

**bizwomen**

SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL

**MENTORING**  
**MONDAY**

Monday, April 3, 2017

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**A speed coaching and networking event  
powered by bizwomen.**

**SACRAMENTO  
BUSINESS JOURNAL**

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# Mentors

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## 1 | Annie S. Amaral | Partner, DowneyBrand

Having practiced and prevailed at the trial and appellate levels in both systems, she knows the courts can be overwhelming. Annie's complex litigation practice includes banks and financial institutions, industrial and land use companies, retail distributors, and solo entrepreneurs, to name a few. Sensitive to the stress that litigation can impose on all business types, Annie uses her in-depth knowledge of how courts work to eliminate as much as possible the worrying that comes with being a litigant.



## 2 | Angela Basi | Principal, Ernst & Young LLP

In her sixteen years as a Risk Advisory professional Angela has embraced opportunities to connect with her clients, provide thoughtful insights, and bring enthusiastic teaming. Angela has an ambitious outlook on EY teaming with the government and public sector and is energized by the prospect that she and her team can contribute to the success of the State of California. Angela is a Northern California native and graduated from CSU, Chico in 2000. As a professional, a wife, and a mom to a nine year old daughter and seven year old son, Angela looks for creative ways to make family and career work together.



## 3 | Christi Black-Davis | Executive Vice President, Edelman

Christi Black-Davis is a respected communications consultant, business executive and civic leader. Her career path has included nonprofit management, education, and small business ownership. In her role at Edelman Christi is a senior consultant in the world's largest, and privately held, public relations firm. Christi has a strong commitment to community service, and has served as a volunteer, board member and board chair for several nonprofits over the years.



## 4 | Donna Bland | President and CEO, Golden 1 Credit Union

Donna Bland became President and CEO of Golden 1 Credit Union in 2010 after serving as the Senior Vice President/Chief Financial Officer. Bland brings more than 25 years of experience in the financial services industry to her role leading the sixth largest credit union in the United States. Prior to joining Golden 1, Bland was a Certified Public Accountant with the global tax, audit, and advisory firm, KPMG, in their San Francisco and Sacramento offices. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from San Francisco State University.



## 5 | Ilene Goldstein Block | Senior Counsel, Kronick Moskowitz Tiedemann & Girard

Ilene Block provides business owners and executives with experienced legal counsel in the areas of corporate, commercial, real estate and intellectual property law. Ms. Block often operates as an outside general counsel, handling the numerous ongoing legal needs of local, regional and national companies. Ms. Block prides herself on educating her clients to enable them to best use her services to minimize ongoing legal fees. This education is based on the cornerstone concept of ongoing attention to legal issues and details as part of any business management's regular responsibilities. Ms. Block has many long time clients who call her regularly to discuss both routine business issues as well as major, strategic and long term business decisions.



## 6 | Rhonda Staley-Brooks | Executive Director, Nehemiah Community Foundation

Rhonda Staley-Brooks is the former President and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Sacramento Area where she was employed for 22 years. Staley-Brooks was appointed as the Executive Director of the Nehemiah Community Foundation in January 2016 where she works with the board and Nehemiah staff to develop the strategic plans, operational plans and agency budget for the Foundation. Staley-Brooks also leads the Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Program. As the program Administrator, she oversees all functions of the program to further its success.



## 7 | Nancy Bui-Thompson | President of the Board of Directors, SMUD

Nancy Bui-Thompson was first elected to the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) Board of Directors in November 2008 to represent the 215,000 constituents of Ward 2, which includes the communities of Folsom, Rancho Cordova, Gold River, Rancho Murieta, Galt, Wilton and Elk Grove. She is currently serving her third term, and recently completed her second term as President of the of the Board Directors for 2016. For over 15 years, Bui-Thompson has served as a technology and management professional who has worked with state and local government agencies as well as energy and health-care organizations. She is currently a Director at Public Consulting Group in their Technology practice.

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### **8 | Carol Burger | President, Burger Rehabilitation Systems, Inc.**

Carol attended CSUS, Loma Linda University and University of San Francisco. As a practicing Physical Therapist, Carol established Burger Rehabilitation in 1978. Carol has led the company from a one person office to a state wide organization serving thousands and providing a range of therapy services across the continuum of care from Acute Hospitals to Skilled Nursing Facilities, Home Health Agencies and outpatient clinics throughout the state.



### **9 | Dawn Clayton | General Manager, Thunder Valley Casino Resort**

Dawn Clayton is the General Manager of Thunder Valley Casino Resort in Lincoln, California, one of Placer County's major employers with 2,500 Team Members working at the AAA Four-Diamond destination resort. She is a 34-year veteran of the gaming/hospitality industry, ranging across commercial, riverboat, and Native American properties. She brings multi-jurisdictional expertise to her current role, developed through a remarkable rise in the gaming ranks that began in 1982 when she started as a craps dealer for the Tropicana Resort & Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey.



### **10 | Kresta Daly | Partner, Barth Daly LLP**

Ms. Daly has extensive experience as a criminal defense attorney. She has represented individuals, businesses and public officials facing criminal allegations ranging from securities, mail and wire fraud to drug and terrorism offenses. Kresta is known for her creativity and dedication to her clients. As a graduate of the National Criminal Defense College she trained under some of the best criminal defense lawyers in the country. That experience taught her that justice for a person accused of a crime is won only through gaining a complete understanding of the person and the case. Ms. Daly brings a dynamic, client focused approach to all of her cases. Prior to co-founding Barth Daly LLP, Ms. Daly spent nearly 20 years practicing law.



### **11 | Drisha Leggett | Vice President, U.S. Business Development and Marketing, Anpac Bio**

Drisha Leggett is Vice President of U.S. Business Development and Marketing for Anpac Bio-Medical Science Company; and responsible for establishing Anpac Bio's U.S. Headquarters and launching national operations/research in/from Sacramento, California. Throughout her career, Leggett has provided international/national/regional award-winning, organizational/business, communications/marketing & professional/resource development & strategic planning to corporations, academic institutions and organizations worldwide.



### **12 | Linda Farley | CEO, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California**

Linda brings a variety of experiences to her role as Chief Executive Officer. Her early work was spent in K-12 education as a teacher in Michigan; educational software consultant in Minnesota; and school director in Texas. She moved from the public to the nonprofit sector when she helped lead and create the Children's Museum of Denver from a financially unstable and unfocused museum to a relevant, vibrant and financially strong institution. She also spent time at Up with People as the Chief Operating Officer. Most recently, Linda led the fund development efforts at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento. She was part of the leadership team that raised funds for the \$93 million expansion, tripling the size of the museum.



### **13 | Savita Farooqui | Founder and CEO, Symsoft Solutions**

Savita Farooqui is the Founder and CEO of SymSoft Solutions, a Sacramento-based Digital Experience company that strives to connect organizations with their customers. Under Savita's leadership SymSoft created many award-winning solutions that are recognized by California State Government, US Department of Labor and the Center for Digital Government. Savita is passionate about User Experience and Open Data, and its potential to provide true transparency and accountability. For her work in open data technology and innovation, Savita has been recognized by the White house as "Champion of Change".



### **14 | Marcelle Flowers | President and CEO, Armstrong Plumbing Inc.**

Marcelle Flowers is a woman of strong faith and character, who's passion for life is reflected in her business ethics. Marcelle began her career as a wedding consultant and simultaneously worked for a plastic surgeon as a surgery technician. In 1989 Marcelle opened a small home based therapy business, founded and operated "Pogwash", a successful international T shirt and toy company and managed a Carmichael based cardiology clinic. In 1995, Marcelle transitioned to Armstrong Plumbing, the family commercial plumbing business founded by her father in 1964.

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### **Nicole Gleason | Partner, Diepenbrock Elkin Gleason LLP**

Nicole R. Gleason is a partner at Diepenbrock Elkin Gleason LLP, and leads the firm's national environmental law practice. She is uniquely versed in environmental agency enforcement actions, brownfields redevelopment, environmental compliance, environmental due diligence, grant programs, cost recovery litigation and environmental insurance. Nicole obtained her B.A. in Political Science with a minor in Planning and Development from California State University, Chico. She earned academic honors while obtaining her J.D. degree from McGeorge School of Law with distinction.



### **16 | Lial Jones | Director and CEO, Crocker Art Museum**

Appointed executive director in 1999, Lial A. Jones has set the strategic vision for the Crocker Art Museum's emergence as the leading cultural institution in California's Capitol Region. The growth of the Museum during her tenure includes a 50-percent increase in the size of the collection, an increase in attendance of 150 percent, and membership growth of more than 300 percent. Previously, Jones served as deputy director of the Delaware Art Museum in Wilmington, Delaware.



### **17 | Judith Kjelstrom | Director, UC Davis Biotechnology Program**

Dr. Judy Kjelstrom (aka Dr. Judy) has a rich background in health science and biotechnology education and training, clinical laboratory science, microbiology, program administration, mentoring and leadership. She directs the UC Davis Biotechnology Program that partners effectively across the campus, the region and the State. Prior to her employment at UC Davis, she taught Introductory Microbiology, Anatomy & Physiology and General Biology at regional community colleges and Sacramento State University.



### **18 | Amy Lerseth | Senior Vice President, Asset Management & Real Estate Services, Buzz Oates**

Ms. Lerseth has more than twenty years of experience in the commercial real estate industry and is primarily responsible for the execution of the investment strategy and business plan for assets valued in excess of \$1.5 Billion. Ms. Lerseth is directly responsible for the management of the real estate, asset management, and property management companies, as well as driving Buzz Oates' strategic vision and growth. She enjoys mentoring those interested in developing a career in the commercial real estate field both within the Buzz Oates organization and outside.



### **19 | June Livingston | Supervisor, Business Environmental Resource Center**

June Livingston supervises the Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC). She enjoys helping owners and operators start and stay in business by providing free and confidential environmental regulatory & permit help. She has worked with industry sectors to help them comply with new and existing regulations including: Automotive, food businesses, mini-market gasoline stations, manufacturing and others. It is common for BERC clients to seek assistance and refer other businesses. Her previous positions in Sacramento include: Communications & Media Officer, Hazardous Materials Specialist and Health Inspector.



### **20 | Gina Lujan | CEO, Hacker Lab**

Founding CEO of Hacker Lab and Code For Hood, Gina is a Social Entrepreneur. She focuses on community, business, regional, and economic development at Hacker Lab. Gina possesses 15 years' technology experience in web development, and is a repurpose maker. In addition to her entrepreneurial projects, Gina has worked as a consultant with economic development in rural Tuolumne County to assess the region's innovative community and resources.



### **21 | Jennifer Madden | Partner, Delfino Madden O'Malley Coyle & Koewler LLP**

Jennifer Randlett Madden represents employers and institutes of higher education to proactively devise effective and practical strategic employment programs to foster productive workplaces and prevent claims that could result in litigation. Jennifer recognizes when claims arise, early assessments in litigation are crucial. She engages with her clients to undertake thorough claims investigations to develop effective litigation strategies in-line with potential exposure and litigation costs.

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### **22 | Sandy Malaney | CEO & Founder, Big Hairy Dog Information Systems**

Sandy has grown Big Hairy Dog from a small start-up with just a handful of employees, to a successful business employing 40+ people who have been expertly trained and empowered to do whatever it takes to keep their customers happy. Due in large part to the knowledge and experience Sandy has gained and retained throughout her career, Big Hairy Dog has been in business for 24 years and has steadily grown, offering the highest level of customer service in the POS industry. This thriving company now supports retailers from small mom and pop stores, to large chain retailers with multiple store locations around the globe.



### **23 | Erica Manuel | Manager: Community Relations, Economic Development & Education**

Erica Manuel is an award-winning communications professional with a proven track record in planning, building and launching successful outreach and awareness campaigns. For the last 15 years she has focused on public affairs, stakeholder engagement, community development, media relations and marketing for various industries, including agriculture, healthcare, education, energy and technology. As a manager for SMUD, Erica oversees all community engagement, economic development and education efforts for the sixth-largest public utility in the US. Prior to joining SMUD, Erica was an appointee of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.



### **24 | Jennie Martinez | President, Financial Executives International – Sacramento Chapter**

With over 15 years experience in finance and accounting, Jennie Martinez has established herself as a financial leader in the Sacramento business community. She currently serves as President of the Sacramento Chapter of Financial Executives International (“FEI”) and sits on the Board of Directors for 5th Planet Games. Her commitment to excellence was recognized when she was honored at the 2016 Sacramento Business Journal CFO of the Year Awards. Jennie continues to challenge herself and recently left her position as CFO of 5th Planet Games to start her own financial consulting practice, where she serves the Sacramento region as an executive consultant.



### **25 | Bobbin Mulvaney | Owner and Partner, Mulvaney’s B&L**

Bobbin Mulvaney, Owner/Partner of Mulvaney’s B&L Restaurant and Next Door Event Space has over 30 years’ experience in the hospitality industry in Sacramento. She comes from a multi-generational entrepreneurial family. She believes that being mindful of your business culture is crucial to doing business. She focuses on teaching and has participated in Local and International women’s mentoring programs, she continues to take an active part in her community outside her business. Including the education of children, and young adults and disenfranchised citizens in our community.



### **26 | Cynthia Renaud | Police Chief, Folsom Police Department**

Cynthia Renaud was sworn in as the City of Folsom’s Police Chief on May 2, 2011, after serving twenty years with the Long Beach Police Department. Chief Renaud is a graduate of the 214th Session of the FBI National Academy. She writes professionally, and has had articles published in the Homeland Security Affairs Journal, the Journal of Leadership Studies, and Tactical Edge magazine as well as the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin. In 2015, she was named California State Legislature “Woman of the Year,” Assembly District 6, and in 2016, she received the Sacramento Business Journal’s “Women Who Mean Business” award.



### **27 | Tina Reynolds | President, Uptown Studios**

Tina works hard to create a community of giving, learning and growing - from the inside out. Her team of 17 creative professionals is committed to building a world around us that is conscious and filled with positive intentions. She wants to work together with people and tear down silos. She is totally attracted to brilliant people with a propensity to create change. Uptown Studios is a Sacramento marketing and design studio specializing in graphic design, website design, video production, social media management, human-centered design (design thinking) and marketing.

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### **28 | Kim Rhinehelder | President, Eskaton Foundation**

Kim Rhinehelder is a sought after trainer, coach, and advisor to nonprofit boards, nonprofit organizations, and individual fundraising professionals. Her niche is building fundraising programs from virtually nothing to millions. In her current position, Kim is the President of Eskaton Foundation. The goals of Eskaton Foundation are To raise money, outreach for the entire Eskaton organization, and to bring philanthropy for seniors on an equal playing field to children's organizations. Previously, Kim served as Chief Philanthropy Officer at Mercy San Juan Medical Center/Mercy Foundation.



### **29 | Lori Rianda | Senior Vice President of Enterprise Business & Community Engagement, Bank of America**

Lori Rianda is responsible for the Environment Social Governance strategy and team that drives brand favorability and revenue growth in the Greater Sacramento region. In her role, she works with market leadership teams – including executives from Consumer, Small Business Banking, Home Loans, Commercial Banking, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management and US Trust – and her national business partners to deliver the bank's brand across the capital region.



### **30 | Cathy Rodriguez Aguirre | President & CEO, Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

Cathy's professional background includes stints at UC Davis Medical School Admissions & Outreach, The Sacramento Bee Public Affairs Team, her own event planning and marketing business, and now as President & CEO of the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. When Cathy first came to Sacramento, she became a part of the community by volunteering with the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and was honored with the 2003 Volunteer of the Year Award. Cathy is a graduate of UC Davis, where she majored in Rhetoric and Communications and minored in English.



### **31 | Susan Savage | CEO, Sacramento River Cats**

Susan, a native of Amarillo, Texas, is entering her eighth season as the sole majority owner of the Sacramento River Cats. Susan and her late husband, Art Savage, purchased the Triple-A franchise and moved the team from Vancouver to the River City in 2000. For 10 years, they co-owned the River Cats, bringing baseball back to Sacramento after a 23-year absence. Her vision, as was Art's, is to offer the best fan experience possible and to make customer service the top priority. Susan and the River Cats family strive, on a daily basis, to make Raley Field the number one venue for entertainment in the Sacramento area.



### **32 | Liz Stafford | President, Inland Business Systems**

Inland Business sells and provides solutions and support for businesses by helping them to streamline their document and printing workflow. Liz assumed this role in May 2014, after a successful 30+ year career at Xerox. Previously Liz held a variety of sales and leadership roles at Xerox including Senior Vice President, Western Operations responsible for leading cross functional field operations accountable for sales, service, customer satisfaction and profitable revenue growth across the U.S.



### **33 | Anne Staines | President, Sagent**

Anne Staines is president of Sagent – a Sacramento-based marketing firm that specializes in creating campaigns that motivate people to make healthier, safer, and more sustainable choices. She has helped dozens of public agencies, nonprofits and “companies with a conscience” engage and educate the public to help improve the health, safety, environment, and quality of life of the citizens they serve. Anne founded Sagent (originally named ProProse) in 2004 after 20 years in the advertising and marketing industry. Sagent has received numerous awards for their measurable campaign results and for their positive culture.



### **34 | Rochelle Swanson | Councilmember, City of Davis**

Rochelle Swanson was first elected to the Davis City Council in 2010, then reelected in 2014. As a city council member, Rochelle has led efforts to develop a sustainable budget and establish Davis as a leader in regional economic development to support her community's quality of life and contribute to the region's vibrancy. Rochelle has done land use consulting since her time in law school with a focus on entitlements and government relations with the telecommunications industry. Though she took a hiatus from her consulting business and pursued a national director role at a tower company, she has resumed consulting for agencies and private companies. In addition, she practices law part-time for select land use clients.

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### **35 | Keri Thomas | Director Community & Government Relations, Sutter Health Valley Area**

She is responsible for working with elected and community leaders and not-for-profit agencies on sustainable programs that enhance community health in Sacramento, Placer, Yolo, Solano, Amador, Yuba and the South Valley which includes San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Modesto counties in California. Keri believes that the state of health care for the underinsured is dependent on partnerships and collaboration. As a result of that philosophy, the affiliates in the Sutter Health Valley Area region have taken the lead in identifying community needs and key collaborative strategies to ensure positive outcomes of existing community resources.



### **36 | Victoria Rosario | Associate Vice Chancellor, Los Rios Community College District**

Victoria Rosario is the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Services at Los Rios Community College District. She also taught in the Educational Leadership Master's Degree programs at CSU, Sacramento and Drexel University. She previously worked in various other faculty and administrative positions at Sacramento City College, Folsom Lake College, Santa Barbara City College and Irvine Valley College. She promotes the interdependence between instructional and student support programs that promote access and success for all students enrolled at any of the Los Rios colleges.



### **37 | Louise Walker | President and CEO, First Northern Bank**

Louise joined First Northern Bank in 1979, and has been a member of the Senior Management Team since 1989. During her career, Louise has held a variety of positions, which included managing Operations and Data Processing, as well as overseeing Human Resources, Risk Management, Compliance, Accounting, and Finance. Prior to becoming CEO, Louise held the position of Senior Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer for 14 years.



### **38 | Leigh White | General Manager, KTXL FOX40**

Leigh White is a 30 plus year veteran of the broadcasting/media business, and currently is the Vice President and General Manager of KTXL TV, FOX40, a division of Tribune Media. She and her husband Gene have recently relocated to Sacramento from Charlotte, NC, where she was with the Gannett/Tegna owned NBC affiliate. Leigh is active in the community, serving on 15 various boards during her career, and is a graduate of the 2016 Class of Leadership Sacramento and is a member of the CA Association of Broadcasters.



### **39 | Kären Woodruff | Vice President, Community Relations, Wells Fargo Foundation**

She is responsible for managing and directing charitable contributions for 27 counties within Northern California and the Central Coast, working closely with community organizations to determine local needs and opportunities for grant making. Ms. Woodruff joined Wells Fargo in 2013 bringing a combined for-profit and not-for-profit perspective from her 25 years' experience in business development, marketing, outreach, community engagement and relationship building at various organizations.



### **40 | Lisa Wrightsman | Founder and Regional Program Manager, Street Soccer USA Sacramento**

Lisa was a member of Sacramento State University's NCAA Division I Women's Soccer team and currently holds multiple program records as well as recognition as a member of the All-Decade team. After college she played over five years of semi professional soccer for the Elk Grove Pride. Today her passion for soccer is seen in her social entrepreneurship initiatives with Street Soccer USA; a nationwide non-profit that uses soccer to break the cycle of homelessness and domestic abuse. Lisa is the founder and current Director and Coach of Street Soccer USA's Sacramento Lady Salamanders. She started this program in 2010.



### **41 | Rachel Zillner | Assistant Vice President, SAFE Credit Union**

Rachel's worked in the banking industry for 17 years, 10 of those years have been with SAFE Credit Union. She's held positions from personal banker, collections, lending, call center, sales, training, community relations, relationship management, and indirect lending. Rachel is a Sac State graduate, with a bachelor's degree in general management and an MBA from University of Phoenix with an accounting concentration. At SAFE, Rachel is a founding member of the Community Banking division, and started the financial education program.

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