic justice, immigration, and seniors, resulting in significant life-changing impact for clients. In February 2019, Marr led the more than 60-year-old organization through a complete rebrand, unifying the Orange and Los Angeles County offices which were previously operating under two separate names. During Marr's tenure, the agency has engaged in important litigation that has broad community impact. For example, a 2017 case against the city of Fullerton on behalf of a homeless individual led to broad policy change in how cities deal with homelessness.



### **Kristen McCarthy, Managing Partner**

*BDO USA LLP, Costa Mesa*

Kristen McCarthy has more than 27 years of experience in public and private accounting. Prior to joining BDO, she was with a Big Four accounting firm and in private industry with Hughes Electronics, a Fortune 50 company. Her experience includes serving public, privately held and nonprofit companies in the technology, manufacturing and distribution, real estate, and service industries. McCarthy is skilled at working with publicly traded companies from initial public offerings to Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) 404 engagements. She has extensive experience assisting with clients' Securities Act of 1933 and Securities Exchange Act of 1934 filing requirements. Further, her Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) experience includes initial public and secondary offerings, private investment in public equity (PIPE) transactions, debt offerings, merger and acquisitions (M&A) transactions, and non-traded SEC registrant filings. McCarthy is a member of BDO's Manufacturing and Distribution and Consumer Products practices. Her leadership roles in the firm include co-chairing the Women's Inclusion initiative, BDO Flex, and serving as a mentor in BDO's Leadership Institute. She is a regular instructor at technical training events, is an active participant in the firm's quality control efforts.



### **Liz McKinley, President/CEO**

*Pinnacle Petroleum Inc., Huntington Beach*

Liz McKinley founded Pinnacle Petroleum, Inc., a national wholesale marketing and distribution company in 1995. Pinnacle Petroleum, Inc. is a best-in-class provider of fuel and fuel management services to commercial, retail, and government Clients through-out the United States. Since founding the company McKinley has been the sole owner and key component to Pinnacle's growth and success. Operating initially out of her home, the company steadily grew to be over \$200 million in revenue. McKinley began her career in the petroleum industry at Koch Industries, a large integrated privately owned company, in Wichita, Kansas. She was the first woman hired at a commercial level as a Petroleum Commodities Trader. In 1995 she decided to leverage her experience and start her own business. Aside from starting the business, her greatest achievement was winning the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2010 and served on the judging committee in 2014, 2015 and 2017.



### **Nicole McMackin, President**

*Irvine Technology Corporation, Irvine*

Nicole McMackin is President of Irvine Technology Corporation, a national

technology solutions and staffing firm based in Orange County. McMackin is a partner in ITC and has led the company for the past fifteen years. McMackin is attributed to making Irvine Technology Corporation one of the most successful firms, not only in Orange County but in the country. When McMackin took over ITC, the company had 15 employees locally and now boasts over 200. ITC is proud to service accounts such as MGM, Molina Healthcare, USC, Trader Joe's, CHOC, Atos, AT&T and many others throughout the country. She oversees all internal operations, brand development, strategic planning and implementation. McMackin currently holds total P&L responsibility in the United States. McMackin is a champion of women's rights and equal treatment in the workplace. Under her direction, ITC has won Best Places to work in Orange County for the past five years.



### **Damaris Medina, Shareholder**

*Buchalter, Irvine*

Damaris Medina is a shareholder in Buchalter's Los Angeles office. She is on the board of directors and is co-chair of the Firm's Life Sciences Practice and a member of the Firm's Litigation and Health Care Practice Groups. Medina represents hospital systems and a diverse array of other health care provider clients in high stakes litigation in federal and state court, as well as in arbitration. She represents providers in all types of health care matters including reimbursement litigation, shareholder and breach of contract disputes, managed care contracting, revenue cycle management, and risk and compliance issues. Medina routinely defends providers against both private and government payor audits, as well as in False Claims Act cases brought by Federal and State agencies including the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Department of Justice (DOJ). Her standing as a top attorney in the healthcare field is routinely recognized by healthcare industry publications and it was recently reinforced when she was named as a Top Health Care Lawyer by the Daily Journal in its first inaugural list in 2019.



### **Meghan Medlin, CEO/Consultant**

*Medlin Workforce & Reentry Solutions LLC, Orange*

Meghan Medlin is a community leader and advocate whose efforts to benefit justice-involved groups in Orange County have been recognized most recently by US Congressman Lou Correa, CA Assembly Member Sharon Quirk-Silva, Business Elite, and Connected Women of Influence. She has been a leader in the workforce development and reentry community for over 11 years which led to her branching out in 2019 and starting her own consulting business Medlin Workforce & Reentry Solutions LLC. Through her company, Medlin assists nonprofit organizations and county agencies with program development, training, strategic planning and sustainability, and also continues to work directly with disenfranchised workers to get them placed into quality employment.



### **Shachi Mehra, Chef & Partner**

*ADYA, Anaheim*

Chef/Partner Shachi Mehra has led ADYA to tremendous success in its first five years of business. She is responsible for bringing a new Indian experience to Orange County at ADYA, an authentic Indian restaurant that reflects modern India. The menu revolves around fresh, sustainable ingredients and focuses on contemporary interpretations of Indian street foods, tandoori specialties and rich curries. With two thriving locations, in Anaheim and Irvine, and a flourishing catering business, Chef Mehra has gained local and national attention for her accomplishments, including becoming a winner on Food Network's Chopped; earning the title of Rising Star Chef in the Golden Foodie Awards; and being tapped to serve as Guest Chef with Celebrity Cruises. Chef Mehra's business model is driven by giving back, as she is dedicated to supporting many local and regional charities.



### **Deborah Miller, Owner**

*YNG Studios, San Clemente*

Deborah Miller is the owner of YNG Studios in San Clemente, the city's original hot yoga studio. The vibrant studio offers two rooms with a range of both heated and non-heated classes. She began her journey at YNG Studios in 2009 as a member and is now the proud owner. Prior to leading YNG Studios, Miller built a successful career as an in-demand hair stylist. In addition to her own book of business, she traveled around the country on behalf of famed industry brands such as Schwarzkopf, Unite and Enjoy, educating stylists. She spent many years as a salon owner, artistic director, and in addition to her role at YNG Studios, she still spends time behind the chair as a Master Stylist. Miller was a platform stylist for Schwarzkopf, Unite and Enjoy and has successfully rebranded and re-energized YNG Studios which was formerly AsanaFit before she bought it.





## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

### Emma Miller, Regional Asset Manager

*BKM Capital Partners, Newport Beach*

In the 11+ years Emma Miller has been a leader in Orange County's commercial real estate community, she has proven to be an indispensable team member who has consistently made positive contributions for her companies' stakeholders and local charitable organizations. Miller takes corporate culture to heart, reinforcing the needs of others ahead of herself when it comes to doing good work and simply wanting to do good things beyond her regular responsibilities. With experience supporting the Illumination Foundation and Mental Health Association OC, she has proven herself to be trustworthy and stellar in balancing many responsibilities as a leader at BKM Capital Partners and continues to build upon a strong foundation for being an impact figure in the community.



### Jennifer Mitzner, CEO

*Hoag Orthopedic Institute, Irvine*

Hoag Orthopedic Institute (HOI) was developed through a unique partnership between Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian and a select group of Orange County based orthopedic physicians with many years of experience providing excellent care to orthopedic patients. After years of careful and dedicated planning, they successfully combined the ideas and experience of the most preferred hospital in Orange County with the knowledge, skills, and experience of some of the top orthopedic physicians. Under Jennifer Mitzner's leadership, in 2019, HOI has helped more than 20,000 members of their community "Get Back To" something that is near and dear and dear to them. Whether the return to a joyful passion or simply a return to everyday activities, patients find meaning again in getting their lives back after being treated at Hoag Orthopedic Institute.



### Jenna Mons Anderson, Chief Executive Officer

*AccessElite, Newport Beach*

Jenna Mons Anderson, CEO of AccessElite has over 12 years of experience in Health Science, Bio-Pharma, and Technology. She has a passion for inspiring individuals to put their health and wellbeing first. Mons has a strong purpose to build a company that is centered around wellbeing, investing in women, and self-care. She believes that people shouldn't have to choose from family or career. AccessElite is the first concierge health company to offer consumers a completely elevated patient experience through both primary and specialty care services. Their concierge program provides patients direct, convenient access to their own primary care physician who is partnered with a hand-picked network of specialists that provide the same level of VIP access and care. For the first time, concierge patients can receive the same level of access, personalized service, and VIP treatment through the entire continuum of care.



### Jessica Moon, Operations Manager

*Your Wealth Effect, Irvine*

Jessica Moon started as a part time intern with no industry experience. From there she has steadily and rapidly grown in responsibility. She is now the operations manager (overall #2 person in the firm) responsible for all compliance and HR for a firm that manages over \$1 billion in client assets placing it among the top 10% of all financial planning firms in the nation. As head of HR, Moon was responsible for designing and implementing company benefits and culture. These have been so well received that our firm was listed by Fortune Magazine, Inc. Magazine and the Orange County Business Journal as one of the Best Places to Work in the nation. As head of compliance she was responsible for making sure the firm took care of its clients. Inc. Magazine honored the firm as one of the fastest growing private companies in the nation.



### Barbara Moreno, Vice President of Marketing

*Allied Universal, Santa Ana*

As VP of marketing, Barbara Moreno is responsible for building and developing a globally recognized top of mind brand for Allied Universal. Moreno has driven brand architecture, brand positioning and style guide work to differentiate Allied Universal in a sea of sameness within the Security industry. In addition, she has generated broad based awareness through PR, social media and digital, resulting in over \$3 billion in significant impressions and an increase in the brand. She has protected the brand and its various slogans through registering trademarks both domestically and globally. Moreno has helped increase productivity, output and strategic thinking of the Marketing team and Outside Agency Partners in order to establish the Marketing function as a value driven partner in the growth journey of Allied Universal.



### Darlynn Morgan, Trust Attorney

*Morgan Law Group, Newport Beach*

Focusing on the areas of wills, trusts, estates, guardianship, asset protection and special needs planning, Darlynn Morgan founded the firm with the dream of truly making a difference in her clients' lives, which meant changing the traditional old-school model of estate planning. The firm is innovative, technologically savvy, and has unique systems in place designed to help people make the best financial and legal decisions possible throughout their lifetime and guides them to leave the world a better place. Morgan Law Group broke through the \$1 million gross revenue milestone and has been hitting it since 2016. Morgan has been quoted in Forbes.com, LifetimeTV.com, LA Parent Magazine, OC Family, OC Metro, the Daily Journal and Parenting OC Magazine; She was named a Top OC Estate Planning Attorney in 2019 by Coast Magazine and a Super Lawyer each year since 2006.



### Jennifer Morris, Founder/CEO

*Ajenda Public Relations, Orange*

Jennifer Morris started Ajenda PR nearly 10 years ago, and it has since grown rapidly, both with new clients and employees. Beginning as a local PR and marketing agency for local single unit restaurants in Orange County, Ajenda PR has branched out to represent national multi-unit chains, restaurants in the fast-casual and franchised space, hotels, and even several liquor brands. Due to the positive reputation of the company, Ajenda PR has headed up the Grand Openings for restaurants in major media markets across the country and represents household names like Artichoke Basille's Pizza, Marie Callendars & Daphnes, in addition to rising stars like Curry Up Now, SAJJ Mediterranean, and The Dolly Llama.



### Cathy Moses, Partner

*Cox, Castle & Nicholson, Irvine*

Cathy T. Moses is a litigation partner at award-winning, real estate-focused law firm Cox, Castle & Nicholson, LLP. A dynamic and experienced business litigator, she has more than a decade of experience working in both the public and private sectors. Leveraging her best-in-class legal counsel, Moses has helped clients obtain outstanding results in all types of high-stake business and real estate litigation matters, including business torts, contracts, partnership disputes, and employment litigation. She has earned victories for her clients at all stages of litigation, including pre-litigation negotiations, early motion practice, trial, and appeal. Moses' career achievements have earned her numerous recognitions. Notably, she is a recipient of the ACLU Foundation of Southern California's 2010 Social Justice Award and her name has been featured on the Southern California Rising Stars list by Super Lawyers, Business Litigation for four consecutive years from 2017 through 2020.



### Samantha Mudd, Regional Sales Director

*Staples Inc. Furniture Solutions, La Mirada*

Samantha Mudd began her career with Staples B2B Contract division in 2007. In her 12+ year career she has transitioned through the organization to best serve her customers. She has held positions in eCommerce, Marketing, Sales, and for the past three years as regional director of furniture for California. Mudd oversees a team of 12 Furniture Account Executives and more than 3,000 B2B Customers in the CA market. Mudd enjoys giving back to the community through the Staples organization by supporting fundraising and donations for City of Hope, Hope-Through-Housing, and Adopt-A-Family.



### Dawn Murphy, Chief Development Officer

*Northwestern Mutual, Newport Beach*

Dawn Murphy, chief development officer at Northwestern Mutual Orange County, is a core member of the leadership team and has "grown up" with Northwestern Mutual. Having spent the past 20 years with the company, Managing Partner Tim Mulroy affectionately (and aptly) describes Murphy's career as "a classic case of 'started from the bottom, now we're here.'" And she has done just that. Murphy started in the proverbial mailroom as an intern and has worked her way through the ranks to the executive leadership team, having changed many lives along the way. In her current role, she is responsible for coaching and mentoring new advisors to help them achieve lasting success while positively impacting the communities in which they live and work. She has been recognized by clients, co-workers, and organizations alike for her professional achievements.



### Alma Murray, Sr. Counsel, Privacy

*Hyundai Motor America, Fountain Valley*

Alma Murray began her career at Hyundai Motor America ten years ago upon law school graduation. She has been part of the transactional, litigation, and privacy groups within the Legal Department. In her first year, she was instrumental in the negotiation of Hyundai's first telematics Agreement positioning Hyundai as a leader



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- EXPERT fellowship-trained and board-certified gynecologic oncologists, treating more patients in Orange County than any other health system.
- LEADING pelvic health program, offering research-based treatment options including integrative therapies and both medical and surgical options.
- CENTER OF EXCELLENCE for Robotic Surgery, with the largest program on the West Coast.
- ADVANCED RESEARCH including Phase 1 clinical trials.



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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

in connected car technology. She led a five-person team in the aggressive, cost-efficient, and innovative defense of litigation matters. In addition to utilizing traditional litigation strategies, she worked with business teams to leverage online capabilities to create solutions designed to quickly address consumer concerns without the need for potentially costly and time-consuming litigation. In 2015, she founded Hyundai's first Privacy Office and implemented the automotive industry's Auto Alliance/Global Automakers Consumer Privacy Protection Principles for Vehicle Technologies and Services as well as the California Consumer Privacy Act. Both projects have resulted in increasing the company's commitment to consumer privacy.



### Rima Nashashibi, President/Founder

*Global Hope 365, Tustin*

Congruent with a successful career in the insurance industry including executive positions at AIG, Rima Nashashibi has been an active voice for civil and human rights in California for more than thirty years. Nashashibi now leads Global Hope 365, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, dedicated to education and prevention of Human Trafficking and Child Marriage. Since the launch of Global Hope 365, she has focused her daily activities around outreach, advocacy, education, raising awareness and saving lives. Through Nashashibi's advocacy, citizens of California have been shocked to learn that Child Marriage is legal in their home state. Although Human Trafficking is a more widely recognized issue in the state of California, Nashashibi advocates for the policies and laws that will disrupt the market of buying and selling women and children for sex.



### Rachel Nelson, Chief Accounting Officer & Controller

*CB Technologies Inc., Orange*

Rachel Nelson has been with CB Technologies, Inc. since its inception in 2001. She began her career at CB Technologies, Inc. as one of the first employees, the sole employee in the accounting department and the company's corporate secretary. She is now the chief accounting officer, is a member of the executive team and holds the corporate secretary/treasurer position. Over the last 19 years she has grown her team to a staff of four, assisted in the implementation of a robust ERP system, automated the Company's sales tax processes, instituted budgets and led the implementation of the Company's Professional Services Automation software. Nelson has been instrumental in CB Technologies, Inc.'s growth from a Value-Added Reseller with 12 employees and \$1.6 million in Revenue to an IT/OT Systems Integrator with 45 employees and over \$153 million in Revenue.



### Talya Nevo-Hacohen, Chief Investment Officer

*Sabra Health Care REIT Inc., Irvine*

Talya Nevo-Hacohen joined Sabra Healthcare REIT, a NASDAQ-listed real estate investment trust specializing in acquiring and managing properties serving the healthcare industry, as part of the founding team (she was the fourth team member to join) in connection with the company's 2010 spinoff from Sun Healthcare Group, Inc. In the ten years since joining Sabra as the company's chief investment officer, Nevo-Hacohen has overseen the growth of the company's asset base from \$700 million to over \$6.0 billion, as well as the diversification of Sabra's asset portfolio to include major facilities investments in the senior housing and behavioral health care sectors. Under her leadership, Sabra has grown into one of Orange County's largest companies, with a market capitalization of more than \$4.5 billion. She also built Sabra's investment team, which now includes 12 investment professionals, and has helped to establish Sabra's reputation as a creative, transactional organization with a stellar reputation for honesty and integrity.



### Karen Nguyen, Founder/CEO

*Inspired Art Wine, Costa Mesa*

In 2016, Inspired Art Wine started with 10 customers in first class. Four years later, Inspired Art Wine has 20,000+ customers and 250+ corporate clients across a range of industries from medium size businesses to top Fortune 500 organizations enjoying a 95% retention rate. IAW has become the #1 arts and entertainment company focused on corporate wellness/team building in Southern California. In 2019, Karen Nguyen launched Inspired Somm, a sister company focused on the B2C and B2C segments offering interactive wine educational seminars to the modern wine enthusiasts and market research to wineries domestically and internationally.



### Mimi Nguyen, Executive Vice President, Underwriting

*KBS, Newport Beach*

Mimi Nguyen is a real estate veteran that has been a powerhouse at KBS for more than 20 years. As executive vice president of underwriting, she has managed and closed approximately \$7.8 billion in commercial real estate transactions and sits on the firm's investment committee. Nguyen plays a crucial role in ensuring the team is

acquiring superior deals and doing its due diligence on behalf of its client portfolios. Beyond driving the underwriting process, she is an exceptional leader and mentor to the team. She is responsible for interviewing and training each of the company's analysts and continues to lead by example. Nguyen believes in rolling up her sleeves to get the job done and never asks her team to do something she wouldn't do herself. It's this type of leadership that makes her a well-respected and adored leader by her team and anyone in which she comes in contact. Beyond driving the underwriting process, Nguyen is an exceptional leader and mentor to the team. She is responsible for interviewing and training each of the company's analysts and continues to lead by example.



### Kelly O'Connell, Founder/Executive Director

*Start Giving Local, Costa Mesa*

Kelly O'Connell is the founder and managing director of Start Giving Local, an entirely volunteer-run GuideStar Platinum 501(c)3 organization committed to strategic programming that fosters community, improves community health & inspires positive action that supports the greater social good. In 2018 O'Connell established a partnership with Orange County-based innovation services firm ON ITS AXIS, who shares Start Giving Local's commitment to giving back. ON ITS AXIS donates 10% of the net profit they receive from their staffing business to the charity their client selects through Start Giving Local's platform. O'Connell established herself as a female business leader in Southern California many years ago through executive roles in M&A for Wachovia Bank and in HR and Talent consulting for Robert Half and Robert Half's wholly-owned subsidiary, Protiviti. As a Forbes HR Council Member who possesses multiple HR certifications and has received industry recognition, O'Connell previously managed P&L in excess of \$50 million annually and in just one year she grew ON ITS AXIS by 200% when she launched the People division in 2019. She currently serves as the executive vice president for the firm.



### Christine Obnial, Design Staff 2

*Little, Newport Beach*

Although Christine Obnial has been with Little for less than two years, she has been intentional about learning all aspects of practice from operations to supporting firm growth initiatives in tandem with the process of obtaining her Architectural license. She has served as a jury member for LaceUp, a competitive internal program that awards mini grants for initiatives in exploration, collaboration and testing. Obnial also sits on the firm's 401K Investment Committee as a trusted fiduciary to the firm's profit sharing and retirement plan. And she was tapped by executive leadership to participate in the Virtual Mentorship Group; a select class of Little's rising stars who receive leadership development training from the firm's chairman of the board himself.



### Jennifer Olson, VP, Finance

*Apriem Advisors, Irvine*

Jennifer Olson is an expert in finance and has appeared in national business publications discussing stock market fluctuations, including Forbes and The Street. A natural born leader, she leads various firm initiatives including staff engagement, nurturing diversity and inclusion. As Apriem's philanthropic champion developing relationships with non-profits, she coordinates initiatives for Apriem's philanthropic arm, Apriem Cares and is a key leader in Apriem Charitable Services which helps nonprofits start and grow their endowments through pro-bono management services on the first \$1 million. She is an integral part in the success of Apriem as a nationally-recognized firm for diversity and inclusion and a top financial advisory firm. When it comes to mentoring, Olson takes it to the highest degree – she is a member of the CFP Board Mentor Program; a former "Big of the Year" and nominated by Big Brothers Big Sisters OC as a 2019 Honoree during National Philanthropy Day.



### Elaina O'Mahoney, VP of Product

*MFour Mobile Research, Irvine*

Elaina O'Mahoney joined fast growing MFour Mobile Research in 2019 as VP of Product, where she leads the product team. Since her arrival, O'Mahoney has realigned the product team, creating an infrastructure that has seen 35% gains in productivity, closer alignment with operations and integration with their technology department. O'Mahoney continues to develop the MFour Product roadmap as the company launches a full-service SaaS platform which combines location and digital data with consumer surveys and sentiment allowing clients like Google, Disney and Samsung to make more informed marketing decisions. O'Mahoney is also managing the redesign of one of the App Stores most successful apps, Surveys on the Go, which ranks in the top 100 apps in the Lifestyle Section of both iOS and Android Play Stores. Surveys on the Go is consistently named as one of the best apps in America to make extra cash and has





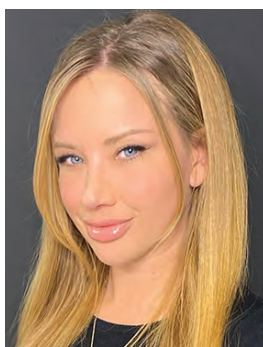
## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

been featured in numerous national media publications as well as on NBC Nightly News and Despierta America.

### Jessica Oslo, Co-Founder/Clinical Director

*Vantis Institute LLC, Newport Beach*

Jessica Oslo co-founded Vantis Institute LLC, which is disrupting the \$11.1 billion US hair loss industry with a non-surgical solution. Oslo spent eleven years in OC plastic surgery where she developed a technique for paramedical micro-pigmentation. She received dual certification in the UK and the US and recently filed a patent with the USPTO on a medical aesthetic procedure. She changes the lives of men and women at Vantis and saves the lives of others. She is a living kidney donor, having given her kidney to a complete stranger who posted a plea on Craigslist.



### Mindy Pack, CFO

*Mark Company, Orange*

Mindy Pack started with the company in 1990 when Mark company began to struggle, it was a newly founded family company that she was determined to help turn around. She left her job at Peat Marwick and since has turned Mark Company into one of the top competitors in the Orange County/Los Angeles region. Pack is responsible for Mark Company's financial operation overseeing all accounting functions as well as financial reporting and cash management. Pack holds two degrees from the University of Kansas. A degree in business as well as a degree in accounting. Pack was the biggest influence on turning the company around. When she began at Mark Company they did less than 500k in revenue per year. She is the biggest contributing factor to their success of constructing over 65 million annually. She has expanded the company's real estate portfolio to over 15 million and just finished the company's first design build real estate project.



### Randi Pinckes Outwater, Partner

*Outwater & Pinckes LLP, Irvine*

Randi Pinckes Outwater has practiced in Orange County, California since 1996. Her practice emphasizes general civil litigation matters including business disputes, real estate disputes, construction defect litigation and elder abuse matters. In the Orange County office of Kasdan Simonds, et al. from 1996 to 2002, she represented homeowners in tract developments against the developers, general contractors and subcontractors for various defects, most notably concrete deficiencies. In 2002, Pinckes started her own practice (Law Offices of Randi E. Pinckes) and, in 2004 she co-founded Outwater & Pinckes, LLP with her husband and law partner. Pinckes continues to successfully handle cases involving fraud, breach of contract, tortious interference, shareholder and partnership disputes, business dissolution, real estate litigation (lease disputes, unlawful detainer, quiet title, trespass, and nuisance), construction defect litigation, and financial elder abuse.



### Maria Pitol, VP/ Corporate Controller

*Montrose Environmental, Irvine*

Maria Pitol has been with Montrose Environmental for over five years and is now the vice president and controller where she has implemented proper segregation of duties, controls and metrics across the financial and accounting functions of the company. Pitol also supervised the Quality of Earnings process and financial due diligence from the finance/accounting perspective for 28 completed acquisitions (some of them all work done in house) and led the back-office integration for said acquisitions, including businesses with operations in Canada and Australia. In addition, she assumed treasury function overseeing the streamlining of the function; consolidated over 35 bank accounts into six operating accounts; developed plan for phasing out the use of legacy accounts after acquisition; and leveraged the use of software automation for cash posting resulting in additional speed in terms of visibility of payments and accuracy of posting.



### Brooke Pollard, Partner

*TLD Law, Irvine*

Brook Pollard handles all aspects of stock and asset purchases, including letters of intent, due diligence, purchase agreement preparation and review, closings and earn-out strategies. She has a particular emphasis on counseling and implementing business transition and succession strategies between family members. Her corporate law experience ranges widely and includes these areas of business law among others: mergers & acquisitions, general corporate transactional, and real estate purchase & leasing. Pollard handles everyday matters for business owners including lease reviews, distribution agreements, trademark issues, employment agreements, tax saving strategies, corporate compliance, and asset protection. Her primary focus for her business clients is on



"preventive law practice," which means preventing problems down the road reviewing all potential areas of legal concern prior to the business having problems.

### Jennifer Povlitz, Managing Director, West Division Director

*UBS Financial Services Inc., Newport Beach*

Jennifer Povlitz leads the West Division, comprised of 13 US states, and is member of the Management Committee for UBS Wealth Management USA. She is also an advisory board member for UBS's All Bar None employee network, which is dedicated to supporting the professional and personal development of female employees at the firm, and helped build the network's 25 US chapters. Povlitz joined UBS in 2015 as a market head leading the wealth management business in Orange County, California. As the world's largest wealth manager, UBS Global Wealth Management provides comprehensive advice, solutions and services to wealthy families and individuals around the world. In January 2019, Povlitz was recognized for her consistent success as Orange County Market Head and promoted to division director for the West Division. After just one year in the job, her strong business performance and purposeful leadership led to an expansion of her role - as of January 2020, her coverage in the West Division has nearly doubled.



### Deidre Pujols, Founder

*Open Gate International and Strike Out Slavery, Santa Ana*

Orange County's own Deidre Pujols is the visionary behind life-changing programs and initiatives that make a tremendous difference for the most vulnerable among us. Her most recent enterprise is Strike Out Slavery, an initiative that raises national and awareness of the scourge of human trafficking, the world's fastest-growing criminal industry. Along with her husband, Anaheim Angels superstar Albert Pujols, she uses the power and passion of sports to put a spotlight on a crime now impacting thousands in the U.S. alone, including here in Orange County. A lifelong humanitarian, Pujols supports children and adults with Down Syndrome and their families through the Pujols Family Foundation, and provides vocational training and life coaching for adult survivors of vulnerable life situations via Open Gate International. Her influence and phenomenal business acumen have rendered these organizations phenomenally effective and



# DEBRA RADCLIFF



## 5.11



### CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

5.11 congratulates Chief Marketing Officer, Deb Radcliff, on her 2020 OCBJ Women in Business nomination!



## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

earned her the prestigious United Nations Women for Peace Association Humanitarian Award.

### Kim Racine, CFO

*Vans-a VF Company, Costa Mesa*

Kim Racine has been with VF for seven years and is currently the vice president and CFO for Vans. Since joining Vans in 2016, she has provided global financial leadership while the brand grew at an annual growth rate of +24% to \$4 billion. During this period, Racine created better visibility to information, streamlined processes, and elevated the organization's analytical capabilities. Racine was also a key player in restructuring the operations of VF South America's business to reduce complexity and improve profitability.



### Debra Radcliff, Chief Marketing Officer

*5.11 Inc., Irvine*

Deb Radcliff joined 5.11 in November 2018 as global chief marketing officer. In this role, she is responsible for leading the strategic marketing direction for 5.11, an iconic global consumer brand rooted in serving public safety and military professionals, providing purpose-built technical apparel, footwear and gear. Radcliff is accountable for strengthening and evolving all aspects of the 5.11 brand and marketing strategies for retail and digital direct-to-consumer, wholesale and professional channels. Over the past year, Radcliff worked with executive marketing management to conduct extensive market research into the brand's female customers and ways that 5.11 can better meet the needs of these women. Prior to joining 5.11, Radcliff was SVP marketing for West Marine, sr. director of marketing for The Home Depot and vice president of marketing for Sports Authority. In her prior organizations, she oversaw and directed all aspects of marketing strategies, leading the development of integrated marketing plans, leveraging new insights, best practices, innovative executions and media integrations to create growth, improve financial performance and gain competitive advantage.



### Sunny Rajab, CEO

*Business Communications Solutions, Irvine*

As the CEO of Business Communications Solutions (BCS), Sunny Rajab is responsible for running all facets of the business. In addition to founding BCS at the age of 20, Rajab has a proven executive management track record and over 15 years of experience driving sales growth in the industry. BCS started out as a single source telecommunications and structured cabling provider. Today, BCS' market share has grown to include audiovisual design and integration, national rollout deployment, networking and wireless solutions, CCTV surveillance, paging and sound masking. The founding principle behind Rajab's vision for BCS was to provide businesses with a singular place to fulfill all of their technology and communication needs. This single-source solution is one of the many accomplishments that have propelled Rajab to the top of her field. In addition, she has built BCS to remedy the commonly broken, uncommunicative processes that are considered standard for a large number of businesses – the implementation of communication and technology.



### Kelly Reeves, President

*Paw Prints in the Sand Animal Rescue, Newport Beach*

Kelly Reeves is the co-founder of Paw Prints in the Sand Animal Rescue. Because of her fearless efforts, the organization has experienced continued YOY growth. They have rescued over 400 animals and are considered one of the most respected animal rescues in Orange County. Reeves started a PR company in 2002. As a solo entrepreneur, she grew it to a multi-million dollar company. So co-founded and operates a nonprofit organization. In late 2018, she became a certified entrepreneurship and business coach. Reeves also a certified NLP practitioner. She also mentors students in the Paul Merage School of Business at UCI in its Masters of Innovations and Entrepreneurship Program.



### Lori Renaud, Owner

*Acti-Kare Responsive In-Home Care, Laguna Hills*

After working as a registered nurse in an ICU for 10 years, starting as a new graduate and moving up to charge nurse, Lori Renaud knew she had the knowledge and skill set to start her own business. Compelled by a need to find home care that was more dependable, supportive, and comprehensive, she founded Acti-Kare Responsive In-Home Care of South Orange County in 2015. Initially she remained a full-time employee at the hospital, while navigating the first year in business, then decided to make the leap and devote 100% of her time to Acti-Kare in 2016. With determination and hard work, Renaud took the company from \$0 revenue to over \$1 million in annual sales in less than four years. Today, the business continues to grow and remains profitable under Renaud's guidance.



### L. Song Richardson, Dean of UCI Law/Chancellor's Professor of Law

*University of California, Irvine School of Law, Irvine*

L. Song Richardson is the dean and chancellor's professor of Law at the University of California, Irvine School of Law (UCI Law) with joint appointments in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society and in the Department of Asian American Studies. She became the dean in 2018, after serving as interim dean since July 2017. Richardson joined the law school as a faculty member in 2014 and was senior associate dean for academic affairs from 2016 to 2017. Her expertise is in the areas of criminal law, criminal procedure, implicit bias, and the impact of AI and other emerging technologies on the legal profession. Her scholarship has been published by law journals at Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Duke and Northwestern, among others. She has won numerous awards and recognition, including the American Association of Law School's Derrick Bell Award, which recognizes a faculty member's extraordinary contributions to legal education through mentoring, teaching, and scholarship; named one of the Top Women Lawyers in California by The Daily Journal; and chosen as one of the two most influential Korean Americans in Orange County.



### Paige Riordan, Chef/Owner

*Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge, Rancho Mission Viejo*

As the executive chef and owner of Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge in Rancho Mission Viejo, Paige Riordan exemplifies true leadership. After cooking in some of New York's most prestigious restaurants, Riordan moved to California in 2018 with the dream of opening a restaurant with her family. Today, her restaurant proudly serves heirloom family recipes and East Coast classics brought to life with the finesse and flair of West Coast farm-to-table cuisine. Riordan's husband, mother, and father are all involved in the day-to-day operations at the restaurant. An East Coast native, Riordan has cooked in some of New York's most prestigious restaurants including Reynard at The Wythe, widely recognized for bringing farm-to-table cuisine to NYC. She attended culinary school at the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City, where she honed her skills in holistic, plant-based cuisine guided by whole foods and wellness.



### Jodi Ristrom, Partner

*HMWC CPAs & Business Advisors, Tustin*

Jodi Ristrom joined HMWC as a manager in 2005 and was promoted as the firm's third female partner in 2012. After leading the audit and assurance department for a number of years, she is now the partner of quality control. Ristrom has been a CPA since 1996 and has extensive experience in public accounting, as well as over eight years as an accountant in private and publicly-held businesses. She makes sure the firm is in compliance with regulatory agencies and requirements, protecting the professional integrity of the firm. Ristrom is passionate about helping clients tighten their business Internal Controls and accounting processes to prevent fraud. She has helped clients identify fraudulent activities at client locations and is a trusted advisor to many clients, helping them with their financial reporting. She is a member of the certified fraud examiners.



### Maryam Rofougaran, CEO

*Movandi, Irvine*

In 2016, Maryam Rofougaran realized there was a huge opportunity to apply her wireless expertise in high frequency, millimeter wave wireless, and she left Broadcom to start a new venture, Movandi that she co-founded. The growing company is currently focused on revolutionizing millimeter wave wireless networks and enabling the next generation of 5G multi-gigabit connectivity. Today, she is the CEO & founder focused on revolutionizing the future of communications by enabling infrastructure providers and operators to unlock the massive benefit associated with the data rates and latencies offered by 5G and other higher frequencies communications. Today, Movandi is the recognized leader, as one of the most significant improvements and innovations in 5G millimeter wave networks. From a revenue standpoint, Rofougaran raised \$38 million in venture money, in oversubscribed Series A and B rounds with leading investors.



### Roshi Roshangah, Branch Manager

*Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A. Inc., Anaheim*

Roshi Roshangah joined the technology industry in 2000 at the start of the digital era. During a disruptive time for most businesses Roshangah's knowledge of networking and natural ability to consult with business owners during the digital transformation led to her success as a Digital Support Specialist within Konica Minolta's infrastructure. As her ability and passion for the consulting portion of her day do day outshined the technical portion, she naturally transitioned to the role of a Digital Color Specialist at Konica Minolta in 2002. Surpassing quota and achieving multiple President's Club trips naturally gravitated her towards a leadership role in 2004 when she was promoted to a coach/mentor/sales





## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

manager within the company leading a team of account executives in the Los Angeles area. She held this dynamic role for 12 years and during this time was able to achieve multiple Circle of Excellence Awards as well as the highest achievement in her sales organization after a record breaking sale in 2014, The Gauntlet Award. These achievements led to an opportunity to grow within the company when she was promoted to a branch manager in Konica Minolta's Orange County office in 2016. Through a constant changing marketplace Roshangah has continued to develop and grow a team and lead people to never-ending improvement.

### Tenny Rostomian-Amin, Co-Owner/Partner

*TALG | The Amin Law Group Ltd., Irvine*

Tenny Rostomian-Amin, Esq., co-founded and co-owns TALG, The Amin Law Group, with offices in Irvine, Las Vegas, and Dallas. Rostomian-Amin was instrumental in the expansion of the law group, identifying locations and legal talent where the firm's expertise would make the most impact. Under her co-leadership, TALG has grown and flourished for the last 15 years, with plans to open more offices across the country over the next 24 months. Her practice area of expertise is Family Law, handling all aspects of family law cases ranging from mediations to trials involving child custody and child support, spousal support, and division of property. Rostomian-Amin has successfully guided clients throughout the U.S. with their adoption cases, helping parents find the right solutions in building their families - a passion of hers. Rostomian-Amin's personal and professional mission is to provide opportunities and support for young people, women, and families looking to strengthen their foundation in order to grow and thrive. Rostomian-Amin is currently enrolled in Pepperdine's School of Law where she'll earn a Master of Laws (LLM) in Dispute Resolution, which will allow her to continue to give client families the option to resolve matters outside of court.



### Kristina Rovirosa, Vice President Quality Management

*LIBERTY Dental Plan, Irvine*

Kristina Rovirosa, Registered Nurse & US Army Sergeant Veteran, joined LIBERTY Dental Plan in October 2018. Within weeks of joining the company, she was utilizing her ability to work calmly under pressure that she had mastered while participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom II (OIF) in Fallujah Iraq. She worked with the team to establish a comprehensive quality program to improve interdepartmental communications, structure critical committees to report to the board of directors and improve the overall workflow. Rovirosa met with each team member, performed a SWOT analysis, created performance metrics setting a baseline and demonstrating projected growth. She outlined a future for the department that included achieving



a full URAC Accreditation in less than one year. This made LIBERTY the second dental plan in the nation to achieve full accreditation. Rovirosa also used her nursing and quality management background to implement the first Dental Care Management Program for the State of Florida's Medicaid Program. This program targets the regions' most overlooked populations and introduces them to oral health care that can both save and change lives. The changes that Rovirosa made to the Quality Program resulted in the early identification of other issues involving housing, food and critical issues that can be reported to other state agencies and community partners to address.

### Jodi Salerno, Founder

*Tudaloo, Newport Beach*

Jodi Salerno founded Tudaloo to create memorable bespoke items that have sentimental meaning, beginning with its first item, a rose themed tote bag for the Rose Parade in Pasadena. Salerno designs all Tudaloo accessories, including handbags, clutch and makeup totes, scrunchies, dog leashes, dog beds, table runners and placemats, etc., working solely with women vendors and suppliers. In a few short years, Tudaloo has developed a client list of boutiques, event planners, hotels and individuals that would be the envy of any small business. Since launching in 2015, Tudaloo is now sold in over 20 locations across the U.S., including boutiques in Newport Beach, Pasadena, Los Angeles, San Diego, Nashville and Jackson Hole.



### Talia Samuels, President

*Outshine Public Relations, Newport Beach*

Talia Samuels began her career in restaurant public relations at age 19. By the time she turned 23 years old in 2015, she had founded Outshine Public Relations with the desire to shine awareness on Orange County's top culinary talent. Today, her company is recognized as one of Orange County's leading restaurant public relations firms. Outshine Public Relations proudly represents the industry's top chefs, restaurants, and culinary brands. Samuel's worth ethic and integrity have attracted an all-star client roster which includes James Beard Award-winning and Michelin-starred chefs. President & founder, Samuels is a poised and passionate Public Relations and Marketing Communications professional offering years of experience and proven expertise in developing and executing communications strategies aimed at increasing brand awareness, exposure, and recognition through creative public relations campaigns, social media strategies, email marketing initiatives, and special events. Samuels sits on the Board of Directors for the California Restaurant Association's Orange County Chapter and the Newport Beach Restaurant Association.



## CONGRATULATIONS

# KRISTINA ROVIROSA

We congratulate Kristina Rovirosa on her nomination for Orange County Business Journal's 2020 Women in Business Award! Kristina serves as LIBERTY's Vice President of Quality Management, and is a true fighter, having served in our military. Kristina's business savvy further positions LIBERTY in a higher standard of excellence. You can read more about Kristina's accomplishments at [www.libertydentalplan.com/About-LIBERTY/Company-Facts.aspx](http://www.libertydentalplan.com/About-LIBERTY/Company-Facts.aspx).



Making members shine, one smile at a time™  
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## 2020 Women in Business Award Nominees

### Laura Schwab, President

*Aston Martin the Americas, Irvine*

After 15 years with Jaguar Land Rover, Laura Schwab was recruited by then-CMO, Simon Sproule, and CEO, Andy Palmer to join Aston Martin as president of its Americas region. Schwab is the first president in the company's 107-year history, and has recently been appointed to its executive committee. During her nearly five years (in October 2020) with Aston Martin, she has taken an inclusive approach, ensuring new audiences "fall in love" with the brand, and her region frequently leads in sales. Schwab oversees sales, service, marketing and communications to Aston Martin's customers and dealers within North, Central and South America. Schwab holds a degree from Notre Dame, where she attended on a full tennis scholarship, and has a law degree from the University of Kentucky. She is based at Aston Martin's regional headquarters in Irvine, California. Schwab was the Business Journal's 2019 women in business keynote speaker



### Cynthia Sender, Director of Area/Community Relations

*CareAssist Services Inc., Mission Viejo*

For the past two years, Cynthia Sender has served as director of community relations for CareAssist Services, a 5-star rated non-medical home care provider. In this role she educates both families and other professionals; provides care consultations with families; provides ongoing care management for her own clients; and manages a territory for the company. Sender's success in this role is evidenced by the respect she has earned from clients and peers alike. As an advocate, Gerontologist Sender has worked tirelessly to educate other professionals and the public about aging-in-place issues. As cofounder of an advocacy group, Senior Resource Educators, she educates seniors in Orange County about their options and appropriate referral sources. Sender also participates in other resource platforms, including Vital Services for Seniors, which seeks to educate other professionals who work with the senior population. In addition, she founded a popular blog, GeriCare Advisor, which offers in-depth coverage of issues affecting our aging population in OC, and is a respected business professional.



### Traci Shirachi, CEO/President

*The Mark USA Inc., Irvine*

Traci Shirachi is the president/CEO of The Mark and oversees all of the company operations, finances, and business development. She bought The Mark in September 2017 and came in with a vision of how to use her business background to grow the company. The Mark has been around for 12 years and has primarily worked in the education sector. Through Shirachi's vision and networking she has helped grow the business to include nonprofit and corporate clients. Shirachi has over 17 years of work experience with consulting companies of various sizes, including PricewaterhouseCoopers. She received a B.A. in political science at the University of California, Davis, and an M.B.A. from Vanderbilt University.



### Monica Shukla-Belmontes, Associate Dean Assurance of Learning and Tutorial Faculty Affairs

*Brandman University, Irvine*

Monica Shukla-Belmontes, Ph.D., is associate dean for Curriculum, Assurance of Learning and Tutorial Faculty Affairs in the School of Business and Professional Studies at Brandman University. Shukla-Belmontes has been involved in the field of higher education since 2008. At Brandman University, she has taught MBA and undergraduate courses in Statistics, Managerial Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Global Business. In addition, she has served on Competency-Based Education (CBE) committees including Program Council and the CBE Academic Affairs Operations Committee. In addition, she has developed five CBE economics competencies and oversees Business Program Reviews and Assessments. Previously, Shukla-Belmontes worked with Chapman University's Student Affairs Department and University Advancement as the Alumni Networks & Outreach Manager. In addition to her experience in higher education, she has also worked in the fields of human resources, special events management, and business operations with companies including Capital Group Companies, M S International, Inc., and the Disneyland Resort. As an alumna of Brandman University, she is also on the founding board of directors for the Brandman University Alumni Association as a representative of the faculty.



### Valerie Shumaker, CEO

*LUX Custom Suit, Costa Mesa*

After owning two boutiques in Costa Mesa & San Luis Obispo County from 2009-2016, Valerie Shumaker then ran a Custom Suit Showroom in OC working in the wedding industry from 2017-2019. Enjoying the suit industry led her to launch her own male & female suit brands in 2019. Her clients refer to her as the Suit Lady. She has a passion for



(suits of course), fashion, beauty, wellness & animals. Many of her clientele are attorneys, finance advisors, CEO's & others who want to look sharp. She has a passion for designing suits with her clients and gets excited for them to see the final product they designed. The business is mobile and comes to clients' offices. Her women's brand is LUX Custom Suit, and her men's brand is SUIT-D.

### Danni Remington Smithson, Senior Vice President/Regional Manager

*Pacific Western Bank, Irvine*

Danni Remington Smithson is an icon in community business banking with a career spanning 30 years. She has worked in the city of Irvine for the last 23 years, first with Premier Commercial Bank where she headed the South Orange County branch launch, through its acquisitions by California United Bank in 2012 and by PacWest in 2017. Smithson continues to oversee the Irvine Legacy branch and its growth and visibility in the OC market, and Irvine-Newport communities. A deeply respected, results-oriented leader, she is highly regarded by staff, colleagues, and clients. Her passion and commitment to her team, fellow bankers, and women in business have helped her to break through the glass ceiling more than once. Smithson's clients become like family as a result of her next-level service, mentoring, coaching, and advocacy.



### Jessica Spaulding, President

*The Spaulding Agency, Aliso Viejo*

As president of The Spaulding Agency, Jessica Spaulding leads business development, brand strategy, media relations and strategic development of multi-layered public relations and marketing campaigns. The firm specializes in commercial real estate and community, workforce and economic development, among business sectors. She founded The Spaulding Agency in 2009 to provide a nimble, senior level boutique style approach to communications. Her experience also includes almost two decades leading one of Orange County's top-ranked public relations agencies. Her creative direction has been behind brand development for San Bernardino County and its annual State of the County event, as well as working closely with founders of RiverRock Real Estate Group, Waterford Property Company and Snyder Langston among others. Her expertise in public relations for commercial real estate is also apparent in her work with Newmark Knight Frank and NAIOP SoCal.



### La Shawn Stanford, West Region Community Relations Manager

*UPS, Aliso Viejo*

La Shawn Stanford is the community relations manager for the west region of UPS, a territory that spans 26 states and has more than 167,000 employees. She oversees all community outreach events in the region and manages a \$1.2 million budget. As region community relations manager, Stanford is the primary field representative for the UPS Foundation, and is tasked with designing, coordinating and implementing a strategy to advance the company's commitment to making local communities stronger. She has been an integral part in enhancing business values, the company's reputation in the community and helping to close gaps to fulfill the needs of the community, through strategic philanthropy, community partnerships, volunteerism, Board engagement, and public relations in the community. She began her UPS career in 1998 as a delivery driver, and created a women's business resources group at UPS, the Women's Leadership Development group, to help women at UPS connect and mentor each other in a supportive environment. This group has evolved into "BRG"- Business Resource Groups that spans all genders, races and professional levels to create a bigger network of support and connectedness within the organization. In 2010, she was awarded "Women of the Year" by UPS.



### Susan Stansbury, Owner

*Wildfire Mercantile, San Juan Capistrano*

Susan Stansbury is the owner of Wildfire Mercantile, an upscale clothing store in San Juan Capistrano that carries higher-end Western-style apparel and boho looks. Identified an unserved market for an upscale retail store featuring unique fashion, accessories, gifts, décor and art – all with a Western Flair to complement the historic San Juan Capistrano community. Conceived and opened Wildfire Mercantile in May of 2017, with a carefully curated collection of clothing, boots, hats, handmade jewelry, accessories, and unique gifts. The store also showcases local artist's work with original paintings, prints and photography. Wildfire Mercantile has been extremely well received in the community and has expanded the original space to now feature a complete men's department.



### Anneke Stender, Executive Vice President

*TAG Bill Pay, Newport Beach*

Since joining TAG in 2003, Anneke Stender has made an impact in outsourced accounting for high-net-worth families, their businesses and the family office



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space. She is a trusted resource for her clients, some of whom are the wealthiest families in the country. Understanding their unique needs when it comes to personal bill pay services and financial reporting, she created TAG Bill Pay in 2018. Since inception, TAG Bill Pay has experienced rapid growth by capitalizing on a gap in the marketplace. Becoming a preferred personal bill pay vendor for top family offices and financial institutions, TAG Bill Pay on-boarded over 80 new clients in two years. Stender has risen to many challenges at TAG and has helped grow the company from seven employees to over 60. Now a partner of the firm, Stender helped establish TAG Bill Pay, which has tripled its revenue and employee size since inception. TAG Bill Pay has office locations in Newport Beach, La Jolla and New York City to serve clients throughout the country and worldwide.



### Paula Steurer, President

*Sterling Public Relations, Corona del Mar*

Paula Steurer founded Sterling Public Relations in 2008 as a Publicity, Branding and Marketing hybrid and has scaled her company's services nationally. Known for her personalized approach to cultivating connections and curating brands, her innovative vision and forward thinking philosophy has become her clientele's secret ingredient for success. With a passion for building brand identities and her innate ability to connect, engage and drive brands to the next level, Steurer has become a trusted authority among entrepreneurs and executives. She can often be seen as the keynote speaker and workshop leader for nationally recognized brands such as Mindbody Inc, Vizio, Oracle and CREW-OC. Sterling Public Relations celebrates its 12 year anniversary this year, and has become the in-demand firm for brands who desire a competitive edge.



### Autumn Strier, Co-Founder/CEO/President – Board of Directors

*Miracles for Kids, Tustin*

Autumn Strier is a driven nonprofit co-founder & CEO who found her passion for helping those in need early, experiencing life on both the receiving/giving sides of charity. This led her to co-found Miracles for Kids - a widely-respected organization dedicated to the stability needs of critically-ill children and families throughout OC and beyond. The organization has raised nearly \$25 million to benefit 2,100+ low-income families with children battling 100+ life-threatening illnesses. Strier serves as the chief executive and architect of every program, initiative, and the board president. She holds the responsibility of knowing that hundreds of families rely on her, and this year increased the number of families served by 40%. Strier is a hands-on leader, dedicated to every family served; determined to raise more funds and develop meaningful partnerships.



### Jennifer Stroffe, Shareholder

*Friedman Stroffe & Gerard P.C., Irvine*

As a Shareholder at Friedman Stroffe & Gerard, an Orange County Top 100 Law Firm, Jennifer Stroffe brings over fifteen years of experience representing businesses ranging from local start-ups to international companies in complex commercial matters such as mergers and acquisitions, debt and equity capital raisings and restructurings, and the acquisition, disposition and leasing of real property. During her career, Stroffe has been instrumental in her clients' success, negotiating and closing over a billion dollars of business and real estate transactions. Stroffe represents clients across various industries, with a niche practice in the apparel and accessories market, emphasis on action sports. Stroffe has been a featured summit and conference speaker, as well as radio interviewee, on capital markets and real estate topics, and is a licensed real estate broker in California.



### Brenda Studley, VP of Recruiting

*Allied Universal, Santa Ana*

Brenda Studley joined Allied Universal® in September 2017 because she wanted to be part of a growing industry and company that has the opportunity to make a difference every day with its job candidates, employees and clients. Prior to moving west to California, Studley was vice president, Talent Acquisition for Wells Fargo in Minneapolis, Minnesota where she led the Talent Acquisition function for the Home Lending Servicing with more than 20,000 team members throughout the United States. She developed the Talent Acquisition vision, strategy and plan as well as led a team of four Recruiting Managers and 40 recruiters to source and hire over 10,000 team members per year. Today, Studley leads and develops a team of over 80 recruiters and staffing specialists to source diverse talent and recruit over 100,000 full and part-time employees every year. In 2018, she hired and promoted many Veterans on her Recruiting team and implemented new sourcing strategies that resulted in an increase in Veteran hiring with over 10% Veteran hires. AUS was recognized as Veterans Employer of the year in CA, TX and WA.



### Mary-Christine "M.C." Sungaila, Partner

*Buchalter, Costa Mesa*

M.C. Sungaila is the leader of the Buchalter's Appellate practice group and a shareholder in the Firm's Orange County office. Sungaila is a highly regarded appellate attorney who has briefed and argued appeals raising cutting-edge and fundamental business issues for over two decades. Her work has helped shape undeveloped areas of the law in constitutional law, employment, franchisor liability, product liability, class actions, probate, immigration, Holocaust art recovery, and human rights. She crafts creative approaches to clients' emerging legal issues and provides pretrial consultations in cases where an appeal by either side appears inevitable. Sungaila has repeatedly been named one of California's Top 100 Women Lawyers by the Daily Journal and twice named a California Lawyer Attorney of the Year for victories before the California Supreme Court and Ninth Circuit U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Last year alone, two of the year's five biggest appellate reversals cited by the Daily Journal involved Sungaila. In 2017, she was awarded both the Orange County Women Lawyers' Association's Attorney of the Year and the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.



### Rachel Svoboda, Chief Executive Officer

*Sunday Brunch Agency, Huntington Beach*

Throughout her 25-year career in advertising, Rachel Svoboda has led prestigious advertising teams spanning across Southern California with the mission of creating an environment in which others can thrive. In 2016, Svoboda utilized her industry experience and proven successes to establish Sunday Brunch Agency, an innovative firm that is designed to capitalize on a network of top branding, advertising, public relations, and video and digital professionals nationwide. She has worked alongside major brands such as Toyota, Panasonic, The Irvine Company, Néktar, City of Hope, LAX and others to develop original content and business strategies that have been recognized by the EFFIES and the ONE SHOW AWARDS. In 2015, The National Association of Professional Women named Svoboda Woman of the Year for her outstanding leadership, professional achievements, and impact within the community.



### Linda Talamo, Owner/Founder

*Hera Hub Irvine, Irvine*

In less than a year, Talamo has created a community and workspace that functions as a platform to bring women together to help each other connect, collaborate and grow their businesses. It serves to promote, advance and empower the dynamic women of OC. Talamo built her business from the ground up from the office build out, to the interior decorating, to promoting the business and filling the space. When people walk into the space they are instantly blown away by the amazing ambiance she has created. Hera Hub is a coworking space and business accelerator, where entrepreneurial women can create and collaborate in a professional, productive, spa-like environment. The platform provides members with connections to other business experts, one-on-one mentoring, access to weekly educational workshops, and visibility within the community, thus giving them the support they need to be prosperous.



### Lynn Tanattanawin, Head of Corporate Strategy

*Ephesoft, Irvine*

Lynn Tanattanawin joined Ephesoft in 2018 as the head of corporate strategy, through an introduction by a Board member to the CEO, Ike Kavvas. Her ability to think strategically, drive operational rigor and her inherent traits of tenacity and positive energy are clear to everyone throughout the organizations and is confirmed by Ephesoft's CEO who depends on her acute insight and guidance. Tanattanawin's work is often behind the scenes, but the achievement and impact is widespread. She manages the Board, leads investor relations, M&A, IP strategy and global market intelligence. She travels frequently to learn about the industry and new technologies (especially AI, digital transformation and enterprise productivity), anticipating trends and providing guidance on how to take advantage of market shifts. Her influence spans across the organization with her hands in every department, making sure the team runs in lockstep, while considering financial and organizational ramifications of each move.



### Jinger Tapia, Principal, Design

*Ware Malcomb, Irvine*

Jinger Tapia started her career with Ware Malcomb in 1994 as a designer, becoming part of the senior leadership team upon promotion to director, design in 2006. Her responsibilities were elevated further when promoted to principal, design in 2013. A California Licensed Architect, Tapia has been instrumental in the growth and transformation of Ware Malcomb's Design team into an award-winning international studio. As a nationally recognized thought leader for design, she infuses the latest





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industry innovations and technologies into her design approach. Tapia is one of five women on Ware Malcomb's senior leadership team and her vision has helped define the firm's design standards of high quality and strong character. She is commended by her peers and colleagues for her ability to effectively bring resolution to any design challenge through the use of monthly design charrettes to provide her 22 years of design expertise.

### Debbie Taylor, COO

*Fusion of Ideas, Lake Forest*

As COO, Debbie Taylor oversees the daily operations at Fusion of Ideas, a company that helps businesses create immersive brand experiences through custom app development, full-color printing on mobile devices and integration of the devices into the organizations. For more than a decade, Fusion of Ideas has worked with some of the most significant brands in the world, including Capital One, Audi, Major League Baseball, and Hilton. Taylor has played a key role in the company's success with consistent year-over-year growth for the past decade, and in 2018, the company recorded its highest year-end revenue to date. Taylor's wide range of responsibilities includes overseeing organizational policies, day-to-day operations and the company financials. Additionally, her people-centric leadership has made Fusion of Ideas a fun and positive place to work, as reflected by the company's low turnover, which is 62 percent lower than the industry average.



### Kara Taylor, VP of Marketing

*ATTOM Data Solutions, Irvine*

As VP of marketing for ATTOM, Kara Taylor leverages over two decades of experience in marketing and product strategy to lead the company's marketing, creative and public relations teams. Under Taylor's leadership, ATTOM has earned top of mind positioning as the premium property data provider powering innovation across a wide range of industries. Prior to joining ATTOM, she developed and grew various marketing teams focused on lead generation and brand awareness. Taylor is a modern marketing leader who has built a solid reputation for creating profit centered digital markets for B2B and B2C companies, building strategic initiatives and increasing conversion rates. Taylor is known as a passionate leader that excels at both strategy and hands-on tactical execution with proven abilities to grow a business through hiring and mentoring strong marketing, product management, ecommerce, user experience, content and technology teams.



### Summer Taylor, Director

*Deloitte, Costa Mesa*

Summer Taylor is a dedicated client service leader who assists clients with complex areas of accounting and auditing. She has been with Deloitte for over 21 years. She is known for helping clients anticipate issues, and has successfully led multiple IPO's, secondary offerings, debt offerings and global acquisitions. She is committed to developing her team and the broader CPA community, where she speaks to over 1000 professionals per year on emerging accounting/auditing topics. She has been recognized by CalCPA for her training and programs. Recently, she designed an app to help develop growth skills of our senior managers, managers, seniors and staff. She is also committed to supporting diversity in the business community. Most recently, she created Deloitte's Women on Boards program that educates and promotes women's leadership on corporate boards. She also leads the OC Inclusion Council.



### Kristen Thibeault, Founder & Chief Culinary Officer

*Nybl, Anaheim*

At the crux of Nybl's explosive growth is Kristen Thibeault's development of proprietary dishes designed to fuel peak performance. Chef has developed an unmatched menu catalog of 1,000 recipes and 150 global menu themes, all of which avoid the use of gluten, dairy and refined sugars, and is constantly innovating with new themes introduced monthly. Nybl is the first of this scale to execute healthy meals without sacrificing variety or flavor, all while keeping prices competitive. Nybl owns the entire process from locally sourcing, to production, to delivery, and on-site services. Nybl has also developed, Mise, its own proprietary software that orchestrates the production, delivery, and presentation of up to 6,000 meals per day across all markets. This software currently hosts the client profiles of approximately 100 companies and sports teams, each with specific dietary needs and restrictions for their workforce. Because of her style of cooking, Thibeault's client list is chalk full of the world's top performers including The Dodgers, The Golden State Warriors, Anaheim Ducks, New England Patriots, SF Giants, Astros, The Red Sox, Amazon, DocuSign, Virgin Orbit and BuzzFeed. Chef Thibeault is the only chef in the world that can say she served four world champion teams at the same time: NFL, MLB, NBA and Rugby World Cup.



### Melanie Thomas, Senior Vice President and Partner

*Burnham Benefits, Irvine*

Melanie Thomas recently celebrated her 20 year anniversary with Burnham Benefits. Starting off as a customer service representative in the service department, she worked her way up to becoming an equity partner halfway through her time at Burnham. Her biggest achievement is starting from a ground zero and having the opportunity to contribute and work her way towards becoming a partner. Thomas was instrumental in pioneering the Burnham Way, which is the Burnham's philanthropy division. This committee within the company raises awareness about volunteering opportunities, financial support, in-kind donations, event participation and educates the staff on the multitude of ways they can focus their time and energy on meaningful, philanthropic efforts. Thomas has always focused on building strong, lasting business relationships and has one of the most impressive client retention rates - many of her clients have been with her for over 20 years! Providing a comprehensive array of services, Thomas has assisted clients with creating and implementing robust wellness program solutions and disease management programs around conditions like diabetes. She also has worked closely with clients on mergers and acquisitions from everything from financial impacts, implementations and migrations, and employee communications. Over the years, Thomas has helped employees overcome financial burdens with claim appeals and mismanagement of contract language.



### Anh Tran, Partner/ Estate Planning Attorney

*JanHobbs Financial Group/ Modern Wealth Law, Orange*

Anh Tran is currently Partner at JanHobbs Financial Group and Estate Planning Attorney at Modern Wealth Law. With JanHobbs Financial Group, Tran advises high net worth individuals, families, and business owners on all aspects of financial planning, retirement planning and estate planning. As a certified financial planner and a professional with estate planning experience, Tran is in a position to advise her clients on a wide variety of wealth management issues. In the past year, Tran has been named Forbes Top 250 Women Wealth Advisor and Forbes Top Next Generation Wealth Advisors.

Additionally, she has been featured in Super Lawyers Magazine for the last seven years (2014 - 2020) and spoke to her colleagues at the 2019 30 Under 30 Conference. She is also actively involved with collective giving organization, Impact Giving and serves as a board member.



### Jade Tran, Partner

*Wood, Smith, Henning & Berman LLP, Aliso Viejo*

Jade Tran is a celebrated trial lawyer who is nationally recognized for her success in the courtroom. She has fueled growth in the Orange County office of WSHB, a firm where she worked during law school and enjoyed promotions throughout the year from associate to managing partner. Her litigation prowess is widely sought out by clients who trusted Tran to take to verdict six high profile cases in the last year alone, one of which was selected as one of the top 100 verdicts for 2018. For these trials, she achieved outright defense verdicts, or in cases of admitted liability, was able to limit the verdicts to less than 10% of the ask from opposing parties. For the businesses that were on the receiving end of these lawyers, Tran's legal prowess provided stability and vindication in an emotionally charged environment that could have easily hit the bottom lines of many companies. She resolved countless claims throughout Orange County and is known for many as the "go to" lawyer for small, mid-size and large businesses. At the same time, she provided risk management practice pointers to not only these businesses but others on strategies to avoid litigation in the first instance. Orange Counties businesses who have entrusted Tran, thrive thanks to her guidance. She is a fierce advocate for Diversity and Inclusivity, and she herself was honored as one of the "Nation's Best" by the Lawyers of Color.



### Jenny Tran, Senior Associate

*Brown & Streza LLP, Irvine*

Jenny Tran's 17-year tenure at Brown & Streza, LLP commenced in 2003 when she started off working as a File Clerk. She was the first associate at Brown & Streza, LLP to ever be hired right out of law school in 2010, just one year after the Great Recession. Since then, she has risen through the ranks to become a senior associate. She provides training and guidance to staff and Paralegals, supports the development of other Associates, and mentors staff in their career advancement. Tran has also established a network of highly esteemed trusted advisors that meet on a quarterly basis at Brown & Streza, LLP to facilitate and foster community, collaboration, and opportunity. For seven straight years in a row, she has been recognized as a Rising Star by SuperLawyer.



### Janie Tsao, Co-Founder

*Miven Inc., Newport Beach*

Janie Tsao co-founded Linksys in 1988 and operated the business from her garage for the first few years. She eventually led the company in developing and opening



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distribution channels for a full line of tech hardware as the company introduced network devices and then wireless routers into the marketplace. Tsao's ability to identify emerging business opportunities coupled with her flexibility and dynamic leadership was instrumental in bringing the internet sharing into homes and small businesses everywhere. Her sales and marketing foresight positioned Linksys as the leader in wireless routers and positioned the company for its eventual acquisition by Cisco Systems in 2003. Tsao and her husband have been recognized as the entrepreneurs of the year 2004 by Inc Magazine. Women transform technology, AnitaB.org, awarded Janie Tsao as the recipient of women of vision award for leadership in 2005. Tsao was instrumental in establishing retail channels and creating hundreds of jobs in Orange County.



### Rachel Valentine, Head of People Operations

*Vincit, Irvine*

During her time with the company, she doubled the employee headcount, and contributed to the successful focus on company culture and employee happiness which resulted in Vincit being recognized as a Best Place to work by the Orange County Business Journal, TopWorkplace by the OC Register and nod at Best Tech Work Culture by Tech in Motion. She also spearheaded the company move into its new headquarters location in Irvine Spectrum and is supporting their office expansion plans for the next five years. Heading up Vincit's People Operations, she continues to support hiring, on-boarding and on-going support of all team members. She is the driving force behind many of Vincit's community initiatives including partnerships with local schools, nonprofits and runs Vincit Dev Talks, a quarterly event hosting speakers from local OC Tech firms discussing the latest trends of the industry.



### Patricia Wallace, Founder of OC Pelvic Wellness, Director of Pelvic Health and Wellness for Mission Hospital, Owner of The Advanced Center for Pelvic Medicine & Reconstructive Surgery

*The Advanced Center for Pelvic Medicine & Reconstructive Surgery, Mission Hospital*

Dr. Patricia Wallace came to work at the Center formally known as the Incontinence and Pelvic Support Institute after her three-year fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and after serving as a Professor at UCI Medical School for six years. Her energy and focus allowed the Center to grow and build a holistic and individualized approach to women's pelvic health. She was instrumental in the changing of the name of the practice, developing patient informational materials on all pelvic health topics, recruiting new providers, and aligning the practice mission with that of the needs of the community. She became an owner in 2011. Dr. Wallace has been a leader in South Orange County for women's health for more than 10 years. Her business accomplishments include owning and growing a private practice in women's health in a healthcare environment that is largely now owned by large hospital systems. She founded her personal corporation and brand OC Pelvic Wellness and continues to work on building the platform and social awareness of women's pelvic health.



### Judith Ware, President

*Ware Disposal, Santa Ana*

Since 1968, for 52 years, Ware Disposal Inc. has developed from two trucks to over 110 natural gas fleets of trucks and has a sustainable CNG natural gas filling station on site at Ware Disposal Inc. headquarters. ware disposal inc. services southern California solid waste and recycling needs for commercial, residential, schools and government service needs.



### Carolina Weidler, Project Director

*H. Hendy Associates, Newport Beach*

Carolina Weidler is an architect, Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and LEED AP professional with domestic and international experience creating process-driven environments for high-tech corporations. She currently represents a small group in the nation - 22% - of reported females with a Certified Six Sigma Black Belt. In an industry dominated by men, Weidler's Six Sigma Black Belt uniquely positions her in the local architecture and design world and provides businesses with unmatched expertise needed to deliver high-performance workplace environments. Weidler has helped clients reimagine spaces - from food processing factories to aircraft assembly lines - ranging from 2,000 to 470,000 square feet. She was hired by Hendy, a national interior architect firm, to lead the company's Science and Technology Studio. This new division was created to support California's growing need for efficient and effective workplace environments in science, technology, engineering and math-based industries - a highly specialized area of the commercial real estate industry.



### Jessica Welch, Vice President of Operations

*Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce, Irvine*

Jessica Welch began her career in the Chamber industry in 2007 with the Greater Irvine Chamber as executive assistant to the president & CEO, working closely with the board of directors, and executive and governmental affairs committees. In 2012, she was promoted to programs director for which additional responsibilities included managing events generating over 30% of the annual budget. In 2017, Welch was promoted to senior director of operations, and in 2018 to vice president of operations. Providing guidance on the strategic plan and governance of the chamber, her role on the chamber's executive management team is fundamental to the organization's everyday operations. She oversees and manages annual budgets for operations, administration, programs, and events-which holds five signature and 30 networking events a year-and membership, including high-level investor relations and partnerships. Welch is responsible for talent recruitment, staff development, and human resource coordination.



### Genevieve West, Director of Healthcare Services

*Howard Building Corporation, Costa Mesa*

Prior to her arrival in 2016, Howard Building Corporation (HBC) focused primarily on corporate and professional tenant improvement projects with no cohesive trajectory towards healthcare real estate. With the wealth of knowledge that Genevieve West brought with her, she has since woven HBC's services into the fabric of Orange County's healthcare development while strengthening relationships between the real estate and healthcare sectors. The result has been the streamlined completion of several major facilities and continued success during the rise of patient-centered healthcare. Funneling her passion for real estate management into the healthcare industry has had resounding effects that extend beyond her success at HBC and into the greater community.



### Charlotte Wiederholt, President

*Studio Other, Newport Beach*

Charlotte Wiederholt has been with Tangram for over 20 years, beginning as a designer in a team of three people that brought in \$1-2 million annually in sales. Today, Wiederholt is the president of Studio Other, leading an over 30-person team that has achieved over \$25 million a year in sales. Once a division of Tangram Interiors, Studio Other is now an independent company working with large scale organizations across the nation, including Google, Saatchi & Saatchi Dallas, Boston Consulting Group, JustFab, Procore, Fuse Media, Imagine Entertainment, Too Faced, Insomniac Games, Lyell, Appfolio and many more. Within the last 10 years, she has helped grow Studio Other over 400% and has achieved national expansion.



### Sophie Wilensky, District Service & Parts Manager

*Toyota, Irvine*

Sophie Tate Wilensky worked at Toyota North America Headquarters with one of Toyota's partner companies. Through networking and excellent customer service, she was hired by Toyota into their Management Training program in October, 2019. In January 2020, Wilensky was promoted to customer first manager. In February 2020, Wilensky was promoted to district sales & parts manager, Toyota LA Regional Office. In an industry dominated primarily by males, Wilensky has quickly branded herself as an excellent, reliable employee who is respected among management and her peers and seen as a rising star in her field.



### Sara Wissmueller, Vice President IT and Facilities

*Sonendo, Laguna Hills*

Sara Wissmueller joined Sonendo in 2019 and had an immediate, positive impact. Shortly after joining, she assessed the IT requirements and developed a multi-year plan to address the organization's business requirements to support rapid growth. Specifically, she very quickly developed an IT infrastructure and systems Roadmap then began working through a prioritization matrix to solve the most urgent and critical issues. Her superior project management skills drove the implementation of a new field service management program, new phone system, server upgrades, Salesforce.com enhancements, ERP improvements, and many other initiatives in the first year. Wissmueller has also built a strong IT and Facilities team, growing the organization's capabilities in Data Analytics, Project Management, Facilities Expansion, and IT Support.



### Diane Wittenberg, Audit Partner

*Haskell & White LLP, Irvine*

Diane Wittenberg has proven to be an invaluable leader at Haskell & White, one of the largest independently owned public accounting firms in Southern California.



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by contributing to the Firm's continued business success and status as the state's best destination for female accountants. With over 30 years of experience, Wittenberg leads teams to provide a variety of audit and business advisory services for public and private companies, as well as nonprofit organizations. Providing value beyond meeting compliance requirements is a key focus. She also contributes her leadership to many vital initiatives for the Firm such as mentoring and training programs for young professionals pursuing a Certified Public Accountant license. As a member of the Association for Corporate Growth Board of Directors, she chairs the group's Women in Leadership Committee. She also chairs the Audit Committee of Discovery Cube Orange County and the Finance Committee for Mariposa Women and Family Center.



### Debora Wondercheck, Founder/CEO

*Arts and Learning Conservatory, Costa Mesa*  
Debora Wondercheck, M.S., Ed, is the founder and CEO of the Arts & Learning Conservatory (ALC). She counts it a true privilege to serve children, their families, and the community with successful and inspiring programs that develop confidence and creativity for life. In addition to leading ALC, and growing its programs, since 2004, Wondercheck is director of Music at the Waldorf School of Orange County—a unanimously superior-rated orchestra of SCSBOA. She continues to embrace her community by participating on the Orange County Department of Education Music Arts Administrators Board, she serves as a panelist for the CA Arts Council in Sacramento, is on the ArtsOC Board, and is an Arts Consultant to many School Districts. Wondercheck is an accomplished Master Teacher of string pedagogy, having taught at Vanguard University (her Alma Mater), Irvine Unified School District, and Newport Mesa Unified District. Among her significant accomplishments, she has received honors from many organizations for her dedication and creation of effective arts and education programs to youth. Some key awarding organizations include: Disneyland Community Arts, Farmers and Merchants Bank, Arts Orange County and Links Incorporated.



### Dr. Tammy Wong, CEO

*Fostering Executive Leadership Inc., Irvine*  
Dr. Tammy Wong is the CEO of Fostering Executive Leadership, Inc. an international business results executive coaching firm. The firm consists of hundreds of leadership coaches worldwide. The coaches work with leaders by improving leadership capability, capacity, and have established a proven record with an ROI through our coaching engagements. The team works with individual leaders at all management levels and are skilled in helping leaders understand the benefit in building leadership competencies within the organization, understanding team integration, and the creation of solid succession planning methodology to create strategic leaders within your company. Organizations we serve will benefit from our focus on building leadership, team performance, communication, accountability, and strategy through a proven track record of experience, certification, and research.



### Ali Woodward, Executive Director

*Fristers, Irvine*  
Ali Woodward is the founder, president and CEO of Fristers, an Orange County-based nonprofit dedicated to helping teenage parents thrive. In 2008, driven by her own experience with teen pregnancy, and seeing a lack of services for teenage mothers, Woodward sought to address this deficit and bring support to this vulnerable population. Under her leadership, Fristers developed comprehensive programming for young mothers, expanded to include programs and services for children, fathers, and teen parent couples, and established three city chapters. She also created a strategic network of community partners to meet the families' needs. Since inception, Fristers has impacted more than 2,000 teen parents and children. Young parents are graduating high school, enrolling in college and vocational training, securing employment, building healthy relationships, and learning how to be successful parents. Children are receiving early intervention services that are improving their developmental, social, and educational gains.



### Jessica Word, President

*Word & Brown Insurance Administrators Inc., Orange*  
Jessica Word grew up in the insurance business. Her father, John M. Word III, and business partner, Edward J. "Rusty" Brown, Jr., established Word & Brown in 1985. Jessica recalls fondly working for the company during high school and college and having the opportunity to learn the business from the inside out, gaining exposure to different facets of the industry and helping her identify where she could make a significant, positive impact. Now at the forefront of Word & Brown, Jessica's experience



and leadership have allowed her to grow through the ranks. She became the first woman to lead Word & Brown in 2013. Jessica represents a new breed of insurance leaders who understand and market to millennials, while supporting established benefits channels. She and her team have pioneered digital approaches that are making the industry more relevant to a new generation of employees and customers.

### Audra Wrightson, CEO

*Audra Interiors, Corona del Mar*

Audra Wrightson is a Certified Interior Designer (CID), and an active member of the NKBA. She has 20 years of education and experience as a professional interior designer. She specializes in all areas of interior design from complete home remodeling, home furnishings as well as commercial space improvements. She has received two design awards from ASID for Gold Kitchen in 2015 and Gold Bathroom in 2014. She was recognized by CBS as one of the Top 5 Interior Designers of OC. She loves giving back to the community and has been involved in several charity events and design projects such as Philharmonic House of Design, HomeAid of Orange County to remodel shelters all over Orange County, as well as Designer Runway at the Laguna Design Center, which benefited The Illumination Foundation.



### Dianne York, CEO

*DYG Cosmetics, Newport Beach*

Dianne York is the CEO of DYG Mineral Makeup. York brings her aesthetic sense of beauty to DYG as an accomplished model and actress with over 20 years of experience. York is the founder of You Glow Girl, a teenage skin care company, Cool Clenz, an acne therapy system for teenagers, and Vitaphenol, an ultra uber skin care line for adults. York was also the founder of La Jolla Spa MD, a world-renowned medical spa founded in 2002. York has co-authored the popular series "YOU Glow Girl! The Ultimate Health & Skincare Guide for Teens. York won the Golden Triangle Award from the American Academy of Dermatology for her illustrated children's book, "Fun In The Sun Safely". She has also lectured around the country about healthy skin care and beauty and has served on numerous boards and panels. York has been featured as a leading beauty expert on The Beauty & Fashion Network, Boomers Show, iVillage.com, MSN.com and has helped secure media plans for La Jolla Spa MD on The Today Show, E! Television, The Swan and in leading publication magazines such as InStyle, Elle, Marie Claire, Harper's Bazaar, Good Housekeeping and others.



### Angela Zepeda, Chief Marketing Officer

*Hyundai Motor America, Fountain Valley*

Angela Zepeda was named Hyundai's chief marketing officer in October 2019. Zepeda leads all of Hyundai's marketing and advertising activities in the U.S., including the strategic direction, brand development, national and regional advertising, experiential marketing, digital and social media, brand partnerships, and lead generation, among other responsibilities. Zepeda came to Hyundai as a seasoned marketing executive with more than 25 years of experience. She was most recently at Hyundai's agency of record INNOCEAN USA, where she spent three years and was the senior vice president and managing director, handling all operations for the Hyundai business including creative, planning and media operations. Most recently, Zepeda led the marketing team and INNOCEAN to produce Hyundai's extremely successful, Boston-themed Super Bowl ad, "Smaht Pahk." The spot ranked second overall on USA Today's Ad Meter and has over 55 million views across YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.



### Erica Zuniga, Principal

*SAA Interiors + Architecture, Irvine*

Erica Zuniga has been a loyal professional with SAA for 18 years where she worked hard to advance from her entry level position to principal within 10 years. Zuniga has achieved professional achievement through hard work and dedication to the design and real estate business. During her tenure she has managed the firms' most important clients and projects. Her humble application of her expertise and knowledge, paired with her approachable persona, have earned her the title of a respected advisor to her clients, colleagues, partners and peers. She strives to make each encounter meaningful, with the goal of elevating the spirit of those around her. Zuniga is the first female in her family to graduate college. She moved from a small, rural town in Indiana to California to pursue a career in Interior Design in a vibrant, urban environment. As a young woman in a male dominated industry, she worked hard to prove her value at the table. She quickly achieved success in the community and has earned her position as Principal at SAA. Striving for excellence and continuing education, she secured her CID and LEED certification while serving a leadership role with the firm and raising a family.





“

Each time a woman  
stands up for herself,  
without knowing it possibly,  
without claiming it,  
she stands up for  
all women.”

---

-Maya Angelou

Right here in the heart of Orange County, our team at Word & Brown General Agency, led by President Jessica Word, has helped health insurance brokers address the diverse needs of small and large businesses for more than 35 years.

From innovative sales tools and industry-leading quoting to personalized sales support, our commitment to *Service of Unequalled Excellence* is the foundation of everything we do.

We congratulate all of the nominees and honorees for a 2020 **Orange County Business Journal** Women in Business Award. Thanks for all you do – for your employers, families, and for our Southern California communities!



[wordandbrown.com](http://wordandbrown.com)

**Word&Brown®**





# Congratulations 2020 Nominees

Free Virtual Event: October 7, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Olivia Duane Adams - Alteryx Inc. | Brateil Aghasi - WISEPlace  
 Lourdes Ahn - Upshoot | Jessica Aliotti - Northwestern Mutual  
 Jodi Allen - Behr Paint Company | Courtney Aloviz - Sugar 'n Spice  
 Priscilla Alvarado - Swinerton | Tamara Anderson - Culinary and Cannabis  
 Corinne Anderson Schoepe - Fluidmaster | Suzy Arriola - Suzy Arriola and Associates; EXP Realty  
 Karen Bannister - Karen K. Bannister International LLC | Madhu Basu - Madi Solutions LLC  
 Ana Battung - Hyatt Hotels Corporation | Margaret Bayston - Laura's House  
 Andra Berezney - Branded Group | Kimberly Bernatz - CIBC Private Wealth Management  
 Kim Bibb - Villa Real Estate | Maureen Bissonnette - Ware Malcomb  
 Destin Blais - B&A Professional Grant Consulting | Ashley Bleckner - Ellevest  
 Amber Bonasoro - Berkshire Hathaway HomeService California Properties  
 Dr. Noemi Bonessio - METAseismic Inc. | Marla Borokoff - Balloonzilla  
 Dr. Sheryl Bourgeois - Chapman University | Ruth Brajevich - Ware Malcomb  
 Michelle Brown - The Agency | Kira Bruno - FORTIS Resource Partners  
 Dana Butler-Moburg - J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center  
 Leslie Calhoun - Optivest Inc. | Rita Carter - Little  
 Laura Catalino - M360 Advisors | Rashmi Chaturvedi - KAYGEN Enterprise Solutions  
 Kitty Cheung - Red Digital Cinema | Mary Cheval - Ware Malcomb  
 Gina Chironis - Clarity Wealth Management | Dana Christensen - The Agency  
 Robin Christenson - Blinking Owl Distillery | Nicole Christopherson - NMC Realty  
 Vicki Clements - Cigna | Stephanie Courtillier - Integrous Women  
 Amy Creager - Brion Jeanette Architecture | Kristin Daher - Powerhouse Communications  
 Erin Darafeev - IMD Furniture | Jennifer Davis - TMC Financing  
 Terry Dear - Stretto | Sherry Delaney - New Market Wealth Management  
 Sara D'Elia - The REMM Group | Carol DeNembo - Mountain Mike's Pizza LLC  
 Deborah Dickson - Smith Dickson, An Accounting Corp.  
 Linda DiMario - Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce  
 Marie DiSante - Carothers DiSante & Freudenberg LLP  
 Caroline Djang - Best Best & Kreiger LLP | Samantha Dorey - Everett Dorey LLP  
 Shawn Dougherty - EXOIO | Lauren Doyle - Tredway, Lumsdaine & Doyle LLP  
 Rhonda Ducote - Apriem Advisors | Tia Dwyer - Think Together  
 Neda Eaton - Irvine Public Schools Foundation  
 Lauren Ellermeyer - Beyond Fifteen Communications | Jenny Elmore - Robert Half  
 Jennifer Espinoza - Crescent Solutions | Nicola Evan - Alfin Technologies  
 Kate Fabian - Genesis Motor America | Laura Fabian - 24 Carrots  
 Gail Farber - HNTB Corporate | Breawn Felix - Swinerton  
 Trina Fleming - WHW | Kirstyann Fournier - Atlantic Aviation  
 Mandy Fry - Z SUPPLY LLC | Dr. Zena Gabriel - ZENA Medical  
 Eulynn Gargano - FutureWise Consulting | Monica Garrett - Margaux Agency  
 Kimberly Gerber - Excelebrate | Beth Goldstein - CoolSys Inc.  
 Heidi Gollledge - Jobot | Jean Gonzalez - South Coast College  
 Cindy Goss - Propel Business Solutions Inc. | Sue Grant - The Literacy Project  
 Jill Griffin - Advantage Solutions | Mary Grace Schmidt Gwin - Mariamor  
 Candice Hall - Next Advanced Medicine | Rebecca Hall - Idea Hall  
 Caterina Hall-Richards - Bracken's Kitchen | Kate Hancock - OC Facial Care Center  
 Jennifer Hannigan - Alliance Resource Group | Lata Hariharan - Svast Inc.  
 Gina Heitkamp - Gengirl Media Inc. | Heather Heleloa - THE RANCH Restaurant & Saloon  
 Olympia Hostler - Women Choose Wealth (WCW), The Lasting Pain Relief Center (LPR)  
 Anne-Marie Houston - Montage International | Neda Imbimbo - BigRentz  
 Shelley Iacona - ON ITS AXIS | Shannon Jenkins - TLD Law  
 Erin Jensen - The Treatment Skin Boutique | Michele Johnson - Latham & Watkins LLP  
 Kelly Kambs - American Technologies Inc. | Tiffany Karlin - Mueller Prost  
 Hilary Kaye - HKA, Marketing Communications  
 Sloane Keane - Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire  
 Robin King - The Shea Center | Stacie Kitts - Haskell & White LLP  
 Elena Kornoff - Surf City Still Works | Stephanie London Krogus - USA Water Polo  
 Prudence Kuai - Alliance Healthcare Services | Nina Kubicek - Helene and Nina Estates  
 Lily Lam - OneDigital | Gail Landau - Catmosphere Laguna  
 Tracy Lanyon - Allied Universal | Xandra Laskowski - OSEA Angel Investors  
 Lindsay Lawrence - First Foundation Inc. | Josephine Lee - The Pointe Shop  
 Julie Leffler - Big Hype Marketing | Katia Levit - InMode

Crystal Li - UHY LLP | Jennifer Lipinski - Wells Fargo  
 Jo-E Lopez - Snyder Langston | Maegan Lujan - Toshiba American Business Solutions  
 Gail Lynch - Mutt Lynch's | Heidi Lynn - Bank of America  
 Ria Madrid - XUMO | Mina Maghami - Pacific Sotheby's International Realty  
 Samrah Mahmoud - Troutman Sanders LLP | Colleen Maloy - David Meltzer Enterprises  
 Joi Mar - Green Street Advisors | Dawn Maroney - Alignment Healthcare  
 Kate Marr - Community Legal Aid SoCal | Kristen McCarthy - BDO USA LLP  
 Liz McKinley - Pinnacle Petroleum Inc | Nicole McMackin - Irvine Technology Corp.  
 Damaris L. Medina - Buchalter | Meghan Medlin - Medlin Workforce & Reentry Solutions LLC  
 Shachi Mehra - ADYA | Deborah Miller - YNG Studios  
 Emma Miller - BKM Capital Partners | Jennifer Mitzner - HOAG Orthopedic Institute  
 Jenna Mons Anderson - AccessElite | Jessica Moon - Your Wealth Effect  
 Barbara Moreno - Allied Universal | Darlynn Morgan - Morgan Law Group  
 Jennifer Morris - Ajenda Public Relations | Cathy T. Moses - Cox, Castle & Nicholson  
 Samantha Mudd - Staples Inc Furniture Solutions | Dawn Murphy - Northwestern Mutual  
 Alma Murray - Hyundai Motor America | Rima Nashashibi - Global Hope 365  
 Rachel Nelson - CB Technologies Inc | Talya Nevo-Hacohen - Sabra Heal Care REIT Inc.  
 Karen Nguyen - Inspired Art Wine | Mimi Nguyen - KBS  
 Kelly O'Connell - Start Giving Local | Christine Obnial - Little  
 Jennifer Olson - Apriem Advisors | Elaina O'Mahoney - MFour Mobile Research  
 Jessica Oslo - Vantis Institute LLC | Mindy Pack - Mark Co.  
 Randi Pinckes Outwater - Outwater & Pinckes LLP | Maria Pitol - Montrose Environmental  
 Brooke Pollard - TLD Law | Jennifer Povlitz - UBS Financial Services Inc.  
 Deidre Pujols - Open Gate International and Strike Out Slavery | Kim Racine - Vans - a VF Company  
 Debra Radcliff - S.11 Inc. | Sunny Rajab - Business Communications Solutions  
 Kelly Reeves - Paw Prints in the Sand Animal Rescue  
 Lori Renaud - Acti-Kare Responsive In-Home Care  
 L. Song Richardson - University of California, Irvine School of Law  
 Paige Riordan - Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge  
 Jodi Ristrom - HMWC CPAs & Business Advisors | Maryam Rofougaran - Movandi  
 Rosh Roshangah - Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A Inc.  
 Tenny Rostomian-Amin - TALG | The Amin Law Group Ltd.  
 Kristina Roviroso - LIBERTY Dental Plan | Jodi Salerno - Tudaloo  
 Talia Samuels - Outshine Public Relations | Laura Schwab - Aston Martin the Americas  
 Cynthia Sender - CareAssist Services Inc. | Traci Shirachi - The Mark USA inc  
 Monica Shukla-Belmontes, Ph.D. - Brandman University | Valerie Shumaker - LUX Custom Suit  
 Danni Remington Smithson - Pacific Western Bank  
 Jessica Spaulding - The Spaulding Agency  
 La Shawn Stanford - UPS | Susan Stansbury - Wildfire Mercantile  
 Anneke Stender - TAG Bill Pay | Paula Steurer - Sterling Public Relations  
 Autumn Strier - Miracles for Kids | Jennifer Stroffe - Friedman Stroffe & Gerard P.C.  
 Brenda Studley - Allied Universal | Mary-Christine "M.C." Sungaila - Buchalter  
 Rachel Svoboda - Sunday Brunch Agency | Linda Talamo - Hera Hub Irvine  
 Lynn Tanattanawin - Ephesoft Inc. | Jinger Tapia - Ware Malcomb  
 Debbie Taylor - FUSION OF IDEAS | Kara Taylor - ATTOM Data Solutions  
 Summer Taylor - Deloitte | Kristen Thibeault - Nybl  
 Melanie Thomas - Burnham Benefits  
 Anh Tran - JanHobbs Financial Group / Modern Wealth Law  
 Jade Tran - Wood, Smith, Henning & Berman LLP  
 Jenny Tran - Brown & Streza LLP | Janie Tsao - Miven Inc. | Rachel Valentine - Vincit  
 Dr. Patricia Wallace - The Advanced Center for Pelvic Medicine & Reconstructive Surgery  
 Judith Ware - Ware Disposal | Carolina Weidler - H. Hendy Associates  
 Jessica Welch - Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce  
 Genevieve West - Howard Building Corporation  
 Charlotte Wiederholt - Studio Other | Sophie Wilensky - Toyota  
 Sara Wissmueller - Sonendo Inc. | Diane Wittenberg - Haskell & White LLP  
 Debora Wondercheck - Arts and Learning Conservatory  
 Dr. Tammy Wong - Fostering Executive Leadership Inc.  
 Ali Woodard - Fristers | Jessica Word - Word & Brown Insurance Administrators Inc.  
 Audra Wrightson - Audra Int | Dianne York - DYG Cosmetics  
 Angela Zepeda - Hyundai Motor America | Erica Zuniga - SAA Interiors + Architecture

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