

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE:  
Private Equity,  
Investors & Advisors



**T**HE MERCURIAL ECONOMIC CLIMATE HAS FORCED COMPANIES TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE WAY THEY DO BUSINESS and to the way they approach their fiscal needs. The role that private equity investors and advisors play in terms of the business world overall has perhaps never been more important.

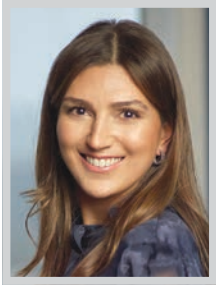
Los Angeles is an area that has an abundance of leaders of influence who make a significant impact in the private equity space.

For this issue, we've reviewed the careers of many of the most notable private equity related professionals in the region and have selected some of the very best to be showcased here. Listed alphabetically, you'll find some of Los Angeles' thought leaders on the subject, along with information about their careers and specialties.

Congratulations to each of the outstanding professionals who made this list and thank you for your contributions to the local business community's success.

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

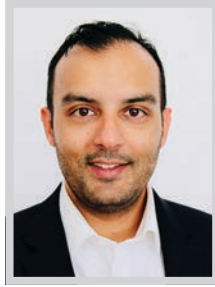
## LOI: PRIVATE EQUITY, INVESTORS &amp; ADVISORS

**LAUREN ANTION**

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

Lauren Antion joined Intrepid in 2015 and focuses exclusively on the Beauty, Personal Care & Wellness sector. She has a strong understanding of the trends and value-drivers across the sector, close relationships with leading acquirers and investors, and significant experience sourcing and executing transactions – delivering an unmatched level of value-add to clients and prospects.

Antion has a lifelong love of beauty and wellness and has propelled Intrepid to one of the most active mergers and acquisitions advisors in the beauty, personal care and wellness sectors in the middle market. In 2023 she was promoted to co-head of the practice, reflecting increased responsibility in the group. She is based in Intrepid's Los Angeles headquarters, where she is also actively involved in the firm's recruiting program.

**NAEEM ARASTU**

*Partner  
Skyview Capital*

Naeem Arastu helps lead M&A and is responsible for negotiating and executing acquisitions and divestitures at Skyview Capital. Arastu joined Skyview in 2021 and serves on Skyview Capital's Investment Committee. He has over 15 years of experience evaluating and executing special situations private equity and distressed for control investments spanning a variety of sectors including consumer, technology, industrials, healthcare and business services.

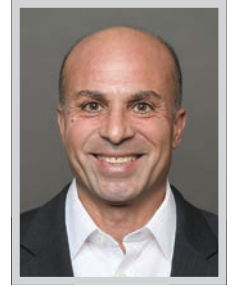
Prior to joining Skyview Capital, Arastu was a managing director at Solace Capital Partners where he was responsible for sourcing, executing, negotiating and overseeing investments. Prior to Solace Capital Partners, Arastu was a vice president at Oaktree Capital Management where he evaluated and executed a variety of special situations private equity and distressed for control transactions. Prior to Oaktree, Arastu worked in the Investment Banking Division at Credit Suisse focusing on leveraged finance.

**CHRIS BALL**

*Managing Director  
CriticalPoint*

Chris Ball is responsible for developing and executing sell-side mergers and acquisitions at CriticalPoint. He brings over 25 years of investment banking, business management, and product development experience to assist entrepreneurs with maximizing the value of their companies.

Prior to joining CriticalPoint, Ball was a director with Brockett Tamny & Co., Inc., a boutique investment bank that focuses on sell-side mergers and acquisitions and raising capital for companies across a wide variety of industries. Before joining Brockett Tamny & Co., he successfully executed numerous transactions with Janas Associates, also a boutique investment bank, for clients that included medical device manufacturers, service providers, petroleum distributors, and technology companies. Prior to Janas, he was the founder of Strategic Initiatives, Inc., a financial and general management consulting firm, where, among other things, he conducted economic studies and advised clients on acquisition strategies.

**DAVID BONROUHI**

*Managing Director  
Calabasas Capital*

David Bonrouhi has been in investment banking and private equity for over 25 years and he brings bulge bracket wall street experience to the lower middle market. He and his team at Calabasas Capital have significant experience working with family businesses seeking ownership liquidity through private equity and M&A transactions. Bonrouhi has the unique ability of executing complex transactions for small and mid-sized companies and negotiating on their behalf with highly sophisticated private equity firms and large public companies.

Bonrouhi and his team have completed deals in a variety of industries including food, aerospace & defense, software, business services, consumer products and industrial manufacturing, including the sale of Berkley Molded Fiber to International Paper, the sale of Invotech to HID Global, the sale of UFP Technologies' Molded Fiber Business to CKF, and the sales of several companies to affiliates of private equity firms.

**CLAY BRYAN**

*Senior Managing Director, Financial Sponsors Group  
B. Riley Securities*

Clay Bryan is a senior managing director with B. Riley Securities, a middle market investment bank headquartered in Los Angeles. He has over 21 years of investment banking experience in private equity coverage, debt and equity capital markets, M&A, special situations, and both in- and out-of-court restructurings, providing solutions to investors ranging in size from middle market to large cap public company transactions. He has advised entrepreneurs, private equity funds, and other asset managers throughout his career.

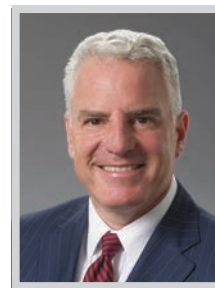
Bryan's recent transactions include the Tillamook Country Smoker (a portfolio company of Insignia Capital Group) financing provided by Proterra Investment Partners; the Ingenuity Studios acquisition by Streamland Media (a portfolio company of Trive Capital); and the Apex Innovative Sciences (a portfolio company of Bison Capital) acquisition by CenExel Clinical Research (a portfolio company of Webster Equity Partners).

**LEON CHEN**

*Managing Partner  
Kayne Partners*

Leon Chen joined Kayne Partners as a senior associate and in less than ten years, he has risen to become a managing partner of Kayne Anderson's growth private equity activities. He is primarily responsible for playing a pro-active leadership role in identifying and analyzing investment opportunities, developing actionable new investment opportunities, deal execution and creating value within existing portfolio companies.

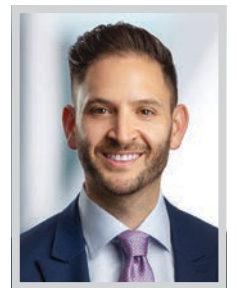
Chen is particularly good at building relationships with entrepreneurs and helping them understand the value of partnering with Kayne. He has a unique ability to analyze what a company needs in order to grow to the next level and overcome the typical challenges growth stage technology companies face in their quest to scale. He has developed a strong track record of helping management teams transform their businesses into market leaders and he truly values working with these entrepreneurs to expand their market footprint and develop breakthrough technologies.

**DAN CLIVNER**

*Managing Partner  
Sidley Austin LLP*

Dan Clivner guides the international direction of Sidley Austin as a member of the 2,300-lawyer firm's Executive Committee. He is managing partner of Sidley's 140-lawyer Los Angeles offices and co-heads its 440-lawyer global M&A and Private Equity group. In the past five years, Clivner has elevated the firm's global M&A / PE practice and in 2022, the team ranked among the leaders in the PE league tables in virtually all major categories. Under his leadership, Sidley was named by Law360 a 2022 Private Equity Practice Group of the Year.

Clivner has nearly 30 years of experience advising both domestic and international private equity clients, including Apollo Global, Blackstone, Siris Capital, and ZM Capital on a variety of matters, including leveraged buyouts, joint ventures, public company acquisitions, and restructurings. He regularly handles high-profile transactional matters for clients across media and entertainment, telecom, technology, financial services, and retail industries.

**DANIEL DUBELMAN**

*Partner  
Massumi + Consoli LLP*

Daniel Dubelman is currently a partner of Massumi + Consoli LLP, where he counsels private equity firms and their portfolio companies, as well as a variety of other public and private companies, in a broad range of complex transactions and corporate governance matters.

In his practice, Dubelman has consistently been acknowledged by clients and opposing counsel for his intellect, knowledge and constructive approach to deal-making. His deep understanding of private equity transactions, coupled with his unparalleled creativity, practicality and complex problem-solving ability, has enabled him to become a trusted and invaluable advisor to both large cap and middle market sponsors. Dubelman has also regularly been commended by his colleagues for his humility and his commitment to a team-oriented approach, and he has played an integral role in cultivating a unique firm culture focused primarily on development of exceptional practitioners and long-term happiness and career satisfaction.

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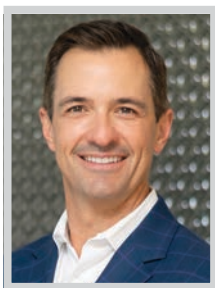
## LOI: PRIVATE EQUITY, INVESTORS &amp; ADVISORS

**ANDREW DUNST**

*Managing Director; Head of E-Commerce  
The Sage Group, LLC*

**A**ndrew Dunst is a managing director at The Sage Group and joined in 2012. He is involved in heading the firm's e-commerce practice, which is one of the most prominent in the country. Dunst has extensive experience advising disruptive direct-to-consumer brands across a variety of categories including apparel & accessories, jewelry, beauty & personal care, home goods, marketplaces, and subscription models.

Dunst has advised a broad range of branded consumer companies, with significant experience in strategic M&A, capital raises and late-stage financing rounds, and private equity recapitalizations. He has guided best-in-class e-commerce companies through a variety of corporate finance matters, assisting stakeholders in achieving their goals and positioning their companies for their next stages of rapid growth. These include, among others, advising Bombas in its investment by Great Hill Partners, Chubbies in its sale to Solo Brands, and MeUndies in its recapitalization with Provenance Digital.

**ROBERT FOX**

*Managing Director, Private Equity  
McGuireWoods*

**R**obert Fox is a dynamic leader and a true trailblazer in the private equity and M&A legal field. He is of a new breed of private equity professionals who has leveraged his private equity business development experience and extensive finance background to create a niche role as the front face of large, international corporate law firms.

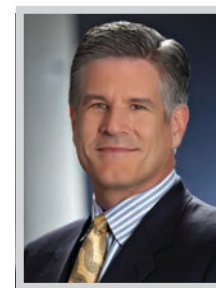
As the managing director of Private Equity at McGuireWoods, Fox is responsible for driving the firm's business development strategy, lead generation, and client growth. He leads many of the firm's innovative private equity initiatives, including its emerging manager and independent sponsor programs. With more than a decade of experience in the private equity industry, Fox plays a vital role in the firm's innovative investment banking mindset, supporting the growth of existing and prospective client firms by introducing investment opportunities, capital sources, and strategic relationships in the M&A community.

**STEVE FRIED**

*Principal / Co-Head, West Coast Originations  
Mesa West Capital*

**S**teve Fried is a principal at Mesa West Capital. He is co-head of the firm's West Coast Originations team alongside principal Ronnie Gul, managing a portfolio totaling \$11 billion. He also oversees the firm's regional offices in Chicago and San Francisco. Under his leadership, the firm's originations platform typically originates approximately \$3 billion of mortgages per year. Fried started at Mesa West as an intern while still attending UCLA's Anderson School of Business. A few years later he was made a principal in the firm.

Fried has been instrumental in helping grow the company and its originations platform, which since the firm's inception in 2004 has originated and closed more than 400 transactions totaling more than \$24 billion. Fried's work has been a driving force in Mesa West's growth from a West coast debt platform to one of the premier commercial real estate lenders in the US.

**HOWARD GLAZER**

*Private Equity Partner; Managing Partner,  
Los Angeles Office  
Ropes & Gray, LLP*

**H**oward Glazer is one of the most respected and sought-after private equity attorneys and advises high-profile private equity clients in sophisticated and ambitious corporate transactions. In 2022, Glazer led teams of attorneys advising and negotiating for PE clients in deals valued at more than \$20 billion. Glazer combines extensive deal experience with a keen sense for industry trends and innovations. Technology dominated deal activity in 2022, accounting for almost 30% of the deal value share and Glazer represented PE firms in the most high-profile technology transactions of the year.

Glazer led a team that represented TPG Capital-backed McAfee Corp. and closed one of the largest take-private transactions ever in the technology space. In March 2022, an investor group comprised of Advent International, Permira Advisers, Crosspoint Capital, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, GIC and ADIA, purchased McAfee at approximately \$14 billion.

**DEREK GRAHAM**

*Principal and Founder  
Odyssey Properties Group*

**D**erek Graham founded Odyssey Properties Group in 2003, securing the first investment deal for the group between himself and five private investors. Today, those five investors have grown to more than 800 private investors across the country. With a long history of strong, ethical, and honest leadership, Graham has established himself and his firm as a trusted sponsor and advisor to his investors and continues to successfully deliver above market returns throughout fluctuating market cycles.

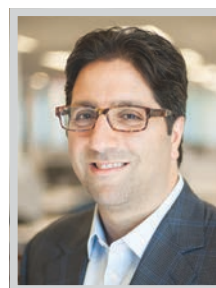
Graham's consistent delivery of impressive results has earned him a steady word of mouth reputation and investor referral base, without the need for or addition of institutional capital partners. Odyssey Properties currently operates 43 properties consisting of 7,363 multifamily units across 14 states in 31 cities, with a total estimated value of nearly \$1.5 billion. In the past 18 months, Graham led the charge on acquiring more than \$275 million in multifamily investment assets.

**RICHARD GRANT**

*Partner  
McGuireWoods*

**R**ichard Grant is a highly accomplished attorney and a recognized leader in the private equity advisory space. He serves as a member of the Board of Partners and the Lateral Partner Integration Committee at his firm. Grant's dedication to the firm is evident in his role as managing partner of the Los Angeles-Century City office from 2009 to 2022, during which he was also a member of the firm's Finance Committee.

With his extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions and private equity-backed corporate transactions, Grant is a trusted advisor to private equity funds, family offices, institutional co-investors, independent sponsors, and privately held companies. He has successfully represented clients in various industries, including healthcare, consumer, manufacturing, technology, and renewable energy. Grant is also a leader in the independent sponsor community, as he leads the West Coast (Los Angeles and San Francisco) independent sponsor networks.

**RONNIE GUL**

*Principal; Co-Head, West Coast Originations  
Mesa West Capital*

**R**onnie Gul is a principal at Mesa West Capital. He co-heads the West Coast Originations team alongside principal Steve Fried, managing a portfolio totaling \$11 billion. He also oversees the firm's regional offices in Chicago and San Francisco. Under his leadership, the firm's originations platform typically originates approximately \$3 billion of mortgages per year.

Gul started at Mesa West as a summer intern in 2005 while getting his MBA at UCLA and joined the firm full-time upon graduating. He was named principal of the firm in 2010. Gul has been instrumental in helping grow the company and its originations platform, which since the firm's inception in 2004 has originated and closed more than 400 transactions totaling more than \$24 billion. Gul has been a driving force in Mesa West's growth from a West coast debt platform to one of the premier commercial real estate lenders in the US.

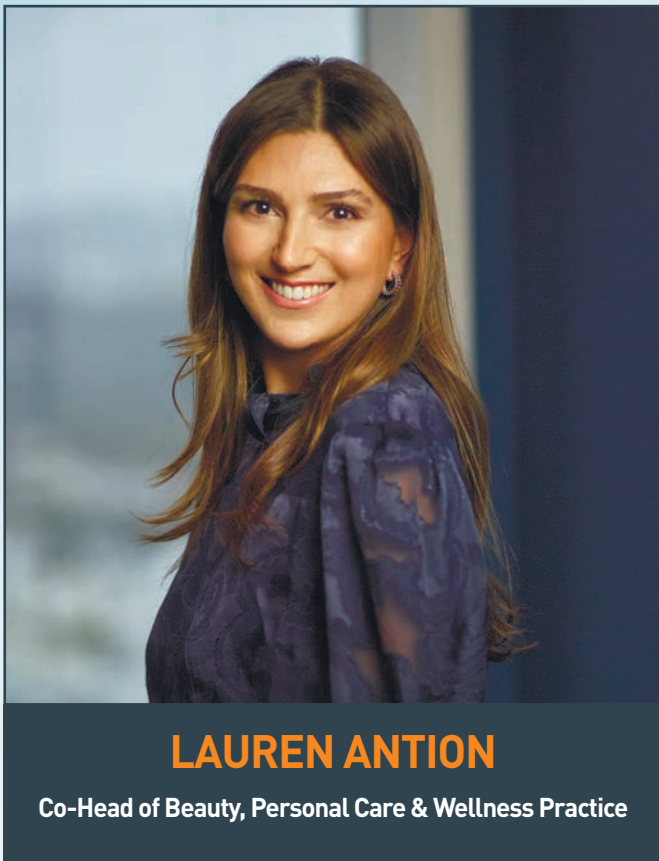
**JEREMY HOLLAND**

*Managing Partner, Origination  
The Riverside Company*

**J**eremy Holland is a managing partner at The Riverside Company, leading the Origination team across the various funds/strategies in North America. He has been a private equity investor in Los Angeles for 25 years. Holland joined Riverside in 2010, when the firm recruited him to switch from executing deals to focusing on originating new investment opportunities in the Western US and Canada.

Holland's influence in the private equity community is heavily derived from his enthusiastic support of other M&A professionals' career paths. He has spent a tremendous amount of time over the years thoughtfully referring deals to people who would not have otherwise seen them, helping people work their way through career advancement and/or pivoting their career in a new direction. He spends a great deal of time mentoring younger professionals. He cites their career progression to be among his biggest successes.


**We congratulate our 2023 Leaders of Influence for their continued dedication to the success of our clients.**



**Beauty, Personal Care, & Wellness Practice Recent Transactions**

**D I M E**


has received an equity investment from



Advisor to DIME Beauty

*tubby todd*  
BATH CO

has received an equity investment from



Advisor to Tubby Todd Bath Co.

**NATIVE**


has been acquired by



Advisor to Native


*Lilly LASHES*

has received an equity investment from




Advisor to Lilly Lashes


**Software & Services Practice Recent Transactions**

 SafetySkills®

has been acquired by



a portfolio company of




Waud Capital


Advisor to SafetySkills

*CASEpeer*

has been acquired by



a portfolio company of




Advisor to CASEpeer LLC

 DATASSENTIAL  
FOOD WITH A STORY

has received a growth equity investment from



Advisor to Datassential

 GraphPad  
Software

has completed a majority recapitalization with



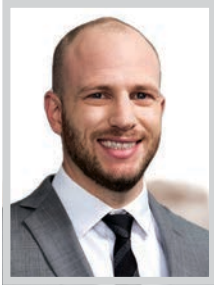
Advisor to GraphPad

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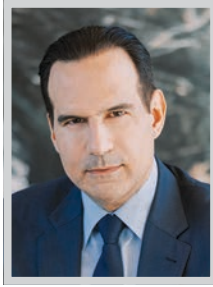
## LOI: PRIVATE EQUITY, INVESTORS &amp; ADVISORS

**JOE KACZOROWSKI**

Partner, Corporate & Financial Services  
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

Joe Kaczorowski is a partner in the Corporate & Financial Services Department and Private Equity Practice Group at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP. Kaczorowski concentrates his practice on counseling private equity and venture capital funds and their portfolio companies, as well as strategic acquirers and operating companies, on mergers and acquisitions, growth equity and venture capital transactions, as well as day-to-day general corporate needs.

In addition to delivering excellent service to his clients, Kaczorowski joined the international law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher in 2022 and has been a part of the Los Angeles office's rapid growth to more than 80 attorneys. He recently advised Platinum Equity in the acquisition of a majority interest in Tarter Farm and Ranch Equipment from affiliates of the company's founders. He also advised The Chernin Group in its Series D Investment in the Premier Lacrosse League.

**MEHDI KHODADAD**

Partner  
Sidley Austin LLP

Mehdi Khodadad is an extraordinary dealmaker, unparalleled in the variety, creative structuring, complexity, and output of the deals he orchestrates. As co-leader of Sidley's global Private Equity practice, Khodadad has led more than 98 deals over the last two years with an aggregate value exceeding \$63 billion.

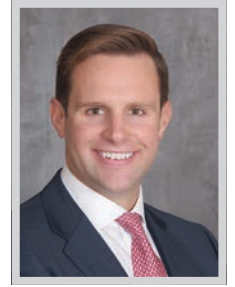
Khodadad is "consigliere" and primary deal counsel to Clearlake Capital Group, having represented the private equity firm as primary deal counsel for well over a decade. Clearlake and Khodadad's partnership is unlike the traditional lawyer-client relationship. Beyond his creative dealmaking abilities, Khodadad has helped Clearlake pivot and adapt as it redefined the market and navigated meteoric growth. In 2022 alone, Khodadad led over 51 transactions for Clearlake and its portfolio companies. In one of the most significant global sports deals in years, Khodadad advised Clearlake in its 2022 acquisition of Chelsea Football Club.

**JASON S. KIM**

Partner, Corporate Law  
Blank Rome LLP

Jason Kim, a 30-year deal lawyer, represents domestic and foreign companies, financial institutions, funds, serial entrepreneurs, and high net-worth individuals in corporate and real estate transactions and related financing with emphasis on cross-border deals. Kim's deals in the United States involve foreign buyers, PEs, and banks. Frequently, he is brought into PE transactions as corporate counsel, on the other side of the PEs.

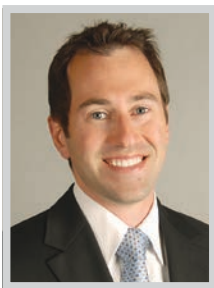
Among Kim's most significant deals are investee-side representation of a green energy company in raising over \$150 million through four rounds of equity financing; issuer-side representation of a Korean airline in the private placement offering of \$200 million in unsecured bonds; and investor-side representation of a Korean social, on-line gaming company in acquiring controlling interest in a US social, on-line gaming company for \$130 million. A Blank Rome team led by Kim recently represented Welcome Group in its \$49 million purchase of Hyatt Place El Segundo.

**DAN KRAFT**

Managing Director, Financial Sponsors Coverage  
B. Riley

Dan Kraft is a managing director with the Financial Sponsors group at B. Riley, responsible for development of the firm's new and existing relationships among leading middle market sponsors, direct lenders and alternative asset managers, both locally and nationally.

B. Riley's presence and relevance among the private equity community has grown significantly in line with the rapid growth of the diversified financial firm and its expanded capabilities in M&A advisory, debt and equity capital markets. Kraft delivers private equity firms and portfolio companies with tailored solutions to enhance value throughout the full investment lifecycle – from pre-deal due diligence, post-acquisition closing and the entire hold period of portfolio company investment, including the eventual monetization. Through partnership, coordination and increased awareness, Kraft and the financial sponsors group represent the full breadth of B. Riley's diversified platform which offers investment banking, valuation, financial and operational turnaround management, and additional advisory services.

**ARI LANIN**

Partner; Co-Chair of Private Equity Practice Group  
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Ari Lanin balances a dynamic corporate private equity practice with his leadership role as co-chair of Gibson Dunn's Private Equity Practice Group. Clients across a wide range of industries turn to Lanin for his guidance on public and private merger transactions, stock and asset sales, joint ventures, and strategic partnerships. Lanin regularly advises some of the most well-known private equity firms in Los Angeles on their most important and complex transactions.

Lanin's recent representations include Platinum Equity, global investment firm with more than \$25 billion of assets under management and a portfolio of approximately 40 operating companies that serve customers around the world, in its \$4.6 billion acquisition with Solenis of Diversey Holdings (March 2023) and \$5.25 billion acquisition of Solenis, a global producer of specialty chemicals used in water-intensive industries, from Clayton, Dubilier & Rice and BASF (November 2021).

**RAY LASOYA**

Partner, Corporate & Financial Services  
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

Ray LaSoya has diverse experience guiding private equity investors and their portfolio companies, as well as public and private companies, in complex transactions and in their day-to-day legal affairs. He is sought out to advise on an array of major corporate transactions, including acquisitions and divestitures, leveraged buyouts, recapitalizations, minority growth investments, strategic alliances and joint ventures. He has decades of experience representing top private equity sponsors across a vast range of industries, including communications, media, entertainment, technology, retail, legal services, financial services, manufacturing and more.

LaSoya recently advised Shamrock Capital Advisors, a Los Angeles-based investment firm with approximately \$4.1 billion of assets under management, in connection with its \$110 million Series D investment round in VidMob, the leading platform for Intelligent Creative. The investment enables VidMob to accelerate platform development and expand its global footprint.

**PETER LEE**

Chief Investment Officer  
Avitas Wealth Management, LLC

As Avitas Wealth Management's chief investment officer, Peter Lee measures success by the positive change he can bring to people's lives. At Avitas, that is realized by thorough exhaustive portfolio research and analysis. Lee's diligence and approach have an immeasurable positive impact on the AWM client experience. Lee takes a CFA influenced approach to portfolio management and uses that to make the best decisions for clients.

Avitas Wealth Management is a boutique asset manager and wealth advisory firm for select multigenerational families. Lee and his colleagues at Avitas provide institutional style portfolio management, financial planning, total wealth organization, and exclusive access to private equity managers. Lee and his team strive to be advisors who guide their clients and client families through every financial decision, standing by their side for a lifetime.

**JONATHAN LITRELL**

Managing Partner  
Raines Feldman

Jonathan D. Littrell is the managing partner of Raines Feldman LLP. Littrell has significant transactional experience in a broad range of corporate, private equity, venture capital and securities disciplines. His practice includes the representation of public and private entities, fund sponsors, family offices and asset management firms in all aspects of corporate governance and finance including structuring and restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, equity financings, fund formation, joint ventures, private placements and go public transactions.

Littrell's recent accomplishments in the M&A space include serving as lead counsel for a roll-up and go public transaction involving two private equity funds that generated a market cap of \$1.65 billion for the client. He also represented a Colorado medical company in a \$300 million reverse merger with a \$700 million acquiring entity and concurrent funding resulting in a \$1 billion enterprise valuation.



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## LOI: PRIVATE EQUITY, INVESTORS &amp; ADVISORS

**FARHAN MAHMOOD**

Partner, West Coast Acquisitions  
Trion Properties

**F**arhan Mahmood is a partner heading up West Coast acquisitions at Trion Properties and responsible for sourcing, structuring, and financing the firm's investment opportunities. Since joining Trion Properties in 2011, Mahmood has been instrumental in driving the company's growth and booming expansion in the West. In 2011, the team was four individuals who had sourced and acquired approximately \$16 million in assets under management. Today, the firm comprises nearly 50 employees with over 1,000 private investors, and, under the direction of Mahmood, maintains over \$1 billion in real estate assets under management while consistently delivering significant above market returns to its investors.

Mahmood has led Trion in the acquisition of more than 50 deals, with a total transaction volume of nearly \$1.2 billion. In the past 18 months alone, he has sourced and acquired \$575 million in assets and nearly doubled the firm's portfolio.

**NEIL MALIK**

Founder & CEO  
K1 Investment Management

**N**eil Malik has overseen more than 220 investments in enterprise software since founding K1. He is dedicated to K1's mission: partnering with management teams to build category-leading software businesses that transform industries. He founded K1 with a passion for making people more productive around the world with enterprise software.

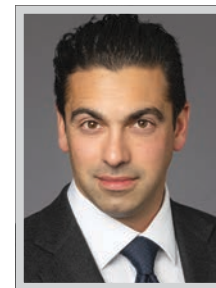
Under Malik's leadership, K1 has been recognized as a top minority-owned asset manager by the Knight Foundation and has seen 24 of its portfolio companies on the 2022 Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing companies in America. Last year, K1 hosted more than 1,100 leaders within its portfolio across six functionally focused K1 Summits, providing learning and development opportunities from thought leadership and tactical workshops. Malik and team celebrated 340 graduates from K1's Advanced Management Program, a year-long program that develops portfolio employees to be future leaders at their companies.

**RYAN MCDOWELL**

Managing Director  
CriticalPoint

**R**yan McDowell is a managing director with CriticalPoint Partners and the head of business development. Having assisted numerous clients through successful exits of their businesses, McDowell brings a unique understanding of the needs of business owners and their families - including wealth transfer and intergenerational dynamics. Since joining the firm five years ago, McDowell has helped shape CriticalPoint into a multifaceted firm, serving the lower-middle market.

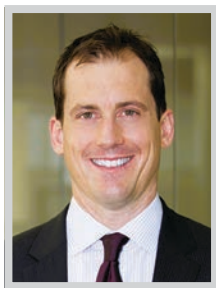
Led by McDowell, the CriticalPoint Business Development team numbers over 20 investment professionals actively seeking opportunities to help companies achieve their M&A goals. This goals-based approach to working with clients is rooted in McDowell's previous career with Merrill Lynch's Private Banking & Investment Group, where he was a partner on one of the largest Private Wealth teams in the country for 11 years. McDowell earned his Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Political Science and Sociology from Amherst College.

**HAMED MESHKI**

Partner  
Kirkland & Ellis, LLP

**H**amed Meshki is a leader in the Mergers & Acquisitions practice in Kirkland's Los Angeles office. His practice focuses on highly structured and complex business transactions, including mergers & acquisitions, restructurings, recapitalizations, and financings. Meshki's clients have noted that he excels at strategic thinking and is a true partner in their businesses, whose input they value and trust. Accordingly, Meshki is often his clients' first call for complex transactional solutions, across the full capital structure.

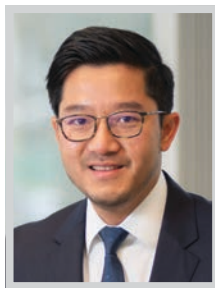
Despite economic conditions and an M&A downturn, the past 18 months have been and continue to be extremely busy for Meshki. During that period, Meshki has led 24 M&A transactions, including LBOs, secondary buyouts and sale transactions, for a number of clients, with aggregate transaction values over \$10 billion. During that time, Meshki has also counseled clients on numerous restructurings, refinancings and recapitalizations.

**JOEL MONTMINY**

CEO  
Montminy & Co

**J**oel Montminy founded and leads Montminy & Co, spearheading its client assignments and operations across the globe. For over 25 years, he has led professional service firms and initiated cross-border and domestic mergers and acquisitions, leveraged and management buyouts, private placements of equity securities, restructurings, business valuations, fairness opinions and strategic advisory assignments. He has advised founders, CEOs and boards of both private and public companies, in a wide range of industries including food and beverage, consumer products, retail, hospitality & leisure, financial services, technology, sports, media and entertainment.

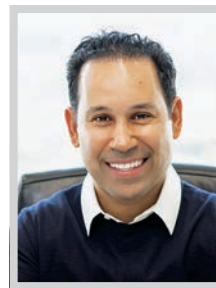
Today, Montminy & Co. has 25 team members, including 17 registered representatives, ranking as one of the largest privately held boutique investment banks in LA. Over his career, Montminy has originated, led and closed over \$6 billion of middle market transaction volume, including over \$2.3 billion in cross-border transactions in over 30 countries.

**VINCENT NGUYEN**

Director  
Palm Tree LLC

**V**incent Nguyen is a director at Palm Tree LLC, a consulting and advisory firm focused on M&A and the private equity investment cycle. He is an exceptional leader who brings over 15 years of experience in private equity, investment banking, M&A advisory, and corporate FP&A.

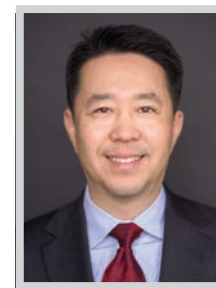
Nguyen brings an elevated level of leadership and sophistication to Palm Tree's Private Equity Clients. He helps Private Equity firms create value in their M&A transactions by helping his clients make better-informed decisions before an acquisition, identifying and driving revenue growth, and improving profitability. He has vast experience implementing FP&A efficiencies, standardizing BI reporting, and streamlining budget and forecast processes. Before joining Palm Tree, Nguyen worked at TravisMathew (acquired by Callaway Golf), and CDH Investments, one of Asia's largest Private Equity funds with \$20 billion of assets under management. He has also worked in investment banking and as an entrepreneur.

**CYRUS NIKOU**

Founder & Managing Partner  
Atar Capital, LLC

**C**yrus Nikou is the founder, owner, and managing partner of Atar Capital, a private equity firm deeply committed to sustainable, socially responsible investments. Atar Capital focuses on acquiring lower middle market companies in need of capital and operational improvement, specializing in acquiring complex corporate carve-outs and under-performing businesses.

Nikou continues to prioritize socially responsible initiatives across the portfolio, viewing Atar as a human capital business that helps companies reach their full potential by cultivating every opportunity. Nikou and the entire Atar Capital team live that mission every day by investing in solutions to humanity's biggest challenges while keeping in sight their greatest opportunities. In his day-to-day work, Nikou oversees and advises the firm's operations, corporate development, and M&A activities. Outside of his work in the private equity space, Nikou devotes considerable time and resources to supporting nonprofits and community organizations in and around the Los Angeles area.

**CHRISTOPHER PARK**

Managing Director; Head of Software & Services  
Intrepid Investment Bankers

**C**hristopher Park serves as Intrepid Investment Bankers' head of the Software & Services practice and is responsible for leading the firm's technology and digital media investment banking efforts. With more than 20 years of combined technology and banking experience, he focuses on originating and executing middle-market mergers and acquisitions and capital raise transactions across enterprise software, tech-enabled services, cyber security and HCIT.

Park has a background in both technology consulting and investment banking, so he brings a unique perspective as an advisor who has built and implemented enterprise solutions, as well as advised emerging growth technology companies in strategic transactions. Park has achieved explosive growth for Intrepid's Software & Services practice. His group doubled in size in 2022, with additions at all levels in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Menlo Park.



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**SHLOMI RONEN**  
Managing Principal / Founder  
Dekel Capital

Shlomi Ronen is a managing principal and founder of Dekel Capital where he heads the company's JV Equity, Capital Advisory and Correspondent Lending platforms. During his more than 20-year career in real estate, including the last 18 years working in a real estate capital advisory role, Ronen's impact on the commercial industry landscape is well documented. In the past 20 years he has invested or advised on more than \$5 billion in equity, mezzanine, and debt financing for investors and developers throughout the US, positioning himself as an industry leader.

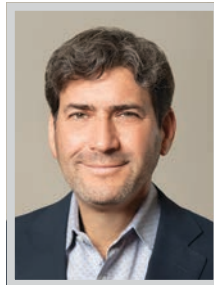
Ronen is also managing principal of Dekel Strategic Investors (DSI), a proprietary equity fund that fills the gap in the capital markets for equity investment between \$3 and \$10 million. Ronen is fully engaged with everything that DSI is doing as the firm invests JV-Equity with developers focused on development of senior housing properties throughout the US.



**TREVOR SALIBA**  
Chairman / CEO  
NMS Capital Group, LLC

Over the past twelve months, Trevor Saliba has advised his clients as the primary advisor on acquisitions and investments throughout the United States, Asia and Europe across the infrastructure, real estate, technology, media and insurance sectors with a total transaction value in excess of \$3.2 billion dollars.

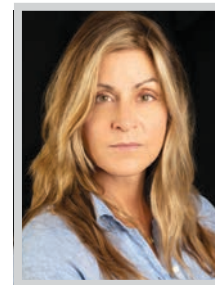
Saliba is the founder, chairman and CEO of NMS Capital Group, a global focused venture capital and private equity investment firm with investments across multiple asset classes including real estate, financial and business services, infrastructure and energy, consumer products, technology and media. Prior to forming NMS Consulting, Saliba, who began his financial services career at Morgan Stanley, enjoyed an accomplished career as an investment banker specializing in mergers and acquisitions, cross border investment transactions and structured financings to public and private clients throughout the world.



**MARTIN SARAF**  
Managing Partner  
Century Park Capital Partners

Marty Sarafa is one of the founders of Century Park Capital Partners and has been with the firm since its formation in 2000. He is responsible for sourcing, closing, and managing investments structured as leveraged recapitalizations and buyouts. He is a member of the firm's Investment Committee and currently sits on the boards of Accelalpha, MCCi, and NCP Coatings.

During his time with Century Park Capital Partners, Sarafa has overseen the firm complete over 70 acquisitions, including 23 platform acquisitions and 48 add-on acquisitions. In December 2021, Sarafa led the acquisition of a new platform, NCP Coatings, a developer and manufacturer of technologically advanced performance coatings solutions for the military, industrial, commercial, and forestry end markets. NCP marks the third platform and eleventh overall investment by Century Park in the Specialty Chemicals sector. Sarafa led the successful exit of The Mochi Ice Cream Company in January 2020.



**VICKY SCHIFF**  
CEO  
Avrio Real Estate Credit

During a distinguished career in commercial real estate, Vicky Schiff has led the charge for women in a male dominated industry, helping provide opportunities for other women. Schiff is a career entrepreneur, having founded/co-founded successful firms in the real estate and finance sectors since 1996.

Among Schiff's ventures have been the creation of an institutionally supported \$400+ million real estate fund that also supported women and minority emerging real estate firms throughout the US; a national boutique investment banking firm which raised more than \$6 billion from institutional investors; an investment platform formed to create value by acquiring commercial real estate debt and distressed assets and MREC Management and its co-mingled debt fund, Mosaic Real Estate Credit which originated approximately \$3 billion in various asset classes. Her newest venture is Avrio Real Estate Credit which offers short-term, first mortgage debt and other structured finance products.

Willkie congratulates partners **Ray LaSoya** and **Joe Kaczorowski**



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**FREDERICK SCHMITT**

President and Managing Director  
The Sage Group, LLC

**F**rederick Schmitt is the president and a managing director of The Sage Group, LLC, which he joined at its inception in 2000. He has advised clients on a variety of corporate finance transactions for over 20 years, including M&A, take-privates, financings, restructurings, and valuations. Schmitt has played a key leadership role in over 60 transactions across the consumer spectrum.

Schmitt's notable clients include TOMS Shoes, Juicy Couture, Oribe, GlamGlow, CircusTrix, Ella Moss and Splendid, Chef Works, J.McLaughlin, Matilda Jane, Inter-mix, alice + olivia, and Daniel's Jewelers. He is on the Executive Committee and is a member of the Board of Trustees at Catholic Charities of Los Angeles. Schmitt received a B.S. in Business Administration from John Carroll University, where he double majored in Finance and Economics.

**ROBERT SHILTON**

Managing Director  
Kayne Partners

**R**obert Shilton joined Kayne as an intern in 2011 and in 2021 was promoted to managing director for Kayne Anderson Capital Advisors' growth capital activities. He is primarily responsible for identifying and analyzing investment opportunities. He is also actively involved in deal execution, monitoring of portfolio companies and value creation through his participation as a board member or observer.

At Kayne, Shilton has played an integral role in helping recruit, train, and build out the growth capital team. He has helped grow the Kayne Partners investment strategy since its inception, including helping refine sourcing execution and understands the key challenges facing growth stage technology companies. He is heavily involved in portfolio management by helping portfolio companies navigate key hiring decisions, M&A work, pricing decisions and budgeting. He currently serves as a board director for Ideas United, GeoWealth, and Onfleet and a board observer with several other companies.

**PATRICK SHIM**

Managing Director  
1927 Capital Management, LLC

**P**atrick Shim is a managing director of 1927 Capital Management, LLC, a family office based in Los Angeles. The firm makes direct investments in private equity, venture capital, and real estate, as well as indirect investments through leading investment managers.

Shim previously served as managing director of Investments at Mirae Asset Securities & Investments (USA), LLC, the US-based investment banking operation of Mirae Asset Financial Group, a global financial institution with over \$550 billion under management. At Mirae Asset, Shim focused on private equity and real estate investments, as well as the firm's strategic investments. Prior to joining Mirae Asset, Shim was senior vice president of corporate strategy and administration at Hana Financial, Inc., a Los Angeles-based diversified financial institution. As a member of Hana Financial's senior management team, Shim was responsible for the firm's corporate strategy, planning, restructuring, and investments.

**FABIO SIMI**

Senior Vice President,  
Private Equity and M&A Services  
Marsh

**F**abio Simi, a senior vice president in the Private Equity and M&A practice of Marsh, has played an instrumental role in establishing Marsh as the largest global PE/Corp M&A services group among insurance brokers in terms of headcount and revenue. Simi's team is agnostic to end markets and operates on a global scale with 128 offices worldwide. The practice caters to clients across the transaction spectrum, from lower middle market deals to large, cross-border transactions, mirroring the business environment of Los Angeles. Marsh's M&A team leverages the vast resources of the greater Marsh organization.

Under Simi's leadership, Marsh's team acts as an external advisor to manage a portion of the acquisition process, identifying potential risk elements of a deal, lowering transaction costs, or helping facilitate "stuck deals" where insurance policies ease concerns on both sides of the transaction.

**AARON SOLGANICK**

CEO  
Solganick & Co.

**A**aron Solganick is the founder and CEO of Solganick & Co., a leading investment bank specializing in mergers and acquisitions for the software, technology services, and healthcare IT sectors. With a relentless entrepreneurial spirit and an unwavering commitment to client success, Solganick has built Solganick & Co. into a powerhouse in the global M&A landscape. His vast knowledge and expertise in the industry, combined with his innovative approach to deal-making, have propelled the company to new heights, enabling it to stand out among its competitors and consistently exceed client expectations.

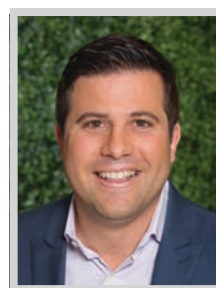
With an impressive career spanning over 28 years, Solganick is a seasoned expert in mergers and acquisitions. His vast experience in this field has provided him with a unique understanding of the intricacies and nuances involved in successful M&A transactions. Throughout his career, he has worked with a diverse range of clients.

**JUSTIN SOLOMON**

Partner  
Kirkland & Ellis LLP

**S**ince relocating to Los Angeles in 2017 as lead partner of Kirkland's Los Angeles Investment Funds group, Justin Solomon has established himself as a leading investment funds attorney and trusted advisor to many of California's premier and emerging private equity fund sponsors. Under Solomon's leadership, Kirkland's Los Angeles Investment Funds group has become the largest dedicated funds group of any peer law firm in Los Angeles.

With over 15 years of experience, Solomon has led fund formations ranging in size from under \$100 million to over \$15 billion. Solomon and his team have cemented their reputation for providing world-class legal services and acting as true business advisors to their clients and the full spectrum of funds regardless of size and strategy, thanks to their unmatched market awareness and experience. Solomon has represented some of the largest and most diversified asset managers, as well as numerous small and middle-market sponsors.

**DAVID STERNBERG**

Partner  
GHJ

**D**avid Sternberg, CPA, is an audit partner at GHJ. As a leader in GHJ's Private Equity Practice, Sternberg specializes in financial statement audits, but he developed his career as a deal facilitator and continues to serve a holistic advisor with specialized knowledge in what private equity groups need to know.

Sternberg has over 15 years of experience and developed a deep expertise working with businesses backed by private equity groups, venture capital and family offices. From South Africa, Sternberg graduated from the University of Cape Town. Before joining GHJ in 2009, Sternberg worked for a Big Four firm in South Africa. Both a CPA and a chartered accountant, Sternberg is well-versed in US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as well as International Financial Reporting Standards. He became a partner at GHJ in 2017. He drives growth within the firm's robust Audit Practice with a concentration on high-growth, entrepreneurial-minded organizations.

**DAVID SUTTON**

Partner  
GHJ

**D**avid Sutton is a partner at GHJ and leads the firm's M&A projects. He also leads GHJ's Private Equity Practice. Motivated by the work he does for clients, Sutton is passionate about the advisory services he provides and how they can positively shape his clients' futures. He brings a wide depth of experience in mergers and acquisitions.

Sutton advises clients on their M&A strategy and objectives and executes transactions. Prior to joining GHJ, he advised on transactions ranging from \$10 million to \$1 billion across a variety of industries. He has provided performance improvement, restructuring and turnaround advice to companies and their stakeholders. His advisory experience includes work in the retail, technology, manufacturing and real estate sectors. In January 2023, Sutton was promoted to partner at the firm. He was instrumental in launching GHJ's Private Equity Practice in early 2023.

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**GEORGE SWAIN**  
*Founder / CEO*  
 GeorgeSwain Investments

George Swain is the founder and CEO of GeorgeSwain Investments (GSI). GSI is an independent global investment bank that assists small and middle-market companies in completing special situation transactions. Swain oversees all investments, investor relations, and operations at GSI. He is a seasoned investment banker with more than 25 years' experience and has advised on more than \$1.2 billion of transactions. Throughout his career, Swain has leveraged his deep industry knowledge to take a strategic approach to dealmaking rather than chase transactions.

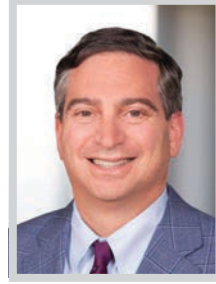
Swain's colleagues and collaborators say is that he is a visionary strategist. He has a broad range of experience in mergers and acquisitions, debt and equity financing and strategic partnerships. He and the team at GSI believe that greater diversity of investment vehicles and intermediary financial institutions can be developed to bridge the gap between money centers and full spectrum finance with respect to capital formation.



**JAY TURO**  
*Managing Director*  
 Growththink Capital

Jay Turo has over 25 years of experience in starting, building, advising and investing in high growth firms. Most specifically, since 1999 he has started and led Growththink, Inc, one of the nation's largest advisory services firms focused on the entrepreneurial marketplace, and GT Securities, Inc., a full service broker-dealer platform that since 2001 has transacted financing and M&A transactions with an aggregate value of more than \$10 billion.

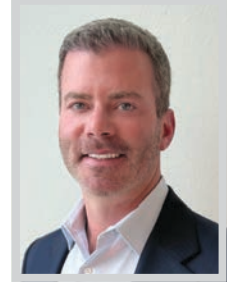
Turo's advisory work spans industries and market sectors, with company clients including Accelerant, Caine & Weiner, C8 Medisensors, Dakim, DCIP, Free Conference, Fresh Games, Green Medical, Innoflight, Integreon, L3D3, Mahar Tool, Margartiaville Apparel, M3 Medical, Mobeze, MyPublicInfo, Nolatak, Ometric, Pocketsonics, Park Group PIC, Precision Time, Raise Capital, Recoup IT, Research Scientists, Sandel Medical, Shimmick Construction, Skyplex Entertainment Group, Spring Medical, Storied Media, Sunglass Hut, Telverse, Thrombovision, XCOM Wireless, and Xorbent, among many others.



**TOM WALDMAN**  
*Shareholder*  
 Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth

Tom Waldman has been a private equity lawyer for more than 25 years, first in private practice, with Munger, Tolles & Olson, Riordan & McKinzie, and Bingham McCutchen, next with The Gores Group beginning in late 2007, and then joining Stradling in 2018 to lead its private equity practice. Since joining Stradling Yocca in 2018, Waldman has grown the firm's private equity practice and acts as head of the firm's M&A group.

Over the last few years, Waldman has advised Gallant Capital Partners in platform acquisitions, growth investments and add-on acquisitions, and in the divestiture of Reveal Data Corporation to an affiliate of K1; advised Snow Peak Capital in its investments in Sandy Alexander, Dalco Nonwovens, and Global Felt Technologies; advised Caprice Capital, Atar Capital and The Gores Group in add-on investments; and provided ongoing advice to a multinational commercial bank in private equity fund commitments by trust clients.



**JEFF WHITE**  
*Partner*  
 Skyview Capital

Jeff White is a managing partner at Skyview Capital, where he has been actively involved with all M&A efforts at Skyview Capital since its inception. He brings decades of experience that encompass private equity, investment banking and executive management. White has held critical positions at many distinguished firms.

Prior to Skyview Capital, White was an integral part of Platinum Equity's multibillion-dollar global business development and M&A team. After Platinum Equity, White established and continues to successfully head up Skyview Capital's business development team. In addition, He is responsible for driving growth through acquisitions by identifying, negotiating and assessing all transaction opportunities within the M&A and business development team. White is also a member of the firm's investment committee. He prides himself in his firm's intense focus, operational commitment, speed to closure, strategic management, and hands-on approach to investing—all in the interest of long-term sustainable growth and success.



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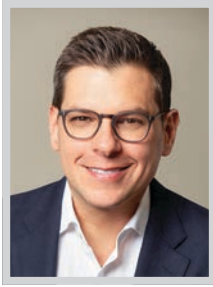
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**MICHAEL YOUNG**  
Partner  
Massumi + Consoli LLP

Michael Young is currently a partner of Massumi + Consoli, where he counsels private equity firms and their portfolio companies and other strategic clients, including public and private companies, in a variety of complex transactions. Young has extensive experience working with clients in various industries, including healthcare, technology and consumer products.

Young was the third partner to join the firm and he has helped grow the firm into one of the largest private equity and M&A practices on the West Coast. As one of the firm's senior leaders, Young plays an active leadership role at the firm. He serves as the chair of the firm's Culture Committee, which is focused on creating a healthy working environment for all attorneys and is responsible for the development of the firm's mentoring program and overseeing some of the firm's charitable activities. He is also a member of the firm's Review Committee.



**GUY ZACZEPINSKI**  
Managing Partner  
Century Park Capital Partners

Guy Zaczepinski has been with Century Park Capital Partners since 2005. He is responsible for sourcing, evaluating and structuring growth equity and buyout transactions, as well as monitoring portfolio company investments. Throughout his career, Zaczepinski has gained extensive experience analyzing and valuing companies for recapitalization, leveraged buyouts, mergers and acquisitions, and financial restructurings.

Zaczepinski is a specialist in the auto aftermarket industry. In April 2021, Zaczepinski led Century Park's recapitalization of CJ Pony Parts, the market leader in the classic Mustang e-commerce space. Also in April 2021, Zaczepinski oversaw the successful exit of Covercraft Industries, Inc. to Audax Private Equity. Zaczepinski believes in a flexible and supportive approach in managing the firm's holdings, providing value-added experience and thoughtful insights into guiding high growth businesses. He adheres to Century Park's key tenets of integrity, transparency, alignment and respect.

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Howard Glazer  
Partner, Private Equity

**Howard Glazer**  
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The *Los Angeles Business Journal's* 2023 Women of Influence: Accountants custom content is coming up.... A dedicated section in the July 31, 2023 issue will recognize your outstanding professionals in the industry. Nominees will be selected based on their professional achievements, community leadership, milestones, and notable accomplishments during the past 12-18 months.

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