

Mentors Across America

Advice and mentoring experiences from 400 women across 40 cities nationwide.



bizwomen
THE BUSINESS JOURNALS

Mentors Across America

"My favorite mentors guided me to act, respond and manage to my long-term potential and aspirations. They helped me understand IQ got me in the door and in my seat, but EQ would take me the distance." – Carol Lowe, Senior Vice President and CFO, Sealed Air, Charlotte

Carol Lowe is one of more than 400 women who shared their favorite mentoring experiences with Business Journal readers across the country earlier this year. This is the first time ALL of these quotes have been published in one place. It's our way of saying "thanks" for signing up for the Bizwomen newsletter.

Bizwomen is a website produced by The Business Journals that highlights the successes of women in every workplace from tech entrepreneurs to marketers to members of Congress. You'll find their quotes in this compilation and their stories on Bizwomen.com. You can meet many of them at our annual mentoring event, Mentoring Monday, scheduled in each of the 40 cities on the next page for Monday, April 3, 2017.

We hope you share these quotes with your colleagues and friends, mentors and mentees. We're using [#mentoringmatters](#) as a reminder of the power of mentoring.

If you have ideas for Bizwomen.com, questions about Mentoring Monday or mentoring experiences of your own to share, please reach out to me at maryjohnson@bizjournals.com.

Sincerely,



Mary Johnson
Editor, Bizwomen.com




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Bizwomen covers 40 major cities across the country, selecting 400 quotes from inspiring business women nationwide.

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Inspire Others


Did you find a quote that spoke to you? Share an inspirational quote with your coworkers and friends by clicking on one of the social icons found throughout the collection. 

Albany



Dawn Abbuhl, President

Repeat Business Systems

“I had a rough childhood and thus spent a lot of time with my grandmother. She never worked and didn’t drive but still had many lessons to teach. The most important one was that true happiness is doing something for others. I use this tenet acting as my guiding principle.” 


Tami M. Cole, President and CEO

DocStrats

“Two mentors, now lifelong friends. Daniel Kenney, Director, Ernst & Young: ‘You’ve got to crawl, walk, run, before you can FLY!’ Sage advice I use in every new challenge that crosses my path. Raymond ‘Charles’ Keith, Director, PwC: ‘You’ll catch more flies with honey – a useful approach to any situation!’” 


Miriam Dushane, Managing Director

Linium

“My mom and my very first boss and mentor, an HR Director of a bank, instilled in me the value of treating everyone with kindness, respect and dignity regardless of status or title. Be true to the Golden Rule and it will be true to you.” 


Sue Groesbeck, Interim Head of School

Emma Willard

“As a young Education Administrator, I arrived enthusiastically at work where my mentor and boss would greet me every day with ‘Sue, I am crazy nuts about you!’ From him, I learned to compliment generously and genuinely.” 


Lisa Henderson, Owner

Duncan & Cahill Inc.

“After submitting a really difficult bid fraught with last minute number crunching, my father would say, ‘Well that was exciting.’ And if we were not the successful bidder we would troubleshoot the bid so, ‘We could learn from it.’ I learned to enjoy what I do even though full of risk and often burdened with deadlines. I look forward to coming to work just like my mentoring father did.” 


Sabrina Houser, Chief Executive Officer

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Capital Region

“He believed in me, more than I believed in myself and it changed my life.” 


Annmarie Lanesey, President

Greane Tree Technology

“This may sound hokey, but one of the secrets to my success is staying positive. Whenever I face a challenge, I picture the situation going exactly the way I want it to. I imagine it working out as well as it possibly can, for the good of all involved.” 


Lauren Payne, Managing Partner

Spiral Design Studio

“My graphic design professor in college, Muneera Spence, is a mentor who remains influential in shaping my career path. She opened my eyes to ‘the power of design’ – how it can enrich and transform a person, a business, a community and our world!” 


Nicole Stein, Senior Vice President of Marketing

SEFCU

“I call them my seven ‘sisters.’ From my mother and grandmother to my high school principal, college advisor, a fellow English major, and two bosses in the ‘real world’ – each bestowed upon me knowledge that has helped mold who I am today. ... Teaching me the greatest lesson: Success comes from listening.” 

Faith Takes, Owner

Empire Education


“Although now retired, my greatest mentor was my older sister, Deb. The most important lesson of all, though, was this: Any executive (woman’s or man’s) greatest asset is their human capital. Treat your employees right and they work their hearts out for you. She was so serious about this, that when she finally had an opportunity to do her master’s degree she did it in Management Science with a concentration in Human Resources. I followed suit.” 

Albuquerque




Michelle Coons, President

First National Bank

“Be ready to write a personal check for those organizations or causes you believe in and devote your time. That personal check speaks louder than words.” 


Lisa Abeyta, Founder and CEO

APPCityLife Inc.

“When someone gives you a compliment, don’t insult their intelligence by dismissing it, brushing it off or telling them they’re wrong — even if the compliment makes you uncomfortable. Just say, ‘Thank you.’ ” 


Karen King, Chair and Owner

Vistage New Mexico

“Laura Burt, principal fundraiser for the global Hunger Project, once told me when I was feeling overwhelmed about a project I’d taken on, ‘Somehow you look like a woman who could handle that.’ Boy, did that sort me out. I remember her words whenever I doubt myself.” 


Becky Prescott, Plant Manager

General Mills

“I had a mentor share that the best leaders are the best listeners. You don’t have to prove that you are the smartest person in the room. You will do better to listen and observe and then share your thoughts. As well, it’s important to let your team shine. Let them be the ones to have all the answers.” 


Jill C. Klar, Interim CEO

Chief Operating Officer UNM Medical Group Inc.

“It’s easy to be mindful; it’s difficult to remember to be mindful.” 


Carrie Mettling, Owner

Rebel Donut LLC

“Eat that frog. I found myself putting off the more non-enjoyable parts of my job in favor of things that were more fun and interesting. By taking care of the ‘frogs’ while they’re fresh, it’s much easier to maintain a balance when running my business.” 


Cynthia Schultz, CEO

Bradbury Stamm Construction Inc.

“Gut reaction matters. No matter how solid advice seems, if it doesn’t fit with your philosophy, don’t follow it.” 


Leean Kravitz, Senior Director

Public Affairs and Government Relations, Fidelity Investments


“1. Don’t burn bridges. You never know who might be your boss or your customer somewhere down the road. 2. You can’t always control what happens around you. But you can choose how you react to it. Embrace change and stay flexible.” 

Michelle Peacock, Family Nurse Practitioner,

Veterans Administration

“A reoccurring theme with all my mentors has been to continue to work on improving yourself. As a leader you can always learn and grow; once you stop learning, you stop growing.” 

Jessica Woods, Financial advisor
Northwestern Mutual


“Being broke is hard. Becoming wealthy is hard. Choose your hard.” 

Atlanta




Teya Ryan, President

Georgia Public Broadcasting

“Gail Evans was executive vice president of CNN. She reached down into the ranks to a woman who showed promise, but who maybe would be derailed because she didn’t sweat the small stuff. Gail didn’t have to do this. She could have watched from the sidelines. She could have let me walk around clueless. Instead, in one short moment, she mentored me and perhaps changed my career direction. That’s a real mentor. Someone, who is not asked, sees where they can make a difference in a young woman’s life and takes the initiative to help.” 

Martha Finn Brooks, President and COO

Novelis (retired); director of Bombardier, Jabil Circuit, CARE, ACFB

“It is difficult for me to choose one single ‘best’ mentor since I benefited from so many over the years, but forced to pick just one, it would be Henry Schact. He was the CEO of Cummins when I joined as a young MBA. He retired early in my Cummins career but was always available to take my call in times of big transitions. Henry’s values, behavior and leadership style have stayed in my mind over many years.” 

Laura Turner Seydel, Trustee


Turner Foundation

“I have had many blessings in my life: a loving husband, three beautiful children and a father whose passion inspires me every day of my life. I’ve also been fortunate to have Pat Mitchell as a mother-in-law who has been an incredible role model for me (and for many others). She has an incredible list of accomplishments including having been the president and CEO of the Paley Center for Media and the former CEO of PBS. Her leadership and vision inspired me to make empowering women and girls an important part of my life’s work, and it is a vision I hope to pass down to my daughters.” 

Pat Upshaw-Monteith, President and CEO

Leadership Atlanta

“This question has caused me to reflect on never having had a true mentor. I have worked primarily in non-profit organizations which tend to lack the depth of management that fosters mentorship opportunities. There have certainly been individuals who have influenced me, but not one that I can identify as having been a true mentor. I do, however, think that mentorship is an important, and often essential, component of maximal career development. Most people can benefit from identifying people who have what they want, and being coached by them to reach their goals. This

is one of the reasons for my deep investment in Leadership Atlanta.” 

Denise Starling, Executive Director


Livable Buckhead

“I have never really had one official mentor, so maybe that is why I picture Yoda or Mr. Miyagi – someone older and wiser who speaks in fortune cookie sentences. While I’ve never worked closely with a guru of that sort, I have received excellent guidance from many people of varying ages and backgrounds. Two that rise to the top are Scotty Green and Elizabeth Gill. Scotty taught me how to navigate politics and how to achieve your goals without creating enemies along the way. Those are critical skills for successfully collaborating with government and community organizations on a project like PATH400. Scotty also taught me a communication tactic that I rely on daily – communicate an idea by starting with the end and then show the audience how to get there. Scotty and I used to butt heads but when we ended up in the middle we had a great product, guaranteed. At the other end of the spectrum, Elizabeth has taught me about service and what it means to really give back to a community. She gives selflessly and tirelessly – I have seen her work doggedly to make our community better. She is that ideal combination of strength, resources and a smile. I encourage everyone to look for mentors in their daily lives – you can learn

something from everyone you meet, even if they don't wear the official 'mentor' title." 


Alicia Philipp, President

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

"For over 15 years, Dan Sweat, then CEO of Central Atlanta Progress, served as my mentor and that of the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. He guided, challenged, opened doors, and brought humor to a 23-year-old woman with big dreams for our foundation and our region. I can't imagine how hard the entrée to those original leaders who established funds at the Community Foundation would have been without his endorsement. Many of the contacts I nurtured under his guidance remain treasured friends of the Foundation today and have been instrumental in our growth." 


Mary Beth Cutshall, Senior Vice President

Acquisitions and business development, Hospitality Ventures Management Group

"I had the serendipitous opportunity to meet Irv Nagle, a retired 88-year-old businessman. After meeting, Irv quickly became my mentor, both professionally and personally. Our meetings, and friendship, had a significantly positive impact on me. There's no doubt, I am the business woman I am today because of this gracious and special man." 

Yvonne Williams, President and CEO

Perimeter Community Improvement Districts

“Throughout my career, especially in the mid 1990s when I served as CEO of the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Betty Siegel has been an inspiration and a valuable role model for me. In addition, Liane Levetan has had a profound impact on me, especially in my current career journey as president and CEO of Perimeter Community Improvement Districts.” 

Hala Moddelmog, President and CEO

Metro Atlanta Chamber

“The mentor who has had the greatest impact on me was not within the typical context of a mentoring role, and she did not realize she was serving as a mentor to me at the time. While I was CEO of Susan G. Komen, the international breast cancer foundation, one of my direct reports was a brilliant and dedicated woman. She was also extremely introverted. While I tend to be drawn to outgoing and extroverted individuals, I learned from this woman the value and importance of stopping to sincerely listen to those whose voices are sometimes drowned out. Her contributions were invaluable, but our most productive conversations were primarily one-on-one. This has been one of my biggest life lessons, and I admire her to this day for showing me the importance of really hearing from all


members of my team – even the quiet ones.” 

Austin




Gail Page, Consortia Health

Director and co-founder

“My first mentor was a gentlemen who always shared the good but equally shared ways for improvement. He was motivating and really pushed me out of my comfort zone. In particular, his words still stick in my mind, ‘ Gail, embrace who you are, do not apologize for being who you are, and use this to distinguish yourself.’ This was a huge step for me and totally turned my fear into confidence.” 

Leslie Wingo, President and CEO


Sanders Wingo

“My mentor, Robert V. Wingo, who is also my father, has several Bob Wingo-isms. One of my favorites is ‘pigs get fat; hogs get slaughtered.’ Basically, it means don’t be greedy; there is plenty for everyone to share when it comes to clients and working with employees.” 


Gay Gaddis, Founder and CEO

T3


“While PR Director of Baylor University Medical Center, I awoke to a State Department call about an international, high-profile political prisoner becoming a patient. I went to my boss, Boone Powell, Sr. He said, ‘Just because you think

you could screw this up tells me that you absolutely won't. I have confidence in you.” 

Chris Plonsky, Women's Athletic Director and Executive
Senior Associate Athletic Director
University of Texas

“Donna Lopiano was Texas' first full-time women's athletics director. Our women's teams had so many wonderfully successful years in the early 1980s, dominating competition, graduating our students, advancing them to great careers. But after each spring, Donna would gather our 27-member staff and say, 'Let's pretend we screwed it all up and need to do better.' This really influenced us to learn and press forward with renewed energy and a fresh approach.” 

Heather Brunner, CEO
WP Engine


“You can set a very high bar for performance without intimidation and yielding power, but by leading from the front and lifting people up to their maximum potential.” 

Baltimore




Nancy McColgan, Senior Vice President and Managing Director

PNC Hawthorn Family Wealth

“When I was a new people manager I was overwhelmed with how to deal with a difficult employee. A professor from Loyola University told me, ‘Leadership takes courage. Help employees recognize when they are creating problems because people are often completely unaware of how their behaviors impact others.’” 

Betty J. Hines, President and Chief Collaboration Officer, CEO Sounding Board and Chapter Chair


Baltimore Women Presidents’ Organization

“After receiving a prestigious honor, I was excited to share with business colleagues. The chill of the responses dampened my spirit. Learn to accept that everyone doesn’t share in your blessings and joy. It’s important to surround yourself with like-minded people. A peer advisory group. Successful people compliment success!” 


Kathleen Getz, Dean

Loyola University Maryland’s Sellinger School of Business and Management


“Dr. Richard Durand, former Dean of the Kogod School of Business at American University, often forced me to get out

of my comfort zone. When I stumbled, he never told me what I should have done. Instead, he always asked me what I learned. I ended up learning a lot.” 

Deborah Kielty, President and Executive Director
World Trade Center Institute


“Upon my promotion to GM Worldwide Strategic Planning at P&G, our CEO John Pepper said to me ‘Don’t forget the smaller countries; they will really appreciate your visits – and you will learn.’ It was a life lesson – to seek and appreciate insights from every market and every individual” 

Linda DeLaurentis, Vice President / General Manager
Comcast Spotlight Baltimore and Salisbury

“Always try to diffuse situations with humor. If you can end a conversation with the other person laughing with you, then you have left a positive impression. Just make sure they are not laughing at you!” 


Bryn Parchman, President and Chief Executive Officer
Port Discovery Children’s Museum

“A woman I worked for at an ad agency had a favorite saying (of unknown origin): ‘Don’t be a peacock today because you

could be a feather duster tomorrow!’ – in other words, stay focused, be humble and don’t burn any bridges.” 


Cara Joyce, President

Urban Pirates

“‘Get as much education as you can, no one can take it away from you’ and ‘Work smart, not hard’ are sentiments my father impressed upon me. He valued education above all. His advice stressed that you must have the willingness to think through a ‘situation’ or mistakes will be made.” 


Diane Devaney, President

Devaney & Associates

“I am not a business book person, and I tend to live my life by my beliefs which are ‘Work hard and lead by example’ and ‘Family always comes first.’ My company is 25 years old this year and I am blessed to have employees who have been here for 16 years, two for 15 years and another for 13 years and we have one client that is in their 19th year working with us.” 


Deborah S. Phelps, Director

Education Foundation of the Baltimore County Public Schools, Inc.

“Playing the keys of a piano beautifully, she had a boundless passion for music. Upon graduation from high school, she declined a scholarship to Peabody to study her craft. Her affection and her longing for life exceeded the piano keys to that of nurturing a family of four, spanning decades in ages. Growing up as the second born, of a total of four, two words would flow fluently from her lips, ‘FAMILY FIRST.’ That meek but powerful message reverberates daily in my heart and I exercise it as a mother, a grandmother and an educator to hundreds of thousands.” 

Bonnie Phipps, SVP and Group Operating Executive


Ascension Health/ St. Agnes Health System

“My CEO said to me before my first board meeting as a CFO Don’t speak just because you think you have to and if you don’t know an answer – don’t fake it, just say ‘I don’t know but will get back to you.’ ‘I have lived by that advice!’” 


Birmingham




Nancy Goedecke, CEO and Chairman of the Board
Mayer Electric Supply Co. Inc.

“My father, my mentor, has always said, ‘Do good and be better.’ He also lives by the Golden Rule. It is pretty simple advice, but it has worked for him, and it is working for me.” 

Barb Godin, Chief Credit Officer and Senior Executive Vice President
Regions Financial Corp. and Regions Bank


“Bruce Birmingham, Scotiabank’s president, told me: ‘I can pay anyone off the street to give me good news. I pay you to bring me the bad news. I may not like it and I might even get upset, but we can’t fix it if we don’t know about it.’ ” 

Tanveer Patel, Co-Founder & CEO
ConcertCare

“I live by it every day: ‘If you want to win you got to play to win.’ That’s from my mentor, Susan Matlock.” 


Sally Mackin, Executive Director

Woodlawn Foundation

“Part of my job at Parisian was to compile performance data for board meetings. I triple-checked every number. Hal Abrams left a meeting once to tell me ‘the three-hole punch does not align on my binder.’ My takeaway: accuracy is the minimum expectation. Excellence is what we strive for.” 


Kathy G. Mezrano, President & CEO

Kathy G. & Company

“Years ago, I did a seminar at Great Performances in New York. At the time, Liz Neuman, president, said ‘the person that controls the venues controls the business.’ I took that to heart and found it to be true when we managed several ‘crown jewel’ venues in the city.” 


Dr. Deborah VOLTZ, Dean

School of Education at UAB

“My grandmother was one of my most influential mentors. She used to say: ‘Good, better, best. Never let it rest until the good is better and the better best.’” 


Leigh Davis, SVP and Deputy General Counsel

Southern Co. Services Operations; general counsel for Southern Nuclear

“My insight is just a few words and consistent advice from several of my favorite mentors over the years. ‘Be confident in being your best self.’” 


Valerie Ramsbacher, Senior Vice President

Corporate Advocacy, Regions


“‘Don’t tell anyone at your company you know how to make coffee or fix the copy machine.’” 

Frances King Quick, Shareholder

Maynard Cooper & Gale PC

“Early mentoring advice I have repeated often is to find time in your day for professional development, particularly for activities that benefit your profession or develop leadership skills. Make responsible choices by saying yes when appropriate, but also be willing and able to say no. Then, follow through.” 


Debra Nelson, Head of Corporate Communications,
Director
Brasfield & Gorrie, LLC

"A mentor once said, 'This, too, shall pass,' after listening to me lament about a mistake. As a young professional, I was embarrassed and thought my career would suffer. I soon realized what my mentor already knew: mistakes are opportunities for learning and growth. The next day, no one remembered the mistake." 


Boston




Maia Heymann, Senior Managing Director and
General Partner
Converge Venture Partners

“Compete until you win; do the right thing; don’t oversell; deliver what you promise; be the person you’d want to work with – I still draw on the example set by my manager from 20+ years ago, Chris McCabe (now a Managing Director at Cowen), for how to be successful and be a good person.” 

Dani Monroe, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer
Partners HealthCare


“As said frequently by one of my mentors Leslie Mays, Former VP, Talent and Inclusion for Avon Products Inc.: ‘You must do great work, but aim to confidently rise above the rest and not with fear. It’s the only thing that will distinguish you, and always remind yourself that decisions made from a place of fear will never be good decisions.’” 

Dusty Rhodes, President
Conventures Inc.

“In the business world my friend, it’s not whether you get hit hard, unfairly and get brutally knocked down, because it will happen. What really matters is how quickly you get back up.” 


Nicole Sahin, CEO

Globalization Partners

“Like many Americans, I come from a long line of immigrants, and my dad is the embodiment of the American dream. He worked incredibly hard to pull himself up by the bootstraps and created a strong foundation for himself and his family out of hardscrabble beginnings. His words of wisdom that resonate with me today are ‘Do what you love and success will follow.’” And also: “‘Go Big or Go Home!’ ” 

Hila Bahar, Director of Medical Affairs


Global Regulatory Partners

“Five lessons I’ve learned from Dr. John Potts, distinguished professor of medicine at MGH that I apply every day: Be humble, loyal and honest; lead with bold vision; people are the most important asset to invest in; care deeply and support younger generations to succeed; anything is possible, even at age 84!” 

Mary Beth McMahon, President and CEO


Special Olympics Massachusetts

“There were many women I thought of when asked who my favorite mentor was – grandmothers, mother, sisters, incredible Special Olympics athletes and probably one

of the most influential woman in my life, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who inspired me to believe that in life we are all equal on and off the playing field.” 


Deborah Re, CEO

Big Sister Association of Greater Boston

“The majority of my career I worked with men who taught me to play the game, but I wanted to change that game. One of my male mentors said ‘Deb, you need to be less passionate and outspoken.’ Today, as a mentor to young women, I tell them ‘Let your passion shine and always speak out on what’s important to you.’ ” 

Jayanthi Narasimhan, Founder and CEO


WatchRx Inc.

“My mom who is my first and foremost mentor always encourages me and tells me ‘Never give up your dreams! Patience, Persistence and Perseverance will make your dream come true.’ ” 

Geri Denterlein, President


Denterlein

“The best advice I received early in my career at WBZ

was from my boss, John Spinola. Seeing that I was a hard worker he commented, 'Geri, you really keep your nose to the grindstone. But, if that's all you do, all you get is a shiny nose.' With those words he encouraged me to get out into the community and develop contacts in politics, businesses and media which would serve me well throughout my career." 

Colette Phillips, President and CEO

Colette Phillips Communications


"One of my sisters, Roma Phillips Spencer, who has become one of my great mentors and advisors says, 'Always remember the difference between 'bitter' and 'better' is one letter. When things don't turn out the way you'd like don't be bitter figure out how to make it better and be better.' " 

Buffalo




Ellen Grant, Senior Vice President Chapter Programs

Say Yes to Education

“I stand on others’ shoulders for help, it’s my job to pass it on and help others. Find your passion in life and go for the job that gives you that passion daily.” 


Denise Gueli, CPA / Partner / Team leader

Buffalo commercial team / The Bonadio Group CPAs & More

“I feel I achieved success the hard way in some respects, and I’d like to make the path easier for other women. No matter what business you’re in, relationships are key. Be a person people want to work with and you’ll excel in your career.” 


Mary Jean Jakubowski, Director

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library

“Women need to band together and direct change. Be committed. Do not be afraid of failure. Take responsibility for your actions, be honest, be forthright and understand diplomacy and how to be diplomatic.” 


Allegra Jaros, President

Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo

"I love seeing women succeed and rise to the top and if I can be a part of fostering that potential in others, then I will take every opportunity to do so. Ask yourself what purpose you want to have in life and let that guide your career." 


Joy Kuebler, President

Joy Kuebler Landscape Architect PC

"I work in a male-dominated industry, and after many years I am often still the only woman at the table. Helping more women be successful helps entire industries to evolve and strengthen." 


Joyce Markiewicz, Executive Vice President

Catholic Health; CEO, Home and Community Based Care, Catholic Health

"Women are exceptional thinkers and doers but many are still filled with self-doubt. I want young women to believe in their capabilities and share their talents with one another. Working hard isn't enough. You need to continue to learn something new every day in order to understand what is relevant in your field." 


Jennifer Parker, CEO

Jackson Parker Communications LLC

"I am passionate about the work (professional and community) I do and am energized when I meet other women with the same passion. My advice is to work smart, work with innovation, work with a passion to make a difference." 


Sharon Randaccio, CEO / Owner

Performance Management Partners Inc./RedSiren Boutique

"I have achieved more than I ever dreamed. I'd like to payback forward for all the great mentoring I received. My advice is to know who you are, play to your strengths, network like crazy and dream big!" 


Karen Spaulding, Vice President of Philanthropic Support

The John R. Oishei Foundation

"Women hold up half the sky! These are the things that count: work ethic, generosity and kindness." 

Michelle Sullivan, CPA / Director

Freed Maxick CPAs P.C.

“Being a part of the process to help develop and encourage young professionals is so very rewarding when you get to watch them succeed and evolve throughout their career. Work hard, do what you love, surround yourself with equally ambitious people and people you admire.” 

Charlotte




Judy Rose, Director of Athletics

Charlotte 49ers, UNC Charlotte

“Early in my career Dale Halton, former CEO of Charlotte Pepsi Cola, invited me to important city events so that I could mingle with the people that I ‘needed’ to know. She also emphasized the importance of hiring the right people. What started as a professional relationship, blossomed into a friendship.” 

Linda Lockman-Brooks, President

Lockman-Brooks Marketing Services

“Paula Smith was my mentor early in my corporate career. She set the example of relentless preparation, modeled building connecting circles not silos, finding common ground with others and building trust with teammates. Paula was a leader with the ability to build a network while shaping authentic relationships that are sustainable.” 

Susan DeVore, President and CEO


Premier, Inc.

“My mentor was Terry Linn, who recently retired as Premier’s Senior Vice President of Corporate Development and Strategy. For 20+ years, Terry was an honest voice and sounding board. He encouraged me to speak up, solve

problems and capture opportunities, always giving me room to grow and ask questions.” 


Theresa Drew, Managing Partner

Carolina's Practice, Deloitte & Touche LLP

“A mentor is a vital asset for career success. Sharon Allen, retired Chairman of Deloitte, has been my mentor for over 30 years. She supported my promotions and opened doors for leadership opportunities throughout my career at Deloitte. I continue to seek her counsel and consider her a friend.” 


Pat Rodgers, President and CEO

Rodgers Builders, Inc.

“Sister Mary Jerome Spradley was president of Mercy Hospital and one of few women healthcare administrators. She taught me the importance of being willing to take a risk. She pressed for diversity by bringing laypeople and non-Catholics onto Mercy's board because she knew diversity would make the organization stronger, and it did.” 


Jennifer Leary, Managing Partner

The Carolinas and Georgia, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

“My favorite mentor is my Grandmother (93) who has an amazing energy and continues to work a few days per week! She teaches the power of positive energy, following your passion and maintaining a strong work ethic. These life lessons provide a foundation for my life and my career.” 


Dr. Pamela Davies, President

Queens University of Charlotte

“We were an unlikely pair – he an executive, me an educator; he a Marine-like leader, me a relational leader; he a hunter, me a vegetarian. But Hugh McColl, my extraordinary mentor, taught me to dream big, think strategically and to build great teams. His insights and wisdom changed my life.” 


Carol Lowe, Senior Vice President and CFO

Sealed Air

“My favorite mentors guided me to act, respond and manage to my long-term potential and aspirations. They helped me understand IQ got me in the door and in my seat, but EQ would take me the distance.” 


Cheryl Richards Ph.D., CEO and Regional Dean

Northeastern University-Charlotte

“I’ve been blessed with many mentors, a few champions, and several advocates in my career. As a mentor, Dr. Tony Zeiss provided me with new perspectives and challenged me to look within myself to answer a significant question, ‘What’s the meaning of life?’ Through our conversations, I was able to personalize my answer, ‘To have fun and add value.’ ” 

Astrid Chirinos, Chief Development Executive

Latin American Economic Development Corporation


“Carol was an accomplished, successful woman of substance and an amazing servant leader. Her legacy in me resonates every day not only in her mentoring, but as a sponsor that took my talent and potential beyond what I could do or be. My mentees and I are grateful for her gifts which keep on giving to us and are impacting many!” 

Jane McIntyre, Retired Executive Director / United Way

Central Carolinas and Director


Charitable Giving, Faison Enterprises

“Michael Rose (retired president of Carolinas Healthcare Foundation), who I met 1991 at the beginning of a nine-year

career with Carolinas HealthCare. Michael was a counselor, advisor, faithful friend from day one and still today; he's a listener, teacher, encourager of risks with no regrets." 

Carol Lovin, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer

Carolinas HealthCare System


"I have not had one favorite mentor; I have had many. Some knew they played that role, and some did not, but collectively, they passed on diverse learnings that have significantly impacted my life. I close out every day having learned something, so to my hundreds of mentors — thank you!" 

Cincinnati




Candace McGraw, CEO

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport


“Jacque Shuck, my first airport boss and a recovering lawyer herself, offered the following when I started my job as an aviation attorney straight from law school: ‘People make mistakes — that’s why they put erasers on pencils. Just don’t make the same mistake twice and wear out the eraser.’ ” 

Jackie Reau, CEO

Game Day Communications


“She was a true inspiration for me during her life. While she may have not said the exact words to me: ‘Pay it forward,’ she certainly lived by them. I admired the impact of her service to others, and try to offer my time and resources to the community as often as I can.” 

Francie Hiltz, Chair-elect Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden Board and Chair-elect Cincinnati Symphony Board
Immediate Past Chair Cincinnati Museum Center

“Be the first to offer your hand and look the person in the eye, this handshake will symbolize that you are trustworthy, respectful and confident. This advice on the power of a handshake was given by my beloved uncle, Harold Schott, and has served me well for many years.” 


Julia Poston, Managing Partner / Assurance Leader

Cincinnati Office / Ohio Valley

“I’ve been fortunate to have many mentors. It’s hard to pinpoint just one! And, I have been very grateful to them as they have risen in their careers, they brought me along, providing guidance and counsel that helped me advance in my career. One mentor, in particular, Beth Brooke, Global Vice Chair of Public Policy at EY, taught me, by example, to ‘lift as you climb.’ I believe wholeheartedly in this and work very hard to pay it forward within my own office and network of colleagues.” 

Susan Zaunbrecher, Partner


Dinsmore

“When I was a young lawyer, Cliff Roe, retired Dinsmore Managing partner, often asked me for some sort of legal analysis for a client. If I answered him starting with ‘I think,’ he would stop me and firmly say, ‘Clients don’t care what you think, they care about what you know.’ I learned to answer questions with confidence.” 

Sandy Walker, President and CEO


YMCA of Greater Cincinnati

Retired CEO of the YMCA of Greater New York, Jack Lund,

consistently emphasized that ‘It’s all about leadership,’ reminding me that the talent surrounding us is everything. Jack’s philosophy was “‘get a lot done and have fun.’ Wisdom, a listening ear, authentic relationships and encouragement matter.” 


Kay Geiger, President

Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky PNC Bank

“Sister Jean Patrice Harrington, former college president and pioneer for women in the board room, told me to ‘Listen more and ask the hard questions.’ She reminded me of the proverb ‘When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.’ That has inspired me to strive daily to learn as I lead.” 


Johnna Reeder, President and CEO

REDI Cincinnati

“I’ll always remember what one of my favorite University of Memphis professors said, ‘You can have it all. You just can’t have it all at the same time.’ Through the years, it reminded me to focus on doing one thing at a time – and doing that one thing really well.” 

Jill Meyer, President and CEO

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber


“ ‘Keep your eye on the ball,’ from Dick Goehler, former attorney and chair of the firm’s litigation department prior to his death.” 

Columbus




Darla King, President/Owner

King Business Interiors, Inc.

“My dad always saw the best in people, situations and me. His encouragement and support, whether it was in sports in school or like now in my business, they have meant the world to me. The simple words like ‘I am so proud of you’ go a long way.” 


Pamela Springer, President and CEO

ORIS Intel


“Greg Tillar had a great impact on me. He had a tremendous capability in being able to relate and coach. His ability to make you understand the how while keeping your head up, never losing site of the why, was quite a gift.” 

Sandy Doyle-Ahern, President


EMH&T

“My graduate school advisor, Dr. Gene Willeke, taught me to round out my technical science education with broader thinking to engage in defining all aspects of a problem in order to come to the best solution, not the easiest solution and I will always be grateful for that.” 


Lisa Courtice, Executive Vice President
Columbus Foundation

“Bill Burke, president of The Washington Center, was my best mentor because he gave me opportunities that stretched beyond my experience, which helped channel my social skills and build fundraising expertise. He was frugal and determined to get the most out of my starting-salary potential. Great timing for me!” 

Janet Jackson, President and CEO
United Way of Central Ohio


“Marian Wright Edelman inspires me to live a life of service. I think of her words, ‘Service is the rent we pay for living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time,’ everyday and I try to live by them.” 

Melissa Ingwersen, Central Ohio Market President
KeyBank

“Mike Whalen, my first boss in banking, was my best mentor. As a recent college graduate without a Finance degree he taught me technical skills, coached me and gave me confidence in my abilities. He regularly provided me with stretch assignments that helped broaden my understanding of the business. And, he made it fun!” 


Nancy Kramer, Founder and Chairman

Resource/Ammirati, An IBM Company

“Ruth Mount, dean of students at OSU, was a great mentor. My own mother did not work out of the home, and Ruth helped me see what was possible for a ‘career’ woman. We lived next door to each other, and many evenings I would seek her words of wisdom.” 

Paula Brooks, Commissioner

Franklin County


“Mary Miller Young paved the way for others through her employment at Lazarus and her volunteerism, where our paths crossed. She taught me the values of standing up for what you believe in a respectful and convincing way. Her motto was, ‘I’d rather wear out than rust out!’ ” 

Dallas




Tina Young, President and CEO

Marketwave


“A favorite mentor of mine is Brenda Jackson, retired Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer at Oncor, the Texas electric utility. She encouraged me to listen, read the room and invite discussion to improve decision-making. She also modeled community connection and giving back, showing me servant leadership in action.” 

Valerie Freeman, CEO


Imprimis Group, Inc.

“For many years I served with Ebby Halliday on the Board of the Dallas County Community College District Foundation. As I got to know her, I learned that a CEO could be gracious, humble, diplomatic, humorous and extremely successful. Ebby always sent me handwritten notes of encouragement and support as I moved through the leadership roles on the Foundation Board. Those notes reflect the saying, ‘They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.’ I wanted to follow her example. My other mentors are the people in my network that I’ve built over 30 plus years that have given me great support and advice as well as encouragement in tough times.” 

Beth Bull, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Communities Foundation of Texas


"I've been lucky to have had many mentors in my career and it's impossible to name a favorite. Best advice? Understand how you uniquely add value; clarify your three to five major priorities; take time for yourself; acknowledge your accomplishments; you can do this, you really can." 

Liz Trocchio Smith, Founder and CEO
The Trocchio Advantage, LLC


"During my career, I had a wonderful mentor that didn't know was mentoring me. I was so impressed with how she handled herself that I quietly watched, listened and learned. Her poise, professional appearance, strength, kindness and respect toward everyone taught me a lot. For that, I'm truly grateful." 

Dr. Suzanne M. Carter, Executive Program Director and
Professor of Professional Practice in Strategy
TCU Neeley School of Business Executive MBA Program

" 'If you want to be noticed, you have to go beyond your current job description.' An early mentor gave me this advice on my first job. Although the advice seems obvious to me now, at the time, I felt as if she were speaking

a foreign language. Doing anything beyond what was expected of me felt like I was overstepping my bounds. Those words changed my perception of how to make a good impression, and forever changed my behaviors.” 


Ginger Shelhimer, Head of Mergers and Acquisitions /
Global Talent Acquisition
Ericsson

“Everyone should have ‘cheerleaders’ to support them in their career. Lora Villarreal, PhD was mine. She has the ability to see talents and strengths in others and expertly leverage those skills. She continuously placed me in new positions that required solution thinking and strong problem-solving skills, expanding my opportunities across HR. This was the foundation of my future success.” 

Janet DeBerardinis, Chief Information Officer
Caliber Collision Centers

“I learned the art of successful IT execution from Clay Cipione during the mid-90s when transitioning from an engineer to management. He instilled in me that regardless the size of your organization, you should always run it with the discipline and structure of a Fortune 100 company as that will raise the bar and deliver spectacular results. That has stayed with me over all these years and has never failed”

Michelle Vopni, Dallas Office Managing Partner
Ernst & Young LLP


“My most impactful mentors recognized my potential early in my career and challenged me to constantly move outside my comfort zone and ‘play up’ to the next level. These mentors provided experiences for me that ensured I was ready and effective with each promotion.” 

Dayton




Erin Hoeflinger, President

Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Ohio

"I had an amazing mentor who taught me about visionary leadership. Her motto – and now mine – is, as E.B. White wrote, 'I get up every morning determined to both change the world and to have one hell of a good time. Sometimes that makes planning the day difficult.' " 


Anne Eiting Klamar, M.D., Chair

Midmark Corporation

"My mentor has people skills that I so admire and have worked to emulate because they are so effective. She ties these 'soft skills' to business results and successes in such a way that you cannot refute the importance of the more subtle aspects of leadership in business." 


Jenell R. Ross, President

Bob Ross Buick-GMC, Mercedes-Benz of Centerville and Bob Ross Alfa Romeo - FIAT

"The late Norma Ross, my mother/mentor, inspired me not only by the words she spoke but by the life she led. As an educator she placed a priority on education, and often told me to 'always have the willingness to learn. No one can take your education away from you.' " 


Debbie Lieberman, Commissioner

Montgomery County

“One of the first elected officials who mentored me was an Indianapolis City-County Councilwoman. She inspired me to serve the public and always stand up for what I believe. I try to be a voice in government for those who need it most and follow the servant-leadership example she set.” 


Tracy A. Fors, Vice President of Marketing and Business Development

Wright-Patt Credit Union, Inc.

“Sometimes all it takes is someone to believe in you! My first mentor, Teri Cameron, pulled me aside and explained I had what it took to succeed. She encouraged me to go the distance. It made a lasting impression that has carried me through career valleys to extraordinary peaks.” 


Cassie Barlow, Director

Center for Workforce Development Wright State University

“My mother continually passed on many nuggets of wisdom to me over the years: always do your best, treat everyone with respect, the squeaky wheel gets the grease and take care of your teammates in life and business.” 


Jo Alice Blondin, Ph.D., President

Clark State Community College

“Nancy Blondin, my mother and mentor, offered these pearls of wisdom: ‘Don’t get ready twice — do it right the first time,’ and ‘Nobody wants to hear how it was done somewhere else.’ Be sensitive to others’ efforts, lead by example, and for goodness’ sake, don’t act like a know-it-all.” 


Catherine Crosby, Executive Director

City of Dayton Human Relations Council

“I had two sisters and two brothers growing up. My mom would always say, ‘Once you make it, it is your responsibility and obligation to come back and help the others succeed.’ That has stayed with me. I apply it both in my personal and professional life.” 


Michelle Riley, Chief Executive Officer

The Foodbank, Inc.

“I have always been schooled by a pack of strong women. My Grandmother, the matriarch, always believed in me. She would say, ‘When you revile something in another, that is the true problem. Correct that first, before forming an opinion. Then your opinion will be worth having.’ ” 


Vicki Giambrone, Executive Vice President

CBD Advisors

“A former NCR executive told me to stop focusing on fixing my weaknesses. He said that kind of focus just leads to less weak, weaknesses. The real opportunity is in fully developing your strengths, because that will lead to exceptional growth and make everyone forget about your weaknesses.” 

Shannon TL Isom, Chief Executive Officer

YWCA Dayton


“At the age of 25, Ms. Sharon Jones, my mother, once told me, ‘Everyone is not interested in your opinion.’ It stopped me in tracks; it never occurred to me. It has made me more conscious of my delivery, timing and sensitivity to the room; and when to just listen.” 

Denver




Sarah Sandberg, COO

Colorado Oil & Gas Association

“Our board chairman, Brad Holly of Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, always reminds me to ‘think of what your boss needs four months from now, and provide it before they ask.’ I consistently set time aside to critically think about how to improve where our industry will be, where our organization will be, and where my boss will be. His advice continues to lift my thoughts out of the weeds and on to the bigger, and inevitably more important strategic picture.” 


Chandy Ghosh, EVP of Technology

West Safety Services

“As a child growing up in Calcutta, facing every career hurdle one could imagine, my biggest mentor was my dad who would repeatedly tell me, ‘Higher-education and travel will give you the kind of confidence and independent-thinking that will take you to heights and places that most people can’t even dream of.’ I came to the U.S. with \$20 in my pocket for my masters degree in 1985 and have traveled over the years to 30 countries to visit my teams and live my dream. I now run a nation-wide 9-1-1 solution across the United States.” 


Stacey Hekkert, President & Managing Partner

Anton Collins Mitchell

“As a young manager at BDO, my lead partner taught me that difficult situations never get easier with time. He would always say, ‘that conversation in your head is more painful than what reality will be – now go tackle the issue.’ Own your mistakes, you will be respected for it.” 


Ceyl Prinster, President and CEO

Colorado Enterprise Fund

“I had a professor in college who distilled four simple truths from The Lord of the Rings trilogy: ‘Things are meant. There are signs. The heart speaks. There is a way.’ I think of those simple truths often to help me understand the big picture of what is going on inside me and around me.” 


Kim Bimestefer, Former President

Mountain States Division, Cigna

“From young professional to corporate leader, my sister has been my mentor – my trusted advisor & my most passionate supporter. She has given me the confidence to drive creative innovation and celebrate diversity. She counsels me through professional & personal challenges, and she inspires me to make a difference in the lives of others.” 


Caroline Portis, Co-Founder/CFO/COO

QuickZip

“Tim Leddy, Level 3 Communications VP of Sales, set a great example of team-building through communication. Every Monday, he emailed a thoughtful update, making the entire department feel part of the team. I took this practice on to my next job and used it to accomplish powerful things.” 


Julie Clark, Founder

Baby Einstein & MommyMade

“Sara Blakely, founder of Spanx, said, ‘Don’t be intimidated by what you don’t know. That can be your greatest strength and ensure that you do things differently from everyone else.’ That attitude is what made Baby Einstein and JoyBox Studios such unique, spectacular startups — it’s critical to be confident in your intuition, and to build businesses from the heart and gut.” 


Pam Jeffords, Partner

Mercer

“Some people work so they can eat, some people eat so they can work. ... Know who is who on your team, then invite yourself to dinner!” 


Amy Pionsett, Co-Founder and CEO

MJ Freeway

“Keith Cunningham, a mentor for many years, gave me the following advice: When you find yourself stuck on a problem you think you can’t solve, ask yourself the question, ‘What one thing is impossible today, but if it was possible would change everything?’ That question has often spurred me to think of different or creative ways to figure out how to achieve the impossible.” 

Dr. Dawn Iwamoto, President and CEO

University of the Rockies


“My husband and very best advocate encouraged me to reach beyond what I thought was possible. His metaphorical advice includes ‘Dress for where you want to be, not for where you are. Looking good is a full-time job.’ ” 

Greensboro




Carole W. Bruce, Partner

Smith Moore Leatherwood

“Millie Mashburn, one of the first women partners in a major CPA firm in North Carolina, was my mentor when I began practicing as a CPA in 1968. Her advice, ‘Take our clients’ goals and objectives very seriously; yourself, not so much.’ ” 


Winston McGregor, Executive Director

Guilford Education Alliance

“Melissa Moss, a friend and mentor from my early DC days, gave me great advice I have often repeated, ‘Your career can recover from any mistake in your 20s. Take risks when you’re young. Learn. It’ll pay off when you’re older and things really start to count.’ ” 


Sandra Harris, Vice President and CFO

Global Supply Chain, VF Corp.

“Bill Reeb, former President of Wilsonart International, always told me that when making critical business decisions you should always ‘measure twice and cut once’ and to always remember that there are ‘champs and chumps, choose what you will be. When you’re a chump turn it around and become a champ.’ ” 


Abby Donnelly, Founder

The Leadership & Legacy Group

“Not all mentors are people you know personally. In ‘The E-Myth Revisited’ Michael Gerber wrote, ‘The difference between great people and everyone else is that great people create their lives actively, while everyone else is created by their lives, passively waiting to see where life takes them next.’ Inspired by his wisdom, I proactively made choices, big and small, that have enabled me to craft a career that reflects my core values, my unique strengths, and taps into my passions.” 


Gabie Smith, Dean

Elon College School of Arts and Sciences

“Push yourself beyond your comfort zone and embrace the lessons that come with failure.” 


Dr. Laura Bachman, Medical Director / Professor of Internal Medicine

Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services / Wake Forest University

“Invest time in those that you work with and facilitate their growth as individuals. It helps make the world a better place for us all.” 


Christy Myatt, Member

Nexen Pruet PLLC

“Control what you can control; what you can’t control, let go.” 


Peggy D. Blackwell, Human Resources Manager

Heat Transfer Sales of the Carolinas

“Not to be afraid to try new things, to step outside of my comfort zone and remain confident in my abilities.” 


Zithobile Nxumalo, Program Manager

Boundless Impact

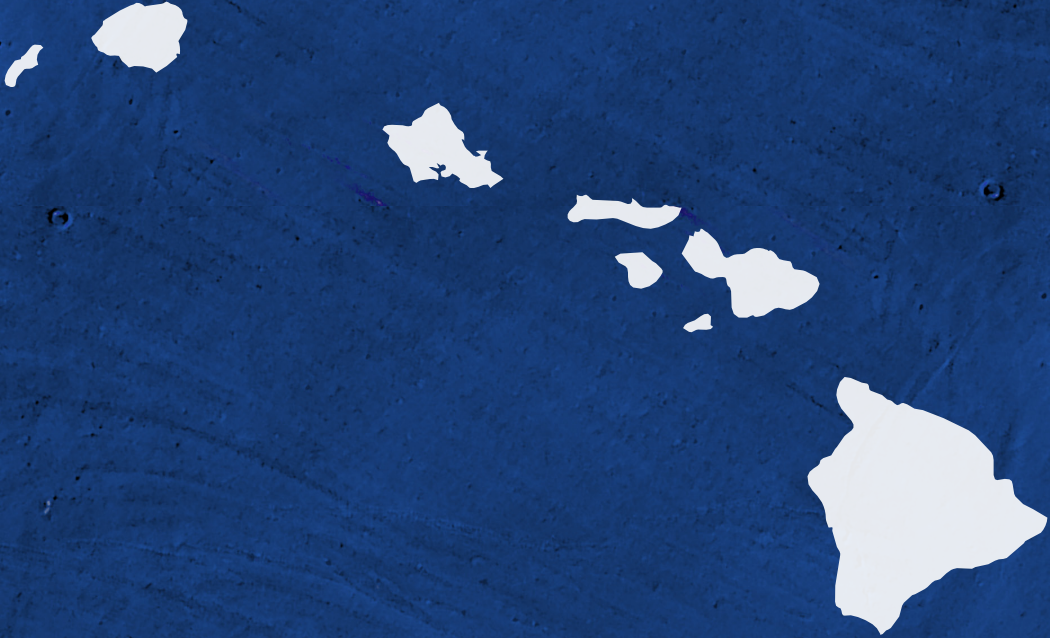
“Dr. Eleanor Gwynn at N.C. A&T State University once told me, ‘Never allow yourself to be defined by one moment.’ ” 

Janet Ward Black, Attorney/senior shareholder

Ward Black Law


“They may not remember what you said, but they’ll remember how you made them feel.” 

Honolulu




Donna Bebber, Executive Director

Hawaii Pops

“I have been fortunate to have several brilliant mentors during my career. All have expressed that it is important to watch how people treat others. We should surround ourselves with people who treat everyone with respect and kindness, not just those who we think can help us.” 


Christine Camp, President and CEO

Avalon Development Co.

“My first boss said, ‘There always will be others who are better, richer, and more educated than you, but it’s what you do with your opportunities that will make the difference.’ So I never let an opportunity pass without whole hearted passion and effort. It is my secret to success!” 


Deena Tearney, President and CEO

Pacific Point

“My first boss offered me key advice as I struggled with career direction, ‘Deena, the only person in charge of your career is you.’ His words of empowerment and self-accountability gave me the courage and drive to set career goals and achieve them. These words continue to guide me forward.” 


Sherry Menor-Mcnamara, President and CEO

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

“My Japanese mother always told me to be prepared for the unexpected, be myself, work hard, and ‘gambare,’ which in Japanese means to try your best and never give up. I never truly appreciated the wisdom of her words, until I found myself repeating them to others.” 

Louise Ing, Vice President / Director


Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing

“My father advised me in my 20s, ‘Expect to work hard until you’re 40.’ It seemed like a sentence to hard labor but it reminded me to stop the self-pity and be serious about my job. The more effort one puts in, the greater the learn and return, even after 40.” 

Beth Whitehead, Executive Vice President and Chief


Administrative Officer

American Savings Bank

“My grandfather was a wise man – a farmer who never wore a suit except to church, but his advice has been applicable to everything I’ve ever done: “no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care” and of course, “measure twice, cut once.” 


Terri Fujii, Audit Partner

CW Associates, CPAs

“My mentor of 30 years always gives me unselfish advice, thinking of what is best for me. Because he is so connected in the community, he is able to provide advice not based only on his perspective. Every critical career decision was made with his guidance, and each of those decisions were the right ones.” 


Virginia Pressler, Director

Hawaii State Department of Health

“My best mentor was my father. He taught me integrity, respect for others, passion for excellence, appreciation of the natural beauty and joy of the outdoors. He also fostered in me the self-confidence that I could be anything I wanted to be.” 


Kitty Lagareta, CEO

Communications Pacific

“My best mentor saw capabilities I was completely unaware of at 25 years of age. She challenged me, pushed me, supported me, and believed in me in ways that re-shaped my self-image and sense of possibility.” 


Leslie Wilcox, President and CEO

PBS Hawaii

“Sometimes you have a one-time mentor of sorts – a stranger who calls you out when you need it. In my case, the stranger was a felon and my problem was a relational blind spot. I was treating people the way I’d want to be treated – and I was a young reporter covering crime. Said a bookie to this rookie, taking me aside: ‘Sister, you better figure out who you’re dealing with. Only then will you know how to treat them.’ Those words, spoken long ago on a Chinatown street, stay with me. Leadership has a lot to do with understanding people. I was a 19-year-old Honolulu Star-Bulletin reporter.” 


Carol Ai May, Vice President

City Mill

“I think of my mentors as people who have given me advice, as well as the varied experiences that have challenged me, throughout my career. I’ve learned that ‘timing is everything,’ ‘practice makes perfect,’ ‘make lemonade out of lemons’ and ‘take care of your team members and they will take care of you.’” 


Tracy Lawson, Owner and President

Lawson & Associates

“I don’t recall who told me this but I think of it often when I am faced with conflict or difficulty ‘respond with character, not emotion.’ This reminds me to respond thoughtfully and with purpose in a manner that reflects well on myself and my organization.” 

Bitsy Kelley, Vice President

Corporate Communications, Outrigger Enterprises Group

“When I was young and just starting out in the career world, one of my long time male mentors gave me this advice: ‘Act like a lady. Think like a man. Work like dog.’ It has taken me far in this fast paced, competitive world.” 


Connie Lau, President & CEO

Hawaiian Electric Industries

“When I was having great difficulty balancing my young son’s needs and my career, Patti Lyons, a very respected social service professional, told me to take care of myself first or I wouldn’t be around to take care of anyone else. It seemed selfish but her advice saved me and today I have both my family and my career.” 

Betty White, Head of School

Sacred Hearts Academy


“My best mentor was a colleague first and an expert second. She listened, listened and then listened some more to hear my concerns before offering advice and guidance. She shared with me options on how to give back to my organization. She was untouched by her high level of success.” 

Houston




Maria Rios, President and CEO

Nation Waste Inc.

“My ultimate mentor, my mom, still tells me, ‘Hija, juega para ganar en los negocios, respetando las reglas del juego siempre con integridad, y no se olvide de sus raíces,’ which means, ‘Daughter, play to win in business but play by the rules and stay faithful and don’t forget about your roots.’ ” 

Pam Lovett, Senior Vice President - Director of Business Development and Community Affairs

Comerica Bank

“I believe that everyone we meet has something to teach, so I have been blessed with countless intended, as well as, chance mentors. Committing to the Platinum Rule (treating others as they desire to be treated), using the 2:1 ratio (listening twice as much as I speak) and adopting an attitude of gratitude and praise are three principles that enhance my relationships, life experience and effectiveness.” 

Monisa Cline, Senior Vice President and Global Head


CWT Energy, Resources & Marine

“My favorite mentor is Gordon Bethune, former Chairman and CEO of Continental Airlines. He taught me ‘the first step in solving a problem is figuring out whose problem it is.’ It’s

so simple and true, and I apply that every day.” 


Laura M. Pennino, Chief Executive Officer

Pennino and Partners

“Fresh out of LSU journalism school, I became a writer at a conservative bank. I loved my job, yet was very naïve about office politics. I am generally a happy, glass is half-full person, which (to my shock and awe) sometimes irritates others! My wise and wonderful boss Sally Lay kindly reminded me: ‘Everyone is not like you.’ ” 

Jeanne Abundis, Partner


KPMG LLP

“My mom always told me, ‘Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.’ This means more than the clothes you wear. Always be prepared for the next step in your career, even if you don’t know what it is yet, and don’t settle for the status quo.” 

Michica Guillory, Owner and Broker


The Guillory Group Real Estate Firm

“My mom, Patricia Guillory, gave me two incredible pieces of advice: ‘Mish, the only thing stopping you from doing

anything is you! Just get out there and do it.' And, 'Never handle a business issue from an emotional place.' She's always right!" 


Aimee Woodall, Founder and President

Black Sheep Agency

Angela Blanchard, spitfire CEO of Neighborhood Centers Inc. and famous for her way with words, has been an example to me since the earliest days of my agency. One of her best bits of advice? 'Be a zealot about the why and agnostic about the how and the what.' That's where we start with every client project: 'Why does this matter?' " 


Emily Keeton, Co-Founder and CEO

Station Houston & Flavor App

"My mentor is Jill Greenthal, who is a Senior Advisor to The Blackstone Group. 'You should love your job. Maybe not every minute of every day, but on balance you should love it. If you don't, find one that you do. People are always more successful doing something they love.' " 


Maidie Ryan, Assistant General Counsel and Director of Compliance

Ascend Performance Materials

“1. When you believe in something, you must be willing to sacrifice everything to pursue it. 2. If it doesn’t work out, trying to force it will bring you great suffering and failure. 3. Knowing the difference between 1 and 2 is the hardest thing in life.” 

Christine Hollinden, President and Founder

Hollinden Professional Services


“ ‘You can accomplish anything you set your mind to accomplish.’ The last words my father said to me in 1987 just days before he passed away, three weeks shy of seeing me earn my MBA at Texas A&M.” 

Jacksonville




Anna Lopez Brosche, Managing Shareholder

Ennis Pllum & Associates CPAs and Jacksonville City Council Member

"My mastermind group of women CEOs are the spark behind my decision to run for office. They challenged me to see and think bigger by pointing out that I 'always choose safe.' Thanks to them, I have taken many bold steps to redefine and significantly expand my comfort zone." 


Audrey M. Moran, SVP for Social Responsibility and
Community Advocacy

Baptist Health

"Ed Austin, who I had the privilege of working for when he was Jacksonville's state attorney and mayor, always said, 'Do the right thing and the rest will take care of itself.' Doing the right thing isn't always easy, but it's always right. I miss Mayor Austin every day." 


Cindy Stover, North Florida Market President

TD Bank

"My dad, who owned a small, family-run business, believed that the customer must be at the center of every business decision and discussion. It was his 'golden rule' and I follow it to this day – to succeed in business, you must center your decisions around doing what's best for your customers." 


Donna Orender, CEO

Orender Unlimited

“Her admonishment was simple, ‘Just push forward and do it, you will figure it out.’ I also knew that if I needed help, she would be there. Gerry Laybourne the first President of Nickelodeon, the Founder of the Oxygen Network, and the Global Mentor Walk’s kindness and wicked intelligence motivates me every day to pay her generosity of spirit forward.” 

Dr. Pamela Chally, Dean

UNF Brooks College of Health


“As I moved into academic administration, I remembered difficult moments with bosses. My father reminded me of a basic approach to life. Treat others the way you wish to be treated. This doesn’t mean I don’t have the difficult conversations, but strive to be respectful and show concern.” 

Frances Bartlett Kinne, Ph.D., Past President and


Chancellor Emerita

Jacksonville University


“Parental mentoring inspired me with positive thinking. A musical librarian mother and a word-master father opened

doors of my thinking with, 'Life is not about me. Life is about others.' The results? Happiness, even at 98." 


Heather Duncan, Regional Director, External Affairs
AT&T

"One of my earliest supervisors at AT&T was best-known for being a great team-builder. His philosophy was that success is all about hiring, supporting and giving ownership and authority to a brilliant team. 'Your job as a leader after that is not to drive the elephant, but to remove obstacles in its path and simply tap it behind the ears if it starts to sway off course.' The visual has always stayed with me. A good leader knows when to 'tap the elephant.' " 


Kelly B. Madden, Florida Division Manager
Wells Fargo Middle Market Banking

"I have had many great mentors, including my father. This quote from General Douglas MacArthur is a constant reminder of what it means to be a true leader. 'A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent.' " 

Megha Parekh, Senior Vice President, General Counsel
Jacksonville Jaguars, LLC

“My father, an Indian immigrant, emphasized self-reliance and infused in me a love of learning. When a light went out in our house, we learned how to be electricians. I did get shocked, but will never forget that with persistence, education and work, dark lights will go bright.” 


Sandy Bartow, President (Retired)
JAX Chamber Foundation

“Sharon Poindexter, a business owner turned minister, advised me against taking advice I received early in my entrepreneurial career, which was ‘Love has no place in business.’ Thank God I listened to Sharon as love and mindfulness have been the cornerstone to my success in business.” 


Kansas City




Jill McCarthy, Senior Executive, Corporate Attraction
KCADC

“My mom was an incredibly strong woman. She raised me to think for myself, to sit at the table with the big kids, to do the right thing even when it’s tough, and in all things, to listen and act with a kind and faithful heart.” 

Eileen Weir, Mayor
City of Independence, Missouri


“When I was 24, I moved to the Midwest to work for Bob Moore in the PR Department of the Kansas City Chiefs. Of the all the things Bob instilled in me personally and professionally, loyalty is the most important. Nothing has more value than being a trusted friend.” 

Wendy Guillies, President and CEO
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

“My mentor would have turned 100 this year. I never had the privilege of meeting him, but his character and principles have shaped me greatly. Ewing Kauffman firmly believed ‘how’ you accomplish something was just as important as ‘what’ you accomplish. I strive to follow this simple yet profound advice every day.” 


Danette Wilson, President and CEO

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City

“My mentor, Roger Foreman, retired Chief Marketing Officer for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City, told me many times, ‘If you do a good job, you’ll always have opportunities.’” 


Maria Meyers, Network Builder, KC SourceLink and Director

UMKC Innovation Center

“My parents didn’t give advice, they showed their values through their actions. From my father: respect everyone, period. From my mother: everyone has a gift, find that gift, cultivate it and they will lead happy, productive lives. Richness is in the diversity of the gifts that we have been given.” 


Anne D. St. Peter, Founder

Global Prairie

“My mother encouraged my five siblings and me to do more for others. Her oft-repeated messages were: ‘From those to whom much is given, much is expected.’ And, ‘Be the change you wish to see.’ Launching our company, Global Prairie, as a Benefit Corporation (B-Corp) clearly is a reflection of her teachings.” 


CiCi Rojas, CEO

Central Exchange

“Although I have had great mentors in my career, some of the best advice I received was from my dad, who didn’t finish high school. He said ‘always have an open mind, even when you don’t agree.’ As simplistic as it sounds, it has served me well in challenging, complex situations.” 

Kimberly A. Jones, Managing Partner

Seyferth Blumenthal & Harris LLC

“I have had many wonderful mentors in my life. However, I think the most impactful was my Grammie. She impressed two things on me that I will carry with me always: ‘Embrace all the good and the bad that happens to you in life because it is what makes you who you are.’ And, ‘always do your best even when you believe your best is not good enough. It is the only thing you can control.’ ” 

Whitney Bartelli, Bank Midwest Market President and NBH


Bank Chief Marketing Officer

“My parents are my greatest mentors, and their simplest words of advice have served me well: Treat others the way you want to be treated, and don’t be afraid to embrace your mistakes. If you are accountable and resilient, those

mistakes can lead to your greatest successes.” 

Roshann Parris, President and CEO

Parris Communications Inc


“The life lessons Adele Hall taught me are a part of my every waking minute: Listen. Care deeply. Engage fully. Give something to someone who can never say thank you. And climb out of bed every day dedicated to making the world better, to being a force for good.” 

Louisville




Virginia Judd, Executive Director

The Humana Foundation

“My greatest mentor is David A. Jones, co-founder of Humana. He gave me the opportunity of a lifetime in tapping me to lead Humana’s Romanian Assistance Project and later the Humana Foundation. He is an outstanding teacher and practitioner of philanthropy – demonstrating by example how to positively impact people and society. His inspirational and passionate leadership, clear vision and confidence in my abilities allowed me to grow, learn and achieve far beyond what I had ever imagined.” 


Henrietta Pepper, President

The Pepper Group

“My client and friend, the late David Roth, former general director of Kentucky Opera, is top-of-mind as a mentor for numerous reasons. As a client, David was a master at gaining consensus – always with grace and a sense of easiness I admired. He believed winning every battle was less important than being true to your vision. David is greatly missed and I feel blessed to have worked with him.” 


Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, Chief

Louisville Forward

“Mayor Greg Fischer has been a great friend, ally, and mentor to me. He’s shared many enriching insights, including how to turn the ‘work vs. life balance’ struggle into ‘work-life integration,’ and most importantly that the biggest room in the world is the room for improvement.” 

Celia Manlove, President


Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Medicaid

“My best mentor was a female boss years ago who first helped me get into management. She taught me how to find the best people, how to know when you need to take swift action, how to stand up for myself, how to find and grab opportunities and take some risks. She knew how to ask the right questions so I could find the right solutions and confidently do more on my own. I trusted her as I knew she had my best interests in mind. She was the great boss, guide, role model and mentor we all want.” 

Susan Weiss, CEO


Net Tango

“Long-time University of Louisville Entrepreneurship MBA faculty, Dr. Van Clouse, had a profound impact on my

decision to start Net Tango. Nearly 20 years ago, based on his referral to the technology incubator program 'Idea to Action,' Net Tango was founded. His guidance throughout our start-up years was foundational to our success.” 


Debra Hoffer, President

Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana

“Dee Maynard, entrepreneur par excellence and my JA mentor, has inspired me to innovate. She hasn’t specifically said this, but she walks this walk in my presence: ‘No matter how well you think you are doing things, there is a better way. Keep reinventing your business, continuously improving. That’s the way to thrive, have fun and to have the greatest positive impact on kids’ lives.’ ” 


Ingrid Hernandez, President

InGrid Design

“My best mentor was my art teacher in middle school, Ana Victoria Vidal, because she believed in my artistic talents at an early age and helped me define a career path that led me to the best design school in the world, RISD, jobs that I enjoyed, and eventually a successful business that I love.” 


Melissa Fraser, Partner, CFO and COO

Strothman & Co.


“Dr. Bob Rodgers has had a major impact on my life. His entrepreneurial spirit combined with his biblical teachings have continually inspired me to seek first God’s plan for my life, and regardless of how scary, take the steps of faith necessary to move my life and career in that direction.” 

Roxanne Lenfert, Director Complex Administrative Manager


KY for UBS Financial Services

“My most recent mentor would be my previous line manager who mentioned to me one day how ‘creative’ I was. That is not a word I would have ever used to describe myself but is now the thing that I am know most for in my organization. When the word creative was tossed out, I asked my line manager for examples. We began to talk regularly about where she saw my talents and encouraged me to raise my ‘out of the box’ ideas to those around me whenever possible. There are mentoring opportunities all around us. When someone you respect takes the time to point out a skill or compliments you, reach out to see if they are willing to spend a few minutes with you to dig deeper. Having a mentor is a two-way street; the responsibility lies with the mentee to respectfully seize the opportunity to receive feedback and work to develop the relationship you desire with your mentor.” 

Lynnie Meyer, System VP and Chief Development Officer
Norton Healthcare

“My parents worked hard and were honest in everything they did. They taught me that hard work pays off, relationships matter, that you have to be true to your own personal vision and to embrace lifelong learning. They have a passion for everything they do and that passion is contagious.” 

Rhonda Petr, Director of Marketing
Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Medicaid


“The mentor I think of was my old boss. Joyce Hagen, former President Passport Health Plan. I listened to her every word with the utmost attention and respect. She had a strong sense of self and was a great listener. She shared her wisdom of life with me, which made her human.” 

Memphis




Laurie Tucker, Co-Founder/Chief Strategy Officer

Calade Partners

“After 30+ years of leadership, no teacher/mentor had more impact on who I am and how I lead than my mother. She modeled strength, resilience and courage. Values she taught me: know and care about people deeply, never say ‘I told you so,’ and be passionate about your work.” 

Paula Jacobson, President


Methodist Healthcare Foundation

“I remember best my high school youth group advisor. She was a mother, wife of a prominent physician and the most creative person I knew. She taught us to be dauntless, confident and thoughtful leaders. We accomplished amazing things and never thought it would be anything less.” 

Linda Williams, President


The Rise Foundation

“Maeola Killebrew, who retired as Director of Workforce Development at Southwest Tennessee Community College, would always remind me I was not recognized for my service: ‘Successful people are those who surround themselves with competent people and allow them the

latitude to get the job done. Who gets the credit should never be an issue.’ ” 

Melanie Keller, President


Meritan Inc

“My father taught me the most important thing in business, and life in general, is integrity. He said, ‘Once you lose your integrity, the rest comes easy.’ He also told me that life is much more than what ‘you can fold up and put in your wallet.’ Work/family balance is important.” 

Kim Cherry, Executive Vice President of Corp

Communications


First Horizon National Corp

“Patsy Collins and Terry Lee live these wisdoms: Carrots taste better than sticks. You’ve got to look yourself in the mirror, sleep at night and answer to your God face to face someday. Don’t lose yourself as you climb that ladder, or you might not recognize yourself at the top.” 


Tina Newman, COO

Mallory Alexander International Logistics


“Success is never one person’s journey, but it’s inevitable at

some moment you are going to think it is. My Italian father took notice when it happened to me. As only he could with his booming voice and hands waving, he yelled, 'Never, ever, forget where you come from.' Those words keep me grounded, and although my dad is gone now, I can still hear his voice and smile at that day." 


Tanja Thompson, Office Managing Shareholder
Littler

"Anna Wermuth is a highly accomplished attorney, but more importantly a beloved wife and passionate mother to two beautiful, strong children. Anna has taught me there is no substitute for hard work, and a successful career will enrich your mind, but family and friends enrich the soul." 


Divya Choudhary, Director, Graduate Engineering and
Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Christian Brothers University

"My mother always said, 'Always challenge yourself by stepping out of your comfort zone.' My graduate advisor, Dr. Carl Halford, said, 'If you have already convinced someone, don't oversell your idea.' " 

Mary Sharp, Alliance Director for Baptist Memorial Health
Care Corporation
CBRE

“I was fortunate to work with Kevin Adams at the beginning of my real estate career. I learned to look at opportunities with a different vision and consider other perspectives. Although we not did not always agree, he challenged my thought processes and allowed me to grow.” 

Wendy Ray, Director Internal Communications
Pfizer


“I’ve tried to learn something from each leader that has shaped my career. A few pieces of advice I remember most are: A smile can change everything; lead like a swan – when paddling like hell, always remain graceful on the surface; and believe in yourself or no one else will.” 

Milwaukee




Danae Davis, Executive Director

Milwaukee Succeeds

"My mother is one of my most treasured mentors, and she once said if you don't stand for anything, you'll fall for everything. I have always treasured opportunities to make a difference as a result of this advice." 


Marybeth Budisch, Philanthropic Adviser

Greater Milwaukee Foundation

"Although my dad only lived to age 47, he instilled in me the importance of finding the good in everyone. My mother taught me to always smile, for it provides comfort and trust. They both encouraged me to stay involved in the community and volunteer. You meet the most interesting people and it's good for the soul." 


Mary Dowell, Principal Consultant

MJ Dowell & Associates

"I salute my mother as my favorite mentor – a strong, kind and pragmatic leader. She led by example, providing me with an exceptional roadmap to follow. From her I learned the gift of giving, always willing to pass along guidance to others as she so generously did for me." 


Linda Gorens-Levey, Partner

General Capital Group

“My dad taught me about real life on the tennis court. I learned to play fairly, enjoy the game, hit within the lines, develop a strategy, contribute to a team and perform under pressure. He warned me not to trust the opponent who cheated and taught me that when the match ended, win or lose, I must shake my opponent’s hand.” 

Nancy Hernandez, Owner

ABRAZO

“My favorite mentors are a group of women – who also are friends, colleagues and confidants. We have freely shared our collective wisdom, honesty and advice; being sounding boards; challenging when needed; praising when warranted; encouraging each other to be better versions of ourselves and work smarter.” 


Jennifer Bartolotta, CEO / Director

Train-2-Gain / Care-a-lotta


“George Dalton had the greatest impact on me. He believed that we’re all diamonds in the rough and we just need someone to pick us up and polish us up once in awhile. George’s greatest gift to me and so many others was that of

his time and his kindness.” 

Lisa Froemming, Vice President for External Relations
Columbia St. Mary’s

“ ‘You have two ears and one mouth – in those proportions and on purpose. Listen twice as much as you talk.’ Sound advice from a boss who practiced what he preached. While I’m not proficient in those proportions every day, I promise you’ll never get into trouble by listening too much.” 

Genyne Edwards, Partner
P3 Development Group LLC

“Dr. Jeanette Mitchell is a visionary leader who has left an imprint on my personal and professional life. Her life’s work has been an inspiration and has motivated me to seek opportunities to become a visible leader in my community. My leadership platform is reflective of her awesome example and vision.” 


Denisha Tate, Chief Strategic Officer
Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee

“John Miller is my favorite mentor. He told me to advocate wisely. A position can elevate my career or cost me my job,

it's my choice.” 

Wendy Baumann, President / CVO


Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp. (WWBIC)

“My Mom is a significant mentor. She was a trailblazing woman leader – ran for Congress in the late 60s, lead international delegations, served in the Carter administration and was professor of political science and director of the Institute of World Affairs. She lead by example showing me leadership, service and impact.” 


Minneapolis




Barbara Butts Williams, Executive Dean, External Relations
and Partnerships, Dean Emeritus of Business
Capella Education Co.

“My parents were incredible mentors throughout my life and career. My dad would often say, ‘Don’t let others define your value; they’ll always underestimate your worth.’ My mom would tell me, ‘Spend less time trying to be interesting and more time interested in others.’ Both parents taught me that being authentic is sustainable.” 

Jean Kane, CEO
Colliers International of Minneapolis-St. Paul

“Mentorship never ends, and is a two-way street. I enjoy learning from our younger workforce – how they work, how they think – as much as I do sharing my experiences with them. And I still value the mentors I have.” 


Kathy Tunheim, President and CEO
Tunheim

“One of my mentors shared Max DePree wise counsel: ‘Leaders respond to change by learning something ... and eager learners in life find actual joy in the process.’ ” 

Nekima Levy-Pounds, Professor of Law


Director / Community Justice Project

University of St. Thomas School of Law / Minneapolis chapter president of the NAACP

“A fellow law professor and civil rights attorney once gave me an important piece of advice about resilience and tenacity. She said, ‘You’ve got to be willing to take the hits.’ That piece of advice has helped me weather many storms and to keep my eyes on the prize in the midst of adversity.” 


Margaret Anderson Kelliher, President and CEO

Minnesota High Tech Association

“One of my mentors shared Max DePree’s wise counsel: ‘Leaders respond to change by learning something ... and eager learners in life find actual joy in the process.’ ” 


Mary Brainerd, CEO

HealthPartners Inc.

“My former boss, George Halvorson, told me when I moved into my current job that I had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to use my work to do good – for our members and patients, for all the people who work at HealthPartners and in our community. I think of that almost every day.” 


Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairwoman

Carlson

“My father insisted on personal accountability: ‘If you don’t like it, don’t blame someone else, fix it.’ He insisted that one person can make a difference!” 


Darlene Miller, CEO

Permac Industries

“I would love to share something I learned from one of my mentors years ago, and I still follow today in my business and personal life. A mentor of mine once said to me, ‘Don’t come to me with a complaint or issue without some thought on a solution. We will then figure it out together or get others to help.’ This has become my way of life and I encourage others to do the same.” 

Sally Smith, CEO

Buffalo Wild Wings Inc.

“My father always said, ‘Stick to your knitting, do not react to the irrational acts of your competition,’ and ‘When in doubt, wear a suit.’ I always appreciated early insights from my family and these are a couple that stuck with me.” 

Amy Klobuchar, Senator

U.S. Congress


“Former Minnesota Secretary of State Joan Growe, who ran for U.S. Senate in 1984, has been a good friend and mentor over the years. She broke down barriers and encouraged countless other women, including me, to do the same. She has given me invaluable advice. The night before I started as Hennepin County Attorney, I called Joan from a phone booth on the ground floor of the courthouse. My predecessor, Mike Freeman, had served for two terms, and he was still packing boxes into the wee hours of the night. I needed to get settled to be ready for my first day. I asked Joan what to do. She said he was still there packing because it was hard for him to say goodbye. I said I thought it was because he was watching the playoffs and kept getting distracted by a close Green Bay Packers Wild Card game. She said, ‘You need to look in charge starting tomorrow. Go hang up your stuff – at least get your diplomas on the wall.’ So I did. Joan gave me the good advice I needed that day, as well as many others. When I won the Senate seat, I knew it wouldn’t have happened without her blazing the trail before me.” 

Nashville




Cordia Harrington, CEO

The Bakery Cos.

“Laurie Ann has the unique ability to be brutally honest and motivating at the same time. She helps me ‘see other options’ and ‘dream and believe big ideas!’ Her honest and truthful and candid feedback are priceless. Her courage and belief in me give me confidence to ‘go for it!’ ” 

Beth Chase, CEO

C3/Consulting

“When I was young, my mom always said ‘go do something productive.’ Beverly Wallace (retired HCA executive) modeled a direct, pragmatic leadership style. The late Imogene Forte (entrepreneur) gave me the gift of her time and asked me insightful questions that really stretched my thinking. All three impacted me greatly.” 

Laquita Stribling, Regional Vice President


Ranstad USA

“Francis Guess was one of my mentors. He was wise, humorous, straight-forward, encouraging, supportive, a great listener and trustworthy. He never hesitated to give his honest opinion. Whatever I set out to do, he was always my biggest cheerleader. Every interaction with Francis Guess

was a valuable and memorable one!” 


Jerry Williams, Executive Director

Leadership Nashville

“Assemble a personal board of directors to advise you on various aspects of life, someone once told me. Though some of my mentors may not know they have that role, one who intentionally opened doors, dispersed wisdom and modeled a life of purpose to the very last week of his life, was Nelson Andrews, Nashville’s civic champion. He set the bar high.” 

Rita Mills-Johnson, CEO


UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Tennessee

“Two people stand out for me. My mom, who always said, ‘You’re special ‘cause God don’t make no junk.’ And the late Paul Offner, former legislator and Ohio regulator who said, ‘Five o’clock is not quitting time. That’s just when some folks go home.’ Both have turned out to be true!” 

Van Tucker, CEO


Nashville Fashion Alliance

“Between 1981 and 2008, there weren’t many female

mentors in banking. I remember Cindy Pyle's (who was whip-smart and assertive) generosity with me. The most impactful [mentor I had] was a very patient Bob Shell, who taught me the value of asking questions instead of just providing the answers." 


Caren Gabriel, President and CEO

Ascend Federal Credit Union

"Former Tennessee Credit Union League CEO Tom Gaines was a wonderful mentor. He taught me how to communicate and foster good relations with a board. He also showed me how to navigate credit union movement politics and work with political figures on issues important to credit unions and their members." 


Janet Miller, Market Leader and CEO

Colliers International

"Beth [Chase] is brilliant, thoughtful, strategic, hard-driving, wildly successful and fun. The thing that sets her apart is her sheer energy and spirit. When she sees you, her smile lights up down to her core. ... In a world where we are all pulled a thousand different ways, that focus, joy and presence is downright amazing." 


Megan Barry, Mayor

City of Nashville

“Tim Williams was my mentor at my first career job where he encouraged me to believe in myself, helped get me the additional training I needed to be successful, was a sounding board for new ideas and challenged me on those ideas in a way that fostered personal growth.” 

Maneet Chauhan, Chef / Owner / Author / Restaurateur /
TV Personality / Partner

Chauhan Ale & Masala House / Mantra Artisan Ales / Morph Hospitality


“I have an unlikely mentor; he is someone that I have the luxury of turning to day or night: my husband, Vivek Deora. Vivek’s global experience in the world of hospitality coupled with his faith in me to succeed, even when I question myself, makes him the perfect mentor.” 

Orlando



Leila J. Nodarse, Florida Division Manager

Terracon

“I have been fortunate to have had several mentors in my life and have found professionals who are outside of my day-to-day world of engineering to be most helpful. My career was advancing at a time when women were becoming more high-profile in our community – such as [former Orlando Mayor] Glenda Hood and [former Orange County Mayor] Linda Chapin. These were two women whose stature in our community did more for women than they will ever know.” 

Karen M. Keene, Director of Marketing and Business

Development

Dean Mead

“My best mentor was Elese Sanford, who was the only female principal of a highly regarded civil engineering firm in the 1990s. Very few women held leadership positions in the design and construction industry at that time. She taught me the ropes of business development and government relations working in partnership with numerous public-sector agencies on significant infrastructure projects throughout Florida. Elese also was a leader in the political arena, and she encouraged me to get involved with local campaigns.” 

Mayanne Downs, President and Managing Director

GrayRobinson, PA

“Former 5th District Court of Appeal Chief Judge Jackie Griffin was my best mentor – among many – because first, she made me believe being a lawyer was possible, and then showed me how being completely engaged was what was required to be a good lawyer.” 

Leslie Hielema, Vice President of the Orlando Center


Florida Institute of Technology

“The best mentoring experience was when I worked at AT&T. As a young engineer at Bell Labs, I was part of a leadership program intended to advance my career. I guess you could call it ‘group mentoring.’ Everyone did their part to listen to my goals, seek out my strengths and weaknesses, and build my confidence and capabilities as my career progressed. I received the benefit of ‘collective wisdom.’ It was an amazing process, and everyone, together, gave me the best career path ever.” 

Linda Costa, President


Linda Costa Communications Group

“To this day, my husband of 46 years remains my best mentor. He’s an excellent sounding board who provides

straightforward, common-sense advice. He always reminds me that the challenges of a large corporation – while they differ in magnitude – are basically the same issues facing a small business, just more zeroes on the bottom line.” 

Joanie Holzer Schirm, Author / Founding President


Geotechnical & Environmental Consultants Inc.

“Jack Parker, a former Law Engineering branch manager and Soil & Material Engineers Atlanta partner, was my best mentor. With his mentorship, I went from answering phones to branch administrator. As a non-engineer, through Jack’s guidance I learned the business of engineering. At Soil & Material Engineers, Jack supported and encouraged my transition to marketing, where I became the first professional woman in Atlanta marketing engineering services. Although retired, Jack remained available with advice when GEC was founded in 1991.” 

Michelle Y. Ertel, Government Relations and
Communications Strategist


Florida Strategic Advisors Inc.

“My best mentors were a combination of men and women who told me what I needed to hear and rarely what I wanted to hear. In recent years, I relish any and all advice Seminole

County Commissioner Brenda Carey cares to pass on. When Brenda faces adversity in business or politics, she deals with it head-on and moves forward. And she never, ever plays the ‘woman card’ to get what she wants.” 


Annetta Wilson, Communications Strategist and Certified Master Coach

Annetta Wilson Media Training & Success Coaching

“Saralyn Collins was the first business coach I ever met. The coaching industry was new, and she encouraged me to go for it. She was teaching a class on starting your own business and said she would mentor me. She believed in me, dared me and never gave up.” 


Sandy Hostetter, Central Florida Regional President
Valley National Bank

“I have been blessed with many positive role models and mentors along the way, both direct and indirect. Having women like Linda Chapin, Glenda Hood, Jane Hames and Dianna Morgan, just slightly ahead of me forging their way, all with families, let me know that my dream of balancing work and home was possible. So never underestimate who’s watching you. If I had to pick one, I’d have to say that my dad had the greatest influence on me. He continually encouraged me to dream big, to stand up for myself and to

let no one put limitations on me or my abilities. He told me not to listen to the noise, keep my head down, work hard and let my work speak for itself. I think this is important for all of us to understand: what kind of lasting legacy our words can have on others, most notably, children.” 

Kelly Cohen, Managing Partner

Southern Strategy Group of Orlando


“I am constantly learning from people each day, but I have three mentors who have strongly impacted me. [Orlando Mayor] Buddy Dyer taught me the importance of preparation, collaboration and focusing on results versus credit. [Former Walt Disney World Resort President] Meg Crofton encouraged me to be my authentic self. Paul Bradshaw, founder of our firm, pushed me to find my voice as a leader.” 

Philadelphia




Billie Jean King, Owner / Founder

Philadelphia Freedoms / Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative

“Many have influenced me over the years, but it was not until I met Ed Woolard, the former CEO of DuPont, that I understood how important it is to have a supportive mentor. Ed teaches us to ask the right questions so we know both sides of the equation, keep things simple and focus on what we want and need and what we can live without.” 

Risa Vetri Ferman, Judge


Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas

“When it comes to influences in my life, no one comes close to my mother, Barbara Vetri. She is my greatest mentor and role model. Mom grew up when women were expected to be wives and mothers. She went to law school. When she couldn’t get a job in a firm, she found another path. She was a trailblazer, paving the way for generations to come.” 

Teresa Bryce Bazemore, President


Radian Guaranty

“I particularly cherish Andy Woodward, former head of mortgage at Bank of America, as my mentor. Andy believed in me and at a time when lawyers were not involved in making business decisions, he included me as part of

the business leadership team. He supported my industry involvement and taught me how to navigate politics within the bank's culture." 

Sara Lomax-Reese, President


900AM-WURD

"My father was without question the most influential mentor in my life. He taught me to leave things better than I found them. If he saw a piece of trash on the ground, he'd pick it up. If you sent him a document with a typo, you'd get it back with sweeping red slashes. He was meticulous, generous, brilliant and funny. He lived his life with a sense of intention and urgency that fueled his entrepreneurial success, while making time for family and fun. But most importantly he modeled a deep, unyielding commitment to the African-American community, demonstrating that it is not only possible, but necessary, to do good and do well at the same time." 

Judith Mondre, President


Mondre Energy

"A poor boy grows up to lead companies and contributes to his community. He provides the foundation for his son to do even better than he did, and never forgets his roots. Sounds like a novel describing the American dream. Sounds like

several people that we have worked with. I happen to have grown up alongside this person. He is my brother and there isn't a day that goes by that I am not proud of, inspired by, and guided by his success, talent, humility, kindness, and love for his family and friends." 


Mary Stengel Austen, President / CEO

Tierney

"Mentor, sounding board, coach, confidant, advisor, sponsor and advocate; these are just a few of the words that come to mind when I think of Judee von Seldeneck. As importantly, she has led by example for me by having grown a woman-owned global company and competing with the big guns." 


Kathleen Owens, President

Gwynned Mercy University

" 'Would you be willing to lead the University's reaccreditation process?' A responsibility offered and accepted over 30 years ago provided a stretching, growth-filled opportunity that charted a future never imagined. Eugene Lappin, FSC, PhD offered me the privilege to lead, while also serving as a model teacher, scholar and colleague." 


Sheila Woods-Skipper, President Judge

First Judicial District, Court of Common Pleas

“My most influential mentor was Justice Juanita Kidd Stout. She was a jurist extraordinaire, teacher and trailblazer. She took lawyers and jurists under her wing, turning us into productive and conscientious legal minds. Her pragmatism and wisdom taught me about the legal profession and how to remain grounded and transparent, making me a better lawyer and jurist.” 

Deborah Epstein Henry, Founder / Co-founder


Flex-Time Lawyers / Bliss Lawyers

“Among the mentors I have been fortunate to have, Sam Silver stands apart. He went beyond inspiring and supporting my development. He showed humility and advanced my career even when I chose a different path. Sam has also been willing to learn from me and has become a lifelong friend.” 

Chellie Cameron, CEO


Philadelphia International Airport

“My boss at Dulles International, Keith Meurlin, was the Airport Manager and a U.S. Air Force Reserve Major General. Keith led by example, emphasizing that every individual is

important to the success of the bigger mission. I recognized this concept as part of the Air Force culture from my years on active duty. I learned from Keith it is equally important to success in the business world.” 

Amy Gutmann, President

The University of Pennsylvania


“In graduate school, I had a team of intellectual rivals as my mentors: Judith Shklar, Michael Walzer and John Rawls. They hotly disputed each other’s original ideas, and mine, and that was part and parcel of our becoming lifelong friends. We learn infinitely more and can lead infinitely better with brilliantly diverse rather than like-minded teams.” 

Phoenix



Candace Hunter Wiest, President/CEO, West Valley

National Bank, AZ Physicians Bank, and AZ Dental Bank

“My mother and aunt were strong, common sense, no-nonsense ladies with incredible work ethics. They taught me so much about the value of your family and the dignity that comes with hard work and doing your best.” 

Molly Stockley, Vice President of Hospital Growth


Cancer Treatment Centers of America at Western Regional Medical Center

“My parents, my first mentors, laid the foundation for my ambitions. Beth Reynolds, former director of KTVK 3/BMS, with developing me into a business executive. She provided guidance and very constructive feedback. Jack Moore, former chief marketing officer at CTCA, took a ‘leap of faith’ hiring me with no healthcare experience. He pushed me past my comfort zone and honed my skills indirectly to consumer healthcare marketing. Bob, my husband and partner in life, is my biggest supporter and most honest critic. He continually inspires me personally and professionally.” 

Eileen Rogers, President / Owner


Allegra Marketing & Print / One Creative View, LLC

“I’ve been fortunate to have many mentors – some younger

and some older. They are the people who always loved me enough to tell me the truth and to challenge me. Most importantly they are the people who help me learn by asking me questions so I can figure it out – instead of telling me what to do. My mother mentored and modeled this the most for me.” 

Brenda Silveus, Marketing Director


Pioneer Title Agency

“Anne M. Terril taught me more than just the real estate business; she taught me the people business, and to value listening over always having to be heard. Helen Hudgens Ferrell, the now-retired executive director of Both Hands (now called Northern Arizona Housing Solutions), taught me how to seek out my passions and continuously explore them. Keith Newlon, president of Pioneer Title Agency, taught me to think and support local.” 

Catherine Scrivano, President


CASCO Financial Group

“I have been fortunate to have an abundance of mentors my entire life. The first was my mother who was widowed at a young age, leaving her with two young girls to support. This was a time when a woman was expected to be a wife and mother and not encouraged to have education or

experience to do anything else. She managed to not only take care of us but to own a business, commit to community service, care for her extended family and continues to inspire me as she decreases some of her independence without sacrificing a bit of her dignity.” 

Michelle McGinty, President

DRA Collective

“I have been lucky to work with and learn from so many talented woman mentors. My mom was an entrepreneur and an amazing example of what hard work and determination accomplishes. Denise Resnik epitomizes how leading with integrity fuels success. I learn from her daily.” 


Becky Jackson, President & CEO

ICAN: Positive Programs for Youth

“I have had three wonderful people in my life that always told me the truth (as hard as it was to hear), but one especially, Barbara Ralston, has been a dear friend and mentor now for almost 30 years, and it is really cool when she asks for my advice!” 


Pamela Conboy, Lead Regional President

Wells Fargo, Covering the Arizona, Nevada and Utah Regions

“I’ve had many wonderful mentors. One of the most influential is my mother who taught me much at a young age and continues to teach me every day. She taught me to always be a leader. She instilled a high degree of confidence and never-ending support, which allowed me the freedom to take risks in order to succeed.” 

Rhoshawndra L. Carnes, Director of Family Services


Pilgrim Rest Foundation Inc.

“My mother and sister have been my greatest mentors because they have guided me in my life. They have been my biggest cheerleaders and have allowed me to grow into a person that is extremely humbled by the opportunities I have been afforded by their personal sacrifices.” 

Danielle Feroletto, President and Owner

Small Giants LLC

“I have been marvelously surrounded by mentors throughout my career. One of my first mentors was a photographer who volunteered at an ASU organization I was in. He guided me, encouraged me and advocated for me. So when I graduated, I immediately sought out others to make


my learning curve — in business, the construction industry and marketing and now as a business owner — shorter. I am currently involved in an entrepreneur's group in which we are surrounded by people who do it better, faster and smarter. It is absolutely critical to always be mentored and be a mentor.” 

Pittsburgh




Dorothy Andreas, President

The Sewickley Spa Inc.

“Show up on time. Always say please and thank you. Tell the truth no matter what. Don’t take shortcuts, they cost you more in the end. When you feel completely overwhelmed, go volunteer. Run your business with a higher purpose than your profits.” 

Carol Harris, President


Carol Harris Staffing LLC

“When I approached my parents about starting my own temporary staffing company, I was hoping for their approval. My dad said, ‘If anyone can do it, you can.’ They instilled in me a strong work ethic, confidence, optimism, sense of humor and honesty. Also important advice: Save for a rainy day.” 

Aradhna Malhotra Oliphant, President and CEO


Leadership Pittsburgh Inc.

“When I was a new executive, a wise lady told me, ‘Never lower your expectations – let your team rise up to them. And never let anyone convince you that people expect women to be nicer so a woman leader cannot demand high standards.’ I’ve always remembered that and always been impressed by

what a team can do when you have faith in them.” 


Amy Novak, Partner Operations Lead

Google Inc.

“My mother taught me to be fearless – to never be intimidated by others. She would say, ‘They put their pants on the same way you do,’ and, ‘If you are going to make a mistake, make it a loud one!’ It has inspired me to take risks and grab opportunities.” 

Mona Pappafava-Ray, President and CEO


General Carbide Corp.

“Be good to everyone. Talk to everyone. You never know who you will meet or how they will fit into the fabric of your life. Life can be ironic. Today, the person is serving you lunch, tomorrow they could be your boss.” 

Louise Urban, President and CEO


Jefferson Hospital

“Leadership is all about communication. This has held true throughout my career. Jim Cooper, a health care executive and mentor, put as much emphasis into communicating the plan as he did in developing the strategy. His key principles:

jargon and acronyms rarely enhance communication – keep it simple; if it takes more than one page, you lost them; how you deliver the message is just as important as the message itself; and people will always remember how you made them feel, particularly when the message is difficult.” 


Ruthann Omer, President

The Gateway Engineers Inc.

“My father, who was my mentor, best friend and business partner, taught me at a very early age that education is expensive no matter how you get it. Throughout my life it is amazing just how true this lesson is in both my personal and business affairs.” 


Mary Frances Cooper, President and Director

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

“A supervisor early in my career would listen thoughtfully to my ideas for our department and allow me to implement those that we agreed made sense. As a new librarian, I felt pride that I could contribute and wanted to do my best work to justify her confidence in me.” 

Kristy Knichel, President


Knichel Logistics

“My mentor is Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, who said, ‘We need women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic, reshape the conversation, to make sure women’s voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored.’” 

Katharine A. Fredriksen, Senior Vice President of


Environmental Strategy and Regulatory Affairs

Consol Energy Inc.

“My quote comes directly from a mentor I had in my professional career – who also happened to be the worst boss I ever had. This was one of the best pieces of advice I’ve used and pass along: ‘There are three things you should evaluate about your job and career: 1. Do you feel like you are adding value? 2. Are you intellectually stimulated by your job? 3. Are you having fun? If the answer is not yes to all three, then you have to make a change!’ Thankfully I am able to shout yes to all three about my job at Consol!” 


Pam Schanwald, CEO

The Children's Home of Pittsburgh & Lemieux Family Center

"My mentor was Robert Hecht, CEO of PJ Dick Inc. and Trumbull Corp. Bob told me, 'Always be yourself and be passionate about what you do; it's up to you whether you sink or swim. If you ever find yourself sitting at your desk thinking that you have nothing to do, you need to find another job!'" 

Patricia Dodge, Managing Partner


Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP

"The best lawyer I know showed me how to work with passion, enjoy life, don't take yourself too seriously, and when you make a mistake – which you will – own it, fix it and learn from it." 


Portland




Angela Dowling, President
Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon

“My mentor was Terry Payne, founder of Payne Financial Group based in Missoula, Mont. His insightfulness about human nature, the business world, combined with his trust in my abilities, helped catapult me to a new level in my career. His belief in my abilities has made all the difference in my career.” 


Janeen McAninch, CEO
Becker Capital Management

“My mother was a scientist in an age when there were very few women in the field. I work in a field where women are still a definite minority, but was raised with the understanding that there were no barriers.” 


Paula Barran, Founding Partner
Barran Liebman LLP

“Has to be my mom! She was an R.N., and she came home one day covered in blood because she saved the life of a man who begged her in the ambulance not to let him die so he could raise his babies. Then she took a shower and fixed dinner.” 

Peggy Maguire, Senior Vice President, Corporate
Accountability and Performance / President
Cambia Health Solutions / Cambia Health Foundation


“An inspiring role model with a rich professional history, Cambia board member Paula Jones shares her own experiences and insights with me. She intently listens and truly cares about my development. As a trusted confidant, Paula provides practical, constructive advice that challenges and encourages me to advocate for myself.” 

Sandra McDonough, President and CEO
Portland Business Alliance

“Bill Robertson was my first boss when I went from newspapers to business. From him I learned to look around the corner and not to be afraid to think big. He nudged me out of my comfort zone and encouraged me to lead. Bill was incredibly smart and a great boss.” 


Vanessa Sturgeon, President and CEO
TMT Development Co.

“Although I have been fortunate to have a handful of mentors, it was my grandfather, Tom Moyer, who showed me by example the importance of diversity in the workplace.

It was unexpected for a man in his 80s, but certainly demonstrates the depth of his wisdom.” 


Jan Robertson, Chief Operating Officer

Norris, Beggs & Simpson Companies


“Picking one mentor is difficult as I was lucky to have many in my life, but it has to be my dad. A city employee in rural Oregon and lifelong learner, he often shared pearls of wisdom. Be happy! Be brave! Try new things! And a quote he had engraved for me: ‘When you’re right no one remembers. When you’re wrong no one forgets.’ ” 

Patricia Smith, President and CEO

Unitus Community Credit Union

“Through their wisdom, positive outlook on life and direct/constructive feedback, my mentors inspired me to maintain a ‘can-do spirit’ during even the toughest of times. They taught me that leadership requires a certain blend of wisdom, common sense, continuous learning from others, curiosity and tenacity to envision and achieve success.” 

Tara Kramer, Owner
Ri-Ky Roofing & Sheet Metal LLC

“My mentor, Tony Zahtila, sent me out in rainstorms to look at commercial roofs and made me rebid the same roof three times. I thought he was crazy, but Tony knew what I didn’t – you must estimate roofs in bad weather and you can miss something on the first estimate. Twenty-two years later, he’s my business partner and best friend.” 

Raleigh




Moni Singh, Founder and CEO / President

STEM For Kids / SFK Franchising Inc.

“My first supervisor straight out of engineering school because he helped me tailor my job for broader cross-functional and cross-cultural experiences that formed the foundation for my current career that combines engineering/STEM and management, and he allowed autonomy in my work that boosted my confidence early on.” 


Sheila Mikhail, Co-Founder

Bamboo Therapeutics

“My first boss was tough as nails, expected perfection and took no excuses. Performers were rewarded with better assignments, more pay and promotions. In a profession and a time where not many women had made it to the top, he gave me clarity on what was necessary to achieve.” 


Natalie Perkins, President

Clean Design

“I’ve been blessed with several amazing mentors in life: My mom taught me independence and gratitude. My grandmother taught me strength and kindness. My dad taught me the importance of integrity and humor.” 


Tatiana Birgisson, Founder and CEO

Mati Energy

“Jake Stauch, fellow Duke entrepreneur and now fiancé, helped me overcome depression and focus on entrepreneurship as a way out. He encouraged me to be brutally honest with myself, develop confidence in my abilities, and embrace lessons taught in cognitive behavioral therapy. Lauren Whitehurst has been a more traditional mentor.” 

Meg McGurk, Executive Director


Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership

“As a friend and a mentor Susan Worley, Executive Director of Volunteers for Youth, is who I turn to for guidance. From her I’ve learned that the business of nonprofit leadership is more than just running an agency; it’s about being a respectful, engaged community member with a powerful mission.” 

Sepideh Saidi, PE, President and CEO


Sepi Engineering & Construction, Inc.

“As a young girl, the most significant role model was my great aunt. She lived alone in a big house next door to us in Tehran. She was the country’s first female criminal lawyer

and received her law degree from Sorbone. She had a great sense of who she was.” 


Lisa Grele Barrie, President and CEO

NC Theatre

“My father, Milton Grele’s track record as a successful CEO/ civic leader played a pivotal role in shaping who I am today. He led by example and taught me the importance of a solid work ethic, a focus on outcomes, a commitment to service and consistent appreciation for the team.” 

Anita Brown-Graham, Director


N.C. State University Institute for Emerging Issues

“My father has molded and mentored me professionally. We don’t talk of our relationship in those terms, but from an early age he encouraged me to know the value of my voice and have confidence that I was ‘in the room’ for a purpose more important than I might understand.” 

Mary Poole, President and CEO

Artspace

“Chuck ReCorr of Merrill Lynch – The Moore ReCorr Bell Group has been one of my most impactful mentors. He has

challenged me to be a stronger leader by asking difficult questions that have resulted in better decision-making and a more strategic vision.” 

Billie Redmond, Founder and chair
TradeMark Properties


“My maternal grandmother, Minnie Hall. ... I watched her work and build a business that was founded on value and honesty. She lived from a devout and deep faith and was unapologetic about her principles. As an adult today, I realize how much she impacted my character and perspective and behavior.” 

Sacramento




Doris Matsui, Congresswoman

Democrat from Sacramento

“Years ago, (political and community activist) Muriel Johnson gave me advice on juggling multiple projects: ‘You have to Swiss cheese it.’ By making holes in a project by completing smaller tasks, the big picture becomes manageable. Breaking down a goal into pieces allows you to carry a larger vision forward.” 


Ann Madden Rice, CEO

UC Davis Medical Center

“When I was promoted to my first manager position, my boss said, ‘Treat everyone who works for you fairly and with respect. It’s the right thing to do and you never know when one of them might become your boss.’ ” 


Pam Marrone, CEO / Founder

Marrone Bio Innovations Inc.

“My mom was right in advising that you get more with honey than with vinegar. It is so true in all aspects of business and life, but it’s not always easy to practice. My dad gave me good advice, too: ‘If you lie with dogs, you can expect to get fleas.’ ” 


Meea Kang, President

Domus Development LLC

“My father’s advice: ‘Discover what you love to do, then find a way to excel at it professionally. Work doesn’t feel like work when you enjoy what you’re doing and see that you’re making a difference. People will rally round you, enthusiasm is contagious, and you will attract passionate supporters.’ ” 


Lial Jones, Director and CEO

Crocker Art Museum


“My favorite advice from one of my mentors, a Delaware museum director: ‘Listen more than you talk, have fun, don’t make faces and say yes whenever possible.’ ” 

Kathleen Sowa, Sacramento Market President


Bank of America

“Some of the best advice was given to me 25 years ago in my first leadership role about the importance of surrounding yourself with strong talent. At the time, I was reluctant to manage out a poor performer. My manager pointed out you cannot afford to keep weak talent saying, ‘You will only be as good as the people on your team.’ I got the message.” 


Christi Black-Davis, Executive Vice President
Edelman

“My father had a profound impact on my life. A successful television director, he had an interesting career. He always said, ‘Show respect to everyone, no matter where they are in life or on the corporate ladder. Integrity is everything. And call your mother.’ ” 


Pat Fong Kushida, President and CEO
Sacramento Asian-Pacific Chamber of Commerce

“As a new corporate buyer for a major retailer, I went to New York and, ignoring my budget, took a risk and overbought. Hauled into the corporate office I had two choices, cancel the orders or be fired. I ate humble pie and canceled the orders. The next day my boss told me what I should have learned: ‘When you take a risk, learn to take a partner.’ ” 

Martha Clark Lofgren, Partner
Brewer Lofgren LLP

“Our children are the mirrors of our best selves, and so my daughters have been my best mentors. They taught me: First impressions matter. Be cheerful and reliable. Investigate the details. Share what you know. Have big dreams and make a map to achieve them.” 


Fredericka McGee, Vice President of California Government
Affairs and Operations
American Beverage Association

“My mom would always tell me a closed hand cannot receive anything. The principle of being willing to give not only material things, but of myself has allowed me to be the beneficiary of amazing opportunities and blessings. Giving simply defies the laws of math. Somehow a giver always ends up with more.” 


San Antonio




Marsha Shields, Manager of McCombs Family Partners
McCombs Enterprises

“My first and best business mentor is also my current mentor: my father, Red McCombs. His best advice: Even a loser wants to win. A winner expects to win. Prepare a plan. Practice. Execute the plan.” 

Suzanne Vautrinot, President / Board member
Kilovolt Consulting Inc. / Wells Fargo, ECOLAB, Symantec, Parsons and Battelle
Memorial Institute


“I was a brand new lieutenant in the Air Force. My first boss, and mentor, gave me a lesson that still guides me daily. It came as a question: ‘Do you understand the difference between personal and professional criticism? Because you should expect and seek tons of the latter.’” 

Phyllis Browning, CEO
Phyllis Browning Co.

“When I was trying to decide whether to open my own company or not, I called [H-E-B CEO Charles Butt] and he said, ‘Yes, open your own company, but whatever you do, don’t take a partner.’ If you have two people fighting with each other, it’s like politics – it can ruin a company.” 


Lynn Hickey, Athletics Director

University of Texas at San Antonio

“Lynn Hickey said she never had a female mentor until arriving in San Antonio to become athletics director at the University of Texas at San Antonio. The best mentoring the Oklahoma native has received to date came from her dad, who offered some simple advice: Stick to your values.” 


Trish DeBerry, President

The DeBerry Group

“My brother did very well in the oil business, and he told me, ‘If you never try, and this is something you want to do, I don’t want you to look back on life with regret. So what if you fail. You are not defined by how you fall down, but by how you pick yourself back up.’” 


Janie Gonzalez, CEO

Webhead

“Outsource everything but your brilliance. As you grow it’s impossible to be president, operations, PR, sales and accounting. It’s OK to outsource, especially in areas that will increase efficiency. Level the playing field, keep yourself focused.” 


Cristal Glangchai, Founder

VentureLab, a STEM education program for young women entrepreneurs based in San Antonio

“The best advice was to keep trying and not being afraid of failing. Failing is just learning. That was in grad school. To create your Ph.D., you have to create something that doesn’t exist, so you can’t actually go out and ask people how to do it. You have to use your network to try and fail, then try and fail again until you try and succeed.” 

Pamela Taylor, Executive Director

Dress for Success, a nonprofit workforce agency dedicated to stopping the cycle of poverty and violence against women


“I get inspiration from our clients. To see these women, to see their courage. I am in awe of them.” 

San Francisco




Niki Leondakis, CEO

Commune Hotels + Resorts

“As a successful entrepreneur, my husband, Bob Puccini, has helped shape my ability to create a company culture that fosters innovation. I remember seeking Bob’s counsel after one of my team members made a significant error. His response was, ‘If you hire people who make things happen, they’ll make mistakes. If you hire people who don’t do anything, they’ll never make a mistake.’ ” 


Joy Chen, Chairman and CEO

H2O+ Beauty


“My mentor is my ex-boss at Clorox. He provided me with insightful perspectives about leadership that have shaped me as a leader today. First, success comes from prioritizing the right team over strategy. Without the right people executing the plan, strategy is only a piece of paper. Second, I am a CEO that leads with the heart. What we know matters, but who we are matters more.” 

Evelyn Dilsaver, Independent Board Director


“My mentor taught me the power of authentic listening and influencing without authority. As chief of staff to Dave Pottruck, then co-CEO of Charles Schwab, I learned there

are multiple points-of-view and to hear those various points of view and articulate 'the other side' would allow Dave and any leader to make better decisions. I couldn't use the power of his office to force things to happen, so learning to influence through listening and finding win-win solutions has helped me advance to my role as a board member of various public and private companies." 

Teresa Briggs, Vice Chair & West Region Managing Partner
Deloitte LLP


"I had an important sponsor for much of my career. I say sponsor because he was my professional champion who helped develop me as a leader, actively going to bat for me by pursuing opportunities on my behalf. This positioned me to become Deloitte's first female West Region Managing Partner." 

Carrie Schwab-Pomerantz, Board Chair and President /
Senior Vice President / Chairman of the Board and Director
Charles Schwab Foundation / Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. / Schwab Charitable

"I met Nicole Young when I was very young and new to business. She was my boss – but more importantly, she was my mentor. I can still hear her voice telling me 'You have what it takes.' That mantra became our shared code for her faith in me – and ultimately, my faith in myself." 


Alison Davis, Managing Partner

Fifth Era

“My best mentors – partners at the consulting firm I worked at (McKinsey) – loved their work and seemed to have fun and interesting lives too. He gave the clear impression it was joyful and rewarding to be a leader, and they modeled how leadership roles are not in conflict with a rich and enjoyable life.” 

Janet Lamkin, California State President


Bank of America

“My mentor is Dick Rosenberg, retired CEO of Bank of America. I’ve been a mentor and I’ve been mentored, but my relationship with Dick is special. He’s generous with his time and he really understands how to combine a strategic business focus with the all-important human touch. Plus, he’s always been an active, effective champion of women advancing in the workplace.” 

Paula Collins, Founder and CEO / Board Chair

WDG Ventures Inc. / The Presidio Trust

“My mentor looked nothing like me, but neither did anyone else in the board room when I arrived as the newest director of an important private company. The chair, an


accomplished business man, helped me learn to lead, build consensus and to move high-powered people to make the best decisions. Our friendship endures to this day.” 

Seattle




Dr. Constance W. Rice, Board Member

University of Washington Board of Regents

“From my friend Desmond Tutu - a real motivator for me: ‘Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.’ This quote hangs in my office!” 


Phyllis J. Campbell, Chairwoman

Pacific Northwest segment of JP Morgan Chase Co.

“Dave Clack, one of my early business mentors, passed on his grandfather’s wisdom: ‘The more you give, the more you get back: it is an unending cycle.’ These words taught me that, especially in business, it is important to give back to other people and to communities, personally and professionally.” 


Ana Mari Cauce, President

University of Washington

“My graduate school advisor, Edmund Gordon, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at Yale, used to always remind me, ‘If you expect the very best of people, they’ll have something to live up to.’ I’ve been doing that ever since, and I’m seldom disappointed.” 


Jill Jacobi Wood, President

Windermere Real Estate

“My dad, John Jacobi, is well known for his ‘Jacobi-isms.’ Some of my favorites are, ‘Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you. Try new things, be innovative, and don’t be afraid to stub your toe. Most of life is built on relationships.’” 


Jenny Durkan, Partner / Former U.S. Attorney

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP / Western District of Washington

“When my grandfather left his mother in County Mayo, Ireland, her parting words were, ‘Be honest, and you shall also be lucky.’ She had taught him honesty is more than just telling the truth, or being trustworthy. It also requires hewing to what is right, even when it is hard.” 


Deanna Oppenheimer, Founder

CameoWorks

“Lou Pepper, retired CEO Washington Mutual, taught me the importance of humility and perspective. A leading charity called to invite him to chair a prestigious initiative. When I said, ‘Lou, they want you!’ He replied, ‘They want the CEO of the bank; never confuse yourself with your title.’ ” 


Tricia Raikes, Co-founder

Raikes Foundation

“My mother showed me that the wisest people don’t always stand in front. She found joy in simple things, modeling the practice of being present. She taught me that a positive mindset is the most important ingredient to a fulfilling life and demonstrated the power of leading by example.” 

Scilla Andreen, Co-founder and CEO

IndieFlix


“My grandmother told me to take the cards I’ve been dealt and play my hand well. Do the research. Be clear on ‘the ask’ and do the heavy lifting. If you give yourself the power to say ‘go,’ I hope you’ll respect how much power you have and not waste it.” 

Mary McWilliams, Retired Executive Director / Board

Member


Washington Health Alliance / Virginia Mason Health System and Puget Sound Energy

“I received some advice from a mentor early in my career when I was a 28-year-old healthcare consultant. He said, ‘People are paying a lot of money for you, so it’s important that you comport yourself in a way that conveys authority.’ That’s advice I have passed along to other young women

whom I have mentored.” 

Anne Farrell, President Emeritus

The Seattle Foundation


“While working on a project with a partner in the fifth grade, I became hurried and a little sloppy. She told me that her grandmother said to always do your best – advice I have tried to follow ever since. ‘Out of the mouths of babes,’ as they say.” 

Silicon Valley




Joan Opp, President/CEO

Stanford Federal Credit Union

“A managing partner I worked with worked harder than any other employee in the firm. As a young person, it showed me that despite reaching the highest position in the company, your workload doesn’t go down, it goes up. Observing his work ethic made me want to work harder.” 

Tammi Blundo, Vice President

Human Resources, Cushman & Wakefield

“Howard Friedman was my biggest mentor (he has passed away). I worked for Howard for many years at my current company. He believed in me and genuinely valued my opinion. I was young in my career when I started working for him, so him believing in me gave me confidence and the drive to be successful.” 


Kristine Ball, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Relypsa


“The advice that has made the most impact on me came from my mother. She told me to always, ‘Be kind. Be yourself. And speak up when something isn’t right.’ I have found that following that advice is just as important in

business as it is in life.” 

Eva Tsai, Vice President Digital Business and Operations
vArmour


“My current boss, Tim Eades, always aims for the moon in building our company and doing so with style and integrity. Even with his busy schedule, he makes it a priority to nurture and mentor people and is so very proud when he makes a positive impact in someone’s world. In my amusement park analogy of life, I see him giddily going on different rides and never letting any long waits discourage him. He inspires me to do the same.” 

Dana Shaw-Arimoto, Advisor / Speaker / Author

“Einstein’s picture hangs on my wall in the office at eye level for a reason. Don’t repeat the same things over and over and expect different results. Life is crazy enough without insanity.” 


Annie Rogaski, Vice President and General Counsel
Avegant

“Be passionate in all that you do. I learned this from one

of my mentors, Dan Furniss (now deceased), who was passionate in everything he did or said. While passion served me well in advocating for my clients, it has also helped me find a path to a practice that gives me great joy.” 


Wendy Mattes, Co-Founder and Executive Director

Jasper Ridge Farm

“When I was in the sixth grade, my Granny taught me a poem, which stayed with me my whole life, and influenced my attitude toward others. ‘I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow human being let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.’ ” 


Patricia Nakache, General Partner

Trinity Ventures

“Many years ago, my partner Larry Orr encouraged me to embrace the fact that I am a woman in a male-dominated industry, rather than trying to fight it. He encouraged me to leverage the fact that I am a woman to bond with female entrepreneurs and dive into market opportunities that serve women.” 


Deborah Juran, Senior Vice President

RBC Wealth Management

“I had a nun for high school honors English who had just finished her masters at Bucknell University. When she found out I was planning on going to Katherine Gibbs Executive Secretarial School after graduation, she had the proverbial cow. She said I was going to Bucknell if she had to take me there herself.” 

June Klein, Vice President for Business Affairs and CFO

Palo Alto University


“To stretch outside my comfort zone and try something new even if I think I have no business doing that or applying for the job. An example was working on my doctorate in education. The doctoral process changed how I think about the world, and frame and re-frame social issues. I would never have known how powerful dialogue can be for transformational learning had I not tried something new.” 

St. Louis




Kathy Button Bell, Chief Marketing Officer

Emerson

"I have had several incredible mentors give me great advice across many businesses – 1. Rip your 'to-do' list in half. Prioritize tightly to the most important three 'high-value projects' you/your business can accomplish. 2. Go big or go home. None of us has enough budget to do everything. Pick one to two big attention opportunities and throw all we have against those tight choices. Good money after good. 3. Make your boss a hero. Always keep your station in mind, take their priorities as your own. Knock it out of the park on their behalf. Enjoy the view." 

Kathy Osborn, Executive Director


Regional Business Council

"University of Missouri - St. Louis Chancellor Blanche Touhill was a great mentor, who focused on the significance of relationships. Her wisdom: people work with and make deals with people they trust. Be true to your word and live up to your commitments." 

Elizabeth Stroble, President


Webster University

"My mother's words to live by have become my own: 'Do not

live your life in regret. If you don't understand a decision, then you don't have all the information. Don't be afraid to move. Do the right thing, and build your reputation as someone who can be counted on.' " 


Mary Mack, Head of Community Banking

Wells Fargo & Co.

"Everyone needs to know there's someone out there pulling for them to be successful. My mentor taught me the value of staying in touch when I was going through a difficult career transition. It's my obligation to pay it forward and do the same for others." 


Melissa Lee, Executive Assistant Manager-Food & Beverage
/ Culinary

The Ritz-Carlton St. Louis

"My parents inspired me to dream and deliver. My mom said, 'Don't let anyone say that you can't. Reach for the stars and you can do anything you put your mind to.' From my dad: 'The job must get done, no matter who does what. Ingredients together create the recipe!' " 


Jackie Yoon, Market President

Bank of America

“Live every day as if you were playing golf. Everyone is watching whether you play with integrity or kick the ball closer to the hole. If you think no one saw you kick the ball - they did. There are no shortcuts.” 


Sharon Price John, CEO

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.

“My mentor is not a person of means but of meaning. Throughout my life, dad’s honest insights cut through the gray of so-called complex personal and business decisions to remind me that ‘doing the right thing’ is less confusing than we’d like and that ‘life can be simple if you let it.’” 


Brittany Packnett, Executive Director

Teach for America - St.Louis

“My mother always taught me to defy expectations. There are certain narratives in existence for what women and women of color are capable of. She taught me to prove those narratives wrong with my excellence, compassion and commitment to not just do more, but do more for justice.” 


Suzanne Sitherwood, President & CEO

Spire

"A leader's accomplishments are not achieved alone. Their ability to succeed is directly impacted by the people in their lives. My husband, Carl, inspires me every day. He gives me the gift of a better me. He gives me strength, decisiveness, laughter and he's even taught me it's ok to cry." 


Penny Pennington, Principal

Edward Jones

"A colleague I respect once told me, 'Penny, leadership is about three simple things: Get better, help others and get better at helping others get better.' I try to live that every day." 

Ann Wagner, Congresswoman

U.S. House of Representatives


"The best advice I have ever received was from my father. Whenever asked how he was doing, he always responded, 'I've never had a bad day in my life.' I've used his words to face each day with a positive outlook and encourage others to do the same." 

South Florida




Penny S. Shaffer, South Florida Market President

Florida Blue

"I have known George Foyo for 25 years. While he has been my mentor for all of those, I only worked directly for him, off and on, for about six of those years. He always encouraged me to work for many leaders. You will learn more from multiple styles and situations and broaden your base of support in the organization." 


Doria M. Camaraza, Senior Vice President and General Manager-Americas South

American Express

"A great mentor of mine, Jim Moline, encouraged me during a very difficult leadership dilemma I had, to leave my ego at the door, swallow a little pride, extend an olive branch a bit further than the other person. This could have been the best advice ever, since it helped me build relationships with a team of people that were skeptical about our working together. Once they realized I was more interested in how we could be more successful together, as demonstrated by my forgetting about my ego, we actually were extremely successful and enjoyed the partnership." 


Rachel Sapoznik, President and CEO

Sapoznik Insurance and Associates

“As an entrepreneur and business owner, I learned very early in my career not to be derailed by the word no. So, I tell everyone I mentor: ‘That no is just a yes waiting to happen.’ ” 


Lucy Morillo, President and CEO

Miami Children’s Health Foundation

“My previous Foundation Board Chair, Tom Cornish, used to tell me, ‘Focus only on the things you can control.’ Focusing on the things we cannot control is counterproductive, don’t waste energy on them. It’s OK to be prepared to react to variable situations, but it’s not OK to worry about them endlessly.” 


Nancy Robin, Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity of Broward County

“Confidence, conflict and change are key success factors. Believe in yourself, do not be afraid of conflict or discomfort, needed change rarely occurs without it. In conflict, focus on the situation, not the person.” 


Tammy Knight, Partner

Holland & Knight

“Steve Sonberg, managing partner of Holland & Knight, taught me to aim high and to strive for positions and opportunities, even if they may seem out of reach. He had me set my sights on things that I would never have dreamed of, including a coveted seat on our firm’s board of directors. He helped me to see leadership qualities in myself that I hadn’t yet discovered.” 

Jacqueline Travisano, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer


Nova Southeastern University

“My mentor, Sister Grace Ann Geibel, told me many times that when facing challenges or adversity ‘courageous leaders must maintain a high degree of humility and kindness,’ and she demonstrated that to me as president of Carlow University every day.” 

Ruth Spiegel, President


Miami/Fort Lauderdale Coop Cold Stone Creamery

“My mentor was the professor who recruited me as an adjunct professor when I graduated with an MBA. I was the first woman in the School of Business and his mantra was

‘No excuses – no one wants to hear why you can’t or didn’t. Get it done.’ ” 


Maureen Shea, CEO

Right Management

“Mayor Virginia Young was my first mentor and role model. She believed you could achieve anything you wanted and connected me with many wonderful people early in my career. I think of her fondly every time I pass her school and park and thank God for the positive influence she had on me and Fort Lauderdale.” 

Ginger Martin, President & CEO


American National Bank

“When I became CEO of American National Bank, my mentor, Roxanne Emmerich, told me to ‘get out onto the skinny branches.’ She encourage me to take risks, get out of my comfort zone and face my fears.” 

Karen O’Byrne, Chief Financial Officer


Modernizing Medicine, Inc.

“Whether I got the best grade or the worst, whether I won the game or lost, whether I got the job or didn’t, the

reaction I got from my father was 'did you give them your absolute best? Because your best is pretty spectacular, no matter how it gets measured.' " 

Linda Worton Jackson, Cofounder

Salazar Jackson LLP

"My father has always had a real sense of justice and fighting for what's right. He made me aware of the world around me at a young age and encouraged me to get a good education and get involved. He instilled the values I hold dearly; honesty, integrity and justice." 

Tampa Bay




Rita Lowman, COO

EVP

“The definition of mentor is trusted advisor. My mentor is also a trusted friend, Alex Sink. I have discussed career moves with Alex for the majority of my banking career. Her best advice has been to ‘stay true to who you are and let your passion shine through.’ From my days when I had the pleasure of working for Alex to Alex serving on two of my bank boards, Alex has been an influence in my life and other bankers in Florida. My goal is to be a positive influence in the lives of women throughout Florida.” 

Rhea Law, Chair of the Florida Offices


Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney

“Finding the right mentor at the right time is crucial to your success. My first mentor in the legal field gave me his ‘mantle of credibility’ by encouraging clients to give me a chance to represent them. Today I pay it forward by spreading my mantle to others.” 

Mindy Grossman, CEO


HSNi

“I believe that mentorship comes from everywhere. I’ve been lucky enough to have notable mentors – from Ralph

Lauren to Phil Knight. But today, I learn as much from young creative entrepreneurs as they do from me. I don't think that mentorship is hierarchical; it's about the relationships that you form and being open to constantly learning." 


Colleen Chappell, President and CEO

ChappellRoberts

"My mentor, Deanne Roberts, never shied away from risk. She taught me to embrace fear and the growth that comes from moving through it. Evaluating personal accountability, strengths and weaknesses is challenging, but I'm eternally grateful for the understanding that inaction is a greater risk than taking on the unknown." 

Kanika Tomalin, Deputy Mayor

City of St. Petersburg

"Veteran hospital executive Sue Brody is a giant among my many mentors. Generous with her time and unforgiving in her expectations, she guided me toward greatness by offering constant opportunities for growth and making it clear that I am the primary determinant of my destiny. I am forever grateful." 


Kathleen Peters, Representative

Florida House

“As an elected official, I met with business people I respected. In lieu of requesting they mentor me, I asked if they would be willing to be my advisor. They all agreed to always make themselves available to me when I needed their council. These advisors have been critical in every successful endeavor I have embarked on throughout my political career. Yes I call them advisors, but they are true mentors who have guided and advised me to do what is best for our community. Their counsel gave me balanced knowledge on issues and confidence in my plans, bills, initiatives and decisions.” 


Sandy Murman, Commissioner

Hillsborough County Commission

“Deanne Roberts, a well-known Tampa public relations businesswoman, took me under her wing and gave me tools to be an effective communicator and a confident speaker as a Florida state legislator. She was generous enough to guide and advise me so every message delivered was focused on helping local citizens and the community. I could not have been more grateful for her mentorship and know how a baby bird must feel when they get kicked out of the nest and make it on their own.” 


Liz Smith, CEO

Bloomin' Brands

"Irene Rosenfeld, a transparent leader with high integrity, taught me the importance of 'failing faster.' It is ok to fail in pursuit of a game-changing idea, but have the courage to call it as soon you see it isn't working and don't make the same mistake again." 


Renée Vaughn, President

Williams Consulting Group

"My favorite mentor was a former boss named Tom. He was retired from the military on his second career and I was a rebel in my 20s. He taught me to take myself seriously – value honesty and integrity above all – and always deliver more than I promised." 


Molly Demeulenaere, CEO

MOSI

"At 24, I had a lot to learn from Patricia Caswell, my first mentor in the nonprofit world. Like listening is better than talking, remembering people's names is non-negotiable, professionalism doesn't mean sacrificing individuality, and perception is reality. Oh, and that fear of rejection? You've gotta just power through it." 


Judy Genshaft, President

University of South Florida

“Among many mentors in my career, one of my favorites was my father, who taught me about hard work and leadership, and to treat everyone with respect. Some other lessons for which I am grateful: Be open to learning every day, actively seek out those from whom you can learn, and be sure your credentials exceed those of your peers.” 

Kathleen Shanahan, Chair and Chief Executive Officer


URETEK Holdings, Inc.

“Every chapter in life is better with a mentor. Margo Alexander was my Wall Street mentor/guidepost. She taught me about how to ask and earn top bonuses, leaning in when you had your facts and shared success. Margo remains a dear and directional friend even to this day, 15 years later.” 

Marty Lanahan, West Florida Area President


Regions Bank, Tampa

“I prefer the term ‘sponsor’ to ‘mentor.’ A mentor teaches or helps an individual; a sponsor vouches for that person and commits to advocate for them. A colleague at First Union, Beth McCague, was my first sponsor. She convinced a much younger me that I could lead a team and vouched for

me as I pursued greater responsibilities. She gave me the confidence to be the leader I am today.” 


Pam Bondi, Attorney General

State of Florida

“A mentor who influenced me greatly was former Hillsborough County Judge Barbara Fleischer. She had the strongest work ethic, and I experienced many long days and weeks in her courtroom. Judge Fleischer could also be very tough, but only because she believed in us enough to expect the very best.” 

Maryann Ferenc, Owner

Mise en Place


“My mother, Wanda Ferenc, who is also my namesake with Wanda being my middle name, was truly my most meaningful mentor. She was an ultimate entrepreneur with courage and vision. She taught me many things but the two most powerful: The customer is always right and trust your instincts. Thanks, Mom.” 

Washington




Karen Kelley, President and COO

sweetgreen

“One of the best pieces of advice I received was ‘always think about how to win the war not every battle.’ It made me think more deeply about what I was really trying to accomplish with every interaction. In practice it enhanced my ability to influence others.” 


Linda Rabbitt, Founder, Chairman and CEO

Rand Construction Corp.

“Steve Harlan, the former Managing Partner of KPMG and my boss in the early 80s said, ‘There are only two kinds of people in the room: clients and potential clients.’ ” 


Betsy Fischer Martin, Executive in Residence / Co-host

American University School of Public Affairs / Bloomberg News

“From my mentor, the late Tim Russert: ‘Preparation is everything! There are no shortcuts. Don’t ever just decide to wing it.’ ” 


Renee DeSilva, Senior Vice President

The Advisory Board Co.

“Focus on your next manager, not your next role (or salary). It’s tempting to focus on landing your dream role or a big salary. Resist the urge. The single biggest inflection point in your early career stage is who you work for, not what you do.” 

Debbi Jarvis, Vice President Corporate Relations


Pepco Holdings An Exelon Company

“When I was a news anchor, news legend Virgil Dominic told me, ‘When in doubt, trust your gut! Let your inner voice be your guide.’ Funny, how we need to be given permission to listen to ourselves. I’ve actually made some of the best decisions focusing on those words.” 

Barbara Mullenex, Principal


Perkins Eastman

“Best words of wisdom from my best mentor: Be of service. How do you distinguish yourself among all the other smart people in your profession? By being of service to your community. There are lots of ways to define that – for me it has meant volunteering, doing the work, contributing time, dollars, expertise to nonprofits and professional

associations in my community and inside my own company. When the people that you serve need your skills and talents, you will have established yourself as trustworthy, reliable, someone with integrity, the go-to expert. So much better than chasing shiny stars - make a difference!" 


Rachel S. Kronowitz, Founding Partner

Gilbert LLP

"My mentor and dear friend, Scott Gilbert, emphasizes the importance to 'do well, have fun, and give back.' That principle has guided me throughout my career, reflected in my work as a lawyer and my commitment to helping the underserved in our community." 


Shonali Burke, President and CEO

Shonali Burke Consulting, Inc.

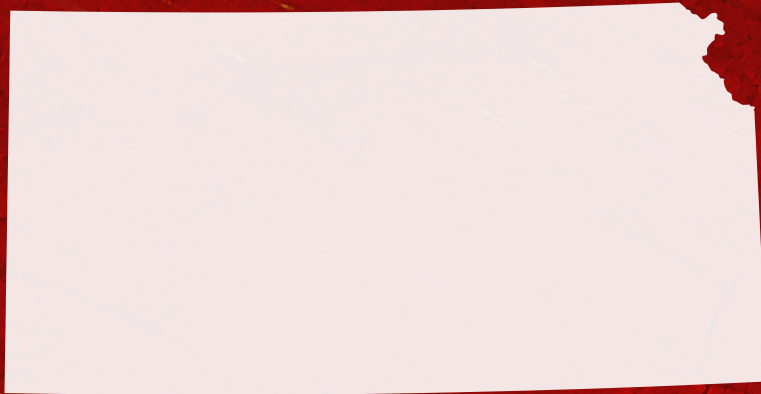
"Patrice Tanaka, the petite powerhouse founder of three agencies including CRT/tanaka, gave me the best business-building lesson ever. She said, 'Do one thing every day. Just one.' While I sometimes do way more, that helps remind me to pace myself as well as be consistent." 

Carolyn E. Howell, Founder, Owner and CEO

Fun Company Events LLC


“You may be fast but you cannot outrun your reputation so make sure you are building one you can be proud of.” 

Wichita




Cindy Carnahan, Broker Associate

J.P. Weigand & Sons Inc.

“When I was a child, daddy took me ‘visiting’ on Sunday afternoons. For 14 years I followed him to open houses and listened as he taught me how to market and sell homes. Dad insisted on the value of hard work, on the rewards of tenacity, on the absolute necessity of caring deeply about clients.” 

Noreen Carrocci, President


Newman University

“My favorite mentor is Dr. Jackie Vietti, President Emeritus of Butler Community College. She demonstrated for me early on how to engage higher education with our business community. In all settings, including Newman’s Board of Trustees, Jackie is a model of openness and transparency with just the right diplomatic touch.” 


Cindy Claycomb, Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning and Professor

Wichita State University


“Dr. Robert Ross is a mentor that I trust, as a leader and a friend, to give me thoughtful and honest feedback. I have known Bob since I entered the MBA program at Wichita

State University. Later, he hired me at WSU as a marketing professor. We continue to meet monthly.” 

Marjorie Engle, Senior Vice President, Organizational Development and Family Business Services
Allen, Gibbs & Houlik LC

“Former and current bosses Ron Hudson and Paul Allen mentored me. Early, Ron helped me recognize my potential and courage to use it. Now, Paul sets high expectations and gives direct feedback. He’s taught me to move toward instead of away from problems because fixing them teaches the best lessons.” 

Cindy Hoover, Vice President
737 MAX Program, Spirit AeroSystems

“I had a wonderful engineering leader, Ann Martin, mentor me early in my career. She pushed me to realize my full potential and encouraged me to pursue leadership roles. With her positive influence in mind, I enjoy mentoring other men and women to their full potential as engineers and leaders.” 


Julie Huber, EVP/CCO

Equity Bank

“To me, mentorship is all about learning from everyone you meet - and using the best bits of leadership to inspire the people I lead and work with each and every day. I’ve learned from everyone, from my grandparents to Jim Berglund to Brad Elliott, and you never stop learning, never stop growing. I never stop looking up to people who break the ceiling - awed by ordinary people’s ability to do extraordinary things, and this inspires me to do more and achieve more.” 

V. Kaye Monk-Morgan, Mid America Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel


Wichita State University - TRIO Programs

“Pat Brown changed my life as a student at Wichita North High School and continues to inspire me today. She taught me to read American literature, but she also taught me to love students, expect excellence and stay angry enough to make a difference when it matters most.” 

Heidi Perez, COO


Mahaney Roofing Company

“Michelle Hubert saw potential in me early in my career and

took personal interest in my professional development. She taught me to have critical conversations early and often, to never waste a good crisis, to invest in others, and that any organization is always a direct reflection of the leader.” 


Shelly Prichard, President and CEO

Wichita Community Foundation

“Wayne Chambers asks the why behind a decision. He models a straightforward and drama-free management example. Wayne taught me the importance of defining your corporate culture, focusing on people who embody those values. He challenges me to respect my time and ensure a place for reflection and personal peace.” 

Susie Santo, President and CEO

Visit Wichita

“My favorite mentor is my dad. He’s an extremely bright businessman. I’ve watched him display dedication and passion for his employees/company. He shares his knowledge generously, and I’ve learned so much from him. He’s taught me to love what you do, to always do your best and to never stop learning.” 

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