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AUGUST 22, 2016

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## PUBLISHER'S LETTER



**W**e're excited to announce the winners of the 2016 Trusted Advisors Awards. Once again we have singled out and honored the outstanding accountants, attorneys, business bankers, insurance professionals and wealth managers who helped their clients thrive here in the greater San Fernando Valley region.

These individuals, all of them well-deserving of the "trusted advisor" mantle, are recognized by the San Fernando Valley Business Journal for their commitment to high-quality client service, their longevity as professionals in their chosen fields, and their commitment to overall excellence.

With the many great professionals providing services in our area, it's not easy to single out a select few to be honored. We collected and examined a long list of nominees and reviewed each in his or her professional category. Within each category, there are individual awards criteria. Certified public accountants and attorneys have annual billing requirements, business bankers have a portfolio threshold, insurance professionals are required to meet minimum annual premium revenue, and wealth managers have to maintain a minimum portfolio as well. While the size of the client account was certainly

considered during the awards selection process, the key driver was client and referral source testimonials. Reading through the submitted material is ultimately what steered us in selecting our honorees.

We want to thank the members of our advisory committee for helping us identify our honorees. It was no easy task by any means. It required each member to read through a few hundred pages of biographical information, statistics, client testimonials and professional experience.

At our annual Trusted Advisors Awards event on Thursday, Aug. 11 at the Hilton Los Angeles in Universal City, we proudly announced the 2016 class of Trusted Advisors, whose stories are also detailed in the pages of this special supplement to the San Fernando Valley Business Journal.

Congratulations once again to each of our 2016 honorees!

Best regards,

Charles Crumpley  
Editor and Publisher

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*Congratulations to Karen Brown!*  
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Karen Brown  
Senior Vice President  
Commercial Banking  
(818) 226-3233  
Karen.Brown@fbol.com

# Trusted Connections for Trusted Advisors



## ProVisors Congratulates Our San Fernando Valley Business Journal's Trusted Advisors Awards Winners

Stan Arutti, CPA, Gish Seiden  
 James Fedalen, HFL Law Group  
 Barry Harlan, Lewitt, Hackman, Shapiro, Marshall & Harlan  
 Kevin Holmes, Martini Iosue & Akpovi  
 Thomas Means, Pacific Coast Health  
 Lisa Odom, Poole & Shaffery

## ProVisors Also Congratulates Our San Fernando Valley Business Journal's Trusted Advisors Awards Nominees

Gary Barr, Alpert, Bar & Grant, APLC  
 Michael Farrell, Decker, Farrell & McCoy LLP  
 Teri Frankel, Taking Care of Benefits Insurance Solutions  
 Ronald A. Hughes, Hughes & Dunstan, LLP  
 Scott Klopert, Klopert & Ravden LLP  
 John Marshall, Lewitt, Hackman, Shapiro, Marshall & Harlan  
 Maureen O'Gara-Adford, Gish Seiden LLP  
 Douglas Ridley, Law Offices of Douglas H. Ridley  
 Lynda R. Schauer, Miod & Company, LLP  
 Jeff Sydney, The Sydney Law Firm, APC  
 Sherry Wallen, Strategic Direction, Inc.



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## HONOREES



## ACCOUNTING

## STAN ARUTTI

gishSEIDEN

Stan Arutti is a home-grown accountant with gish SEIDEN that started 14 years ago with the firm. He quickly demonstrated the skills of a superstar and made his way to Partner in 11 years. His dedication to what the firm stands for has created great relationships with clients of all sizes.

Arutti focuses on evaluating and improving the efficiency within the accounting departments of mid- to small-size businesses. With his advanced training and technical experience, he actively consults businesses and successful individuals with a variety of services including tax planning and accounting.

Arutti is a well-rounded partner that is skilled in both accounting/auditing and taxation. Having experience in both enables him to provide exceptional customer service to his clients because he can speak about all facets of their business. He has clients in many industries, such as molding manufactures, restaurants, alarm systems, retail, start-ups and entrepreneurs. He prides himself on his tax planning strategies to help his clients navigate through the maze of changing tax issues for federal and state income taxes. He coaches his entrepreneur clients on what type of entity their new ventures should be classified as to helping multi-generational clients with succession planning.

Arutti is also the chair of the firm's Technical Committee, which is the committee that is solely responsible for developing and implementing changes to its procedures for new accounting and tax laws that arise. He is also in charge of the firm's peer review process which keeps the firm in good standing with the public to make sure its quality control standards are above the minimum – displaying to the community the firm's high level of ethics and technical skills.

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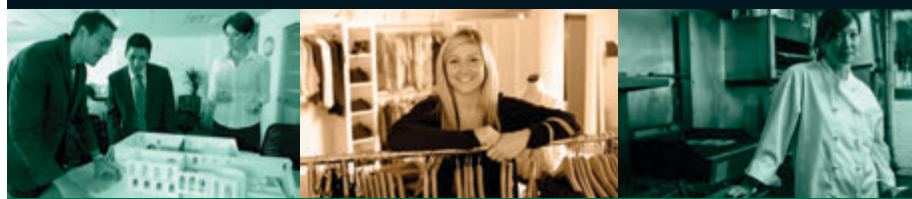
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Contact Brian Gabler 805-583-6701 or [simibiz@simivalley.org](mailto:simibiz@simivalley.org)

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ACCOUNTING

**ROB BERRY**

CohnReznick LLP

Rob Berry is a partner at CohnReznick, the 11th largest accounting, tax, and advisory firm in the United States. He has more than 35 years of experience in consulting on tax and business matters for entrepreneurs and business owners. Berry specializes in entity structures, divestitures and other exit strategies, as well as transactional and operational issues for his clients and has been with CohnReznick for more than 10 years.

Berry serves as a member of CohnReznick's Hospitality and Financial Services Industry Practice. He provides tax and financial planning services to closely held businesses and their owners primarily in the middle market. He is an active member in the California Restaurant Association.

He began his career at a Big Four accounting firm, working with large corporations and high-net-worth individuals. Establishing tremendous relationships with his clients as a trusted advisor, Berry has multiple clients that he has been serving for more than fifteen years.

Acting as a mentor to his staff and others, Berry develops and conducts professional development sessions in the accounting and tax fields. He takes great pride in providing opportunities for his team members to develop and grow. Throughout his tenure with CohnReznick he has assisted in building a dynamic and specialized tax team that serves not only clients in the greater Los Angeles area but national clients as well.

Berry is also involved in his community and participates in a variety of local, as well as firm organizations. He has served as a director for several not-for-profit organizations, including the American Lung Association, the Center for Non-Profit Management, and the Freeman Hospital Foundation, where he was chair of the Finance Committee.



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**BEHIND EVERY GREAT  
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**Roy Fisher**  
 Senior Vice President  
 Operations Administrator  
 2016 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker



**Janet Shinkle**  
 Vice President and Relationship Manager  
 2015 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker



**Lola Forbis**  
 Vice President and Relationship Manager  
 2014 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker



**Jahun Smith**  
 Senior Vice President  
 Regional Sales Manager  
 2013 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker



**Marianne Cederlind**  
 Executive Vice President  
 Chief Business Banking Officer  
 2012 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker



**Tamara Gurney**  
 President & Chief Executive Officer  
 2011 Trusted Advisor – Business Banker  
 and 2011 Trailblazer

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# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### ACCOUNTING

## KEVIN HOLMES

Martini Iosue & Akpovi

Kevin Holmes is an assurance and consulting partner with Martini, Iosue & Akpovi. Holmes specializes in audit, business advisory and internal control consulting. He has a broad range of experience and has spent more than 20 years serving private and public companies in the technology, manufacturing, distribution, real estate, private equity and service industries. He has worked with both established and growing companies throughout Southern California and his core expertise is in serving middle market businesses and their owners.

Holmes began his career at Arthur Andersen in 1994 and since 2005 has been a partner at local and national firms. He has developed expertise in financial accounting, corporate acquisitions and divestitures, initial public offerings, private equity and debt financing transactions and internal control optimization. He has a proven record of providing outstanding results to his clients.

Holmes has also single-handedly created a unique and exciting new line of service. He has expanded his role as a traditional audit partner to include consulting to the business management in the entertainment sector. Specifically, he assists business management firms to provide assurance that clients' accounts are managed properly and with the necessary internal controls in place. In a short period of time, this service line has expanded to provide services to several popular musicians and actors.

Holmes is also passionate about the community he serves and has given his time and resources to a number of organizations and causes, including the College of the Canyons Foundation (where he serves as a member of the Board of Directors) and the Michael Hoefflin Foundation for Children's Cancer (he is a former President of the Board of Directors).

### BANKING

## KAREN K. BROWN

First Bank

A financial professional who genuinely enjoys what she does for a living, Karen Brown has worked for 30 years in commercial banking and finance – as a regional executive, portfolio manager and lending officer – and as a trusted advisor in each role.

After graduating from California State University, Dominguez Hills with a BS in Public Administration, Brown spent several years as a senior auditor and collateral manager with Barclays Business Credit. Thereafter, she moved into commercial banking, working in various senior management positions for mid- to large-sized institutions including City National Bank, California United Bank, US Bank, Pacific Western Bank and 1st Enterprise Bank.

In July of 2014, Brown joined First Bank as SVP Team Lead of the bank's San Fernando Valley Regional Office located in Woodland Hills. Her responsibilities include overseeing a team of relationship managers and developing new business opportunities for the bank.

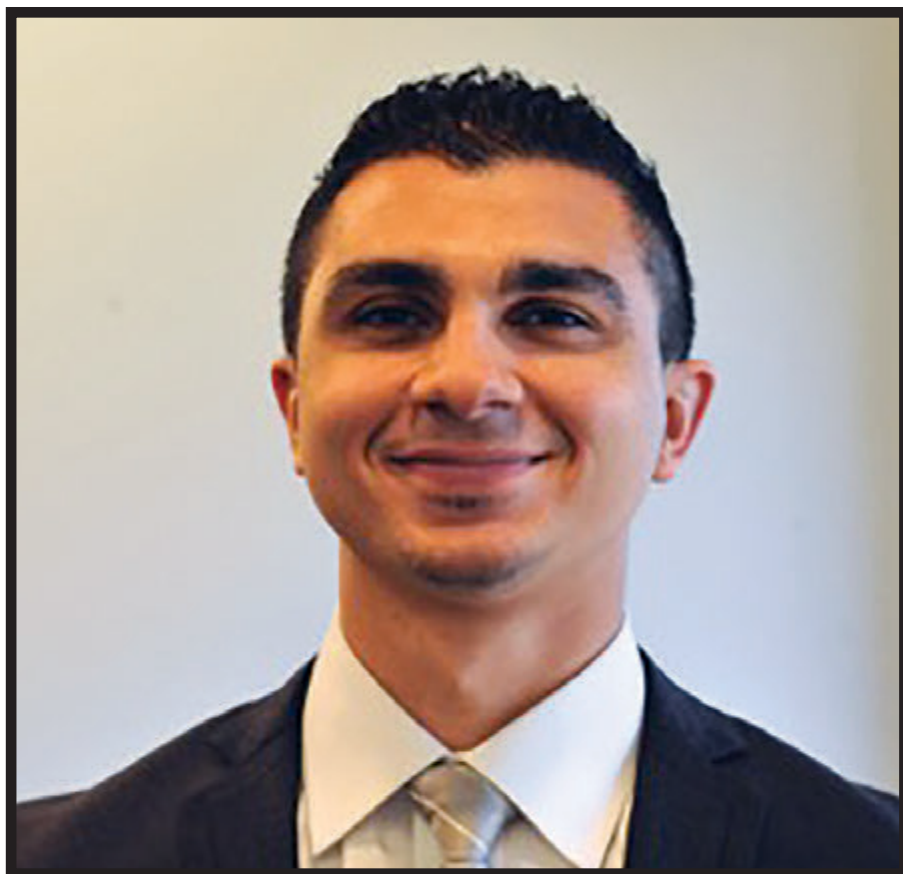
Outside of the office, Brown is passionate about the community she serves and has given her time and resources to a number of organizations and causes. She is presently on the Boards of Camp 4 Kids and Habitat for Humanity, and also previously held board positions at Verdugo Mental Health and Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice.





# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### BANKING

## SHANT CHAHINIAN

Wells Fargo

Shant Chahinian is always looking for ways to assist Wells Fargo's business customers in achieving their business goals and financial dreams. He provides proactive advice and solutions to meet their needs and his efforts have resulted in customers achieving financial growth, operation efficiencies and mitigated risk associated with fraud.

Chahinian is a Business Associate who consistently provides stellar customer service. He continues to receive awards for his top of class customer service.

Customers report that Chahinian has a positive attitude and is never too busy to help with an issue. He is very knowledgeable and also willing to research to find an answer or solution. He has great follow up with customers, which contributes to a consistent "wow" factor. He is more than willing to go the extra mile. His positive energy and "service with a smile" attitude are also greatly appreciated by customers.

One example of the many situations in which Chahinian has stepped up to assist a customer was when a particular customer needed some help as her mother's home in the Midwest was destroyed by a tornado. There was a check made payable to the insurance company, the customer and her mother. Chahinian helped this customer by reassuring her he would help her through obtaining what was needed to collect the funds. She received what was needed to repair her mother's home and rebuild. She was very thankful for his time and reassurance. All in a day's work for Chahinian – who prides himself on going the extra mile.

### BANKING

## ROY FISHER

Mission Valley Bank

Reflecting upon the many things learned throughout his military service and banking career spanning nearly three decades, Roy Fisher, Vice President and Regional Branch Manager for Mission Valley Bank, found that developing positive relationships – both personally and professionally – is essential. Specifically, his motto is to treat people with respect, be kind, listen carefully, have integrity, share credit, and be a team player.

Fisher manages the operations of Mission Valley Bank's Business Banking Center in Santa Clarita and is a retired Army Officer and Major Army National Guard with 21 years of service. He served in Operation Enduring Freedom and was awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal (2005-2006). He has a proven track record of experience in retail banking, team leadership, and business development. His strong strategic and analytical skills, combined with the ability to drive flawless execution of business initiatives, has served both the bank and clients well.

Fisher prides himself on the strength of his customer relationships and developing a lasting rapport with each – earning his role as a trusted advisor. He believes deeply that "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Always projecting a very professional, yet friendly style, Fisher is able to put clients quickly at ease with the confidence that he is as dedicated to their success as they are! He has successfully built his portfolio through referrals and creating an environment of reciprocity wherein he works to connect the business community to each other – business owners working together to create positive results for one another.



# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### LEGAL

## JAMES FEDALEN

HFL Law Group

Attorney James Fedalen's work has garnered a variety of praise over the course of more than three decades practicing law. He has had multiple published decisions in the California Court of Appeals and the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, and has set precedents for numerous future cases. Fedalen stands out from the rest of his contemporaries through his client-driven focus, which enables him to see the big picture, stay humble and focused, and remember that in the end, his clients' best interests are what is most important.

Fedalen represents clients in high-stakes intellectual property, business and real estate litigation. He also represents clients in disputes concerning financial elder abuse; will, trust and probate litigation; corporate and partnership matters.

On a recent case, Fedalen represented a client who loaned money and equipment to a food processing company. When the company stopped paying for these items, the client sought to recover the money and equipment that they had lost. Thanks to Fedalen's work, the client was ultimately able to recover \$650,000, and was able to obtain a controlling interest in the food processing company as part of the resolution.

Clients are also drawn to Fedalen because he is an advocate known for his exhaustive preparation, incisive strategy and track record of success. Fedalen is renowned as a lawyer who will go above and beyond to outwork and outthink his opponents in order to benefit his clients. His clients not only consider him a trusted advisor who actively demonstrates genuine concern for their interests, but consistently offers insightful and thorough legal advice in some of the most challenging business decisions they face.

### LEGAL

## KAREN L. GABLER

LightGabler

With over 24 years of experience counseling businesses in all aspects of employment law, Karen L. Gabler has earned the reputation for developing proactive strategies to enhance workplace productivity and avoid employment disputes. She co-founded LightGabler in Camarillo in 2011 and has been instrumental in the law firm's unprecedented growth, building the firm from seven to 19 employees and from 287 to over 1,300 clients in less than five years. Clients span the state of California, but the majority are located or have branches primarily in Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

As a major part of her practice, Gabler serves as an employment law expert for businesses of all sizes and industries, providing counsel to management and conducting training programs for both management and employees. She performs internal audits of clients' employment practices to ensure strategic compliance with current laws and conducts client investigations of employee allegations regarding harassment, discrimination, employee theft or other misconduct.

In one circumstance, Gabler performed a workplace audit for a restaurant owner with four locations. She streamlined their wage and hour practices, developed policies and memoranda to guide employees and establish legal compliance, revised day-to-day employment practices and conducted management training for effective supervision and evaluation of employees. The business owner narrowly avoided what would have been multi-million dollar liability, and significantly advanced company profits while substantially reducing the risk of legal disputes.

When litigation is unavoidable, Gabler aggressively defends her clients against employment law claims in state and federal courts as well as in administrative hearings, arbitrations and mediations. Her skill as a litigator and negotiator shows by her record of accomplishment—she has successfully resolved hundreds of claims on behalf of her clients.





# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### LEGAL

## BARRY HARLAN

Lewitt, Hackman, Shapiro, Marshall & Harlan

Barry Harlan is a Los Angeles divorce attorney and a Certified Family Law Specialist designated by the State Bar of California's Board of Legal Specialization. He represents high net worth individuals in complex divorce matters where the earnings and property of the parties are significant.

Harlan has extensive experience in divorce matters where multiple corporations are owned by the couple and must be distributed between the parties, and in other cases where complex compensation packages or parental fiscal responsibilities must be determined and properly distributed. He also handles Family Law matters where custody and visitation rights are at issue.

Whether handling emergency Family Law matters or complicated financial transactions, Harlan's goal is to bring calm to the chaotic world of Family Law for Firm clients, which includes business owners in a variety of industries, celebrities, corporate executives earning complex benefits or compensation packages, doctors and other health care professionals, entertainment industry artists and executives, financial planners, company owners, professional athletes and real estate professionals (and/or the spouses of all of the above).

As Chair of the Family Law Practice Group at the Firm, Harlan leads six attorneys and a paralegal. Under his supervision, the Family Law Group is able to provide excellent service at affordable rates because of the cost-efficient methods and expert advice of the lawyers in his department. When feasible, this team of California Family Law attorneys recommends alternate methods of resolving disputes through the use of mediation or arbitration, which can result in significant time and cost saving benefits for divorcing clients. He also negotiates and drafts pre-nuptial, post-nuptial and cohabitation agreements for clients, which potentially save time and litigation costs in the future.

### LEGAL

## LISA ODOM

Poole & Shaffery

Lisa Odom is a partner in the law firm of Poole & Shaffery, LLP representing numerous individuals, families, and small and mid-sized businesses with respect to estate planning, trust administration and probate matters, contracts and business law matters, business formation and dissolution, asset sales and stock purchasing agreements, commercial and retail leasing matters, trademarking matters and complex real estate transactions.

Odom is passionate about her work and that of her clients. She is caring, compassionate and makes clients comfortable with her friendly demeanor. She really gets to know her clients, which leads to providing them the high level of service they require. The more she knows her clients and they know her, the more clients trust her and are willing to divulge full information.

Odom has represented multi-million dollar projects at high-profile law firms in Los Angeles including Kirkland & Ellis and Sidley Austin LLP. She has extensive experience representing large financial institutions and energy companies performing negotiations, extensive due diligence, preparing loan agreements, construction and various other types of real estate agreements, leases and permitting documents, and reviewing entitlements.

Today, Odom uses her talent and sharp legal acumen to protect businesses and families, help them achieve success and secure peace of mind. She has also taught estate planning as a professor at College of the Canyons.

Giving back to the community, Odom serves as an active board member at Single Mothers Outreach and as a member of Soroptimist International of the Greater Santa Clarita Valley, a global volunteer organization working to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. In 2015, she successfully co-chaired SIGSCV's major fundraising event, the Wine Affair.



# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### INSURANCE

## ED LIGONDE

Montage Insurance Solutions

Ed Ligonde is one of Montage Insurance Solutions' trusted advisors to many clients, not only the ones he manages. He began as a sales person in 2009 and then assisted with account management where he became an expert in Benefits and Workers' Compensation. With the enrichment of his knowledge base and skill set, he produced over \$6 million in premiums by 2013 and was promoted to Director of the Employee Benefits Department. Ligonde not only managed the department, he continued to grow the book of business he manages for Montage to \$10 million today.

Ligonde wins Montage's monthly "shout out" contest regularly, due to his innumerable thank you letters received daily from clients. He is equally loved by his Montage team and was recently promoted to Vice President of Employee Benefits Technology and Marketing. His colleagues say that it is easy to vouch for Ligonde's integrity and dedication and add that they have never seen anyone give as much as Ligonde does to his clients, his team and the company. "Client Services is what Ed is built for," exclaimed one impressed co-worker.

Ligonde actively participates on a men's soccer league and plays on a co-ed team with his wife. He attends many PIHRA Meetings to further learn the ins and outs of HR to assist with fully understanding the needs of clients. He also attends the HRD Credit Union Association meetings and events for Charter Schools and the Health Industry.

He is an activate attendee to several industry organizations including EBPA Employee Benefits Planning Association and LAAHU, Los Angeles Association of Health Underwriters.

### INSURANCE

## TOM MEANS

Pacific Coast Health

Tom Means of Pacific Coast Health is an insurance advisor in the areas of health and life insurance. As both an insurance agent and a strategic consultant, Means advises closely held businesses, their owners and their employees on health and life insurance strategies and options (including providing clients with Life, LTC, and all employee benefit insurance policies).

Clients view Means of Pacific Coast Health as not just a great and reliable advisor, but as a friend. He makes the effort to understand and listen to the unique needs of each client's situation before his team goes to work in finding strategic solutions that will work for any given situation. He regularly saves clients thousands of dollars on their insurance spends and helps them to better understand how all of the various insurance plans are connected. His service to the community is unmatched for such a young professional.

Means also regularly speaks to groups about, and consults with companies in the area of, the Affordable Care Act (strategy and compliance). He serves on the Executive Board of the Ventura County Sheriff Foundation as well as National Association of Health Underwriters - leading its Producer Roundtable.





# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### WEALTH MANAGEMENT

## ALEX MARKOWITZ

Merrill Lynch

Alex Markowitz of Merrill Lynch has always been an idealist who put the needs of others before himself and wants everyone to be happy. Thus, his original plan was to go to medical school to become a general practitioner. However, he found medical to be a different environment than he imagined. It was at this point that Markowitz shifted to the financial services industry. As a young man he would always read financial news as most children consume sports. He thus was able to apply his interpersonal, and quantitative skills to a new industry.

In the four years since dropping out of medical school to pursue a career in wealth management, Markowitz has built a book of business from scratch that has now grown to over 40 million dollars in assets under management – all before turning 31!

Perhaps the main reason for this is that Markowitz always puts the needs of his clients first. Clients report that he always has an ear open to listen to concerns while also ensuring his eyes remain on the goals of his clients.

A large portion of his business is dedicated to providing wealth management service to families of children with disabilities.

It should also be noted that in his spare time, Markowitz does charity work with the City of Hope. He is a founding member of 25to5 which is a subset of the board of trustees for the City of Hope whose mission is to raise money to help fund and eradicate cancer as well assisting Etta Israel which is an organization dedicated to providing homes to young adults with special needs.

### WEALTH MANAGEMENT

## LOUIE VALDEZ

UBS Financial Services

Lou Valdez has been a financial advisor at UBS for 25 years. In 2009, Valdez earned the Wealth Advisor designation, which recognizes financial advisors who have completed a comprehensive advisory training and education program. He specializes in providing comprehensive wealth management through personalized attention and service to help high net worth individuals achieve their financial goals. Prior to joining UBS, he worked for PaineWebber Inc., in the Ventura County office. He currently works out of the UBS Wealth Management Office in Westlake Village.

What sets Valdez apart is not his extensive menu of client services, as impressive as it is, or even his exceptional team of colleagues. Rather, it is his unwavering dedication to character, communication and commitment. These core values guide his every decision, every action and every recommendation.

Valdez graduated from California State University, Northridge, with a business degree in Finance and Economics. He holds General Securities Licenses Series 7, 66, 65, plus licenses in health, disability, and long term care insurance. He has achieved the Certified Financial Planner designation, a prestigious designation awarded by the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards. He has met the educational, examination, experience and ethics requirements affiliated with the CFP designation.

An active supporter of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ventura County since 1998, Valdez also serves on the boards of the Moorpark Foundation for the Arts and Cabrillo Music Theatre of Thousand Oaks. He believes in the community's responsibility to mentor youth because their development and leadership are critical to our country's future. Through involvement with charitable organizations, Valdez finds an opportunity to give back to the community that his family has called home for 50 years.



# Trusted Advisors

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### WEALTH MANAGEMENT

## ALI ZAMANI

Steel Peak Wealth Management

As Chief Financial Officer, Founding Partner and Wealth Advisor at Steel Peak Wealth Management, Ali Zamani takes pride in helping advisory clients accomplish their most important life goals, and in helping ensure that Steel Peak remains a strong business as it grows.

Zamani began his career at Northwestern Mutual, in Los Angeles, where he focused on estate- and wealth-transfer planning. He then joined UBS as a Financial Analyst. Later he was a Vice President of Investments and a Portfolio Management Director at Smith Barney, which merged with Morgan Stanley.

Zamani's clients have consistently chosen him as their top and only advisor, not just for the competent advice he has to offer but also for his deep interest in their personal lives. Going beyond the role of a mere paid advisor, Zamani seeks to become a lifelong partner for each of his individual clients, often conversing with them on their daily lives, their personal problems or circumstances, in an effort to better understand their situations and give them the advice that best fits their needs.

Families call upon him for assistance in home investments and business strategy, as well as for personal views regarding car dealership recommendations and home remodeling consultations. Thanks to his consideration of their finances and their personal lives, clients feel reassured by the presence of Zamani, to whom they can turn to in times of need. This complete trust that is established between Zamani and every single one of his clients has, more than anything else, changed their lives for the better, and identifies him as a competent and worthy advisor.

### OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

## DENNIS DEYOUNG

Financial West Group

For over three decades, Dennis DeYoung has been working with individual clients and providing honest and ethical financial advice to achieve a variety of investment goals and objectives. Each client receives specific and unique advice tailored to their particular situation and the recommendations are in the best interest of the client with a detailed balance between risk and reward.

DeYoung has considerable expertise in financial planning, income taxation and estate planning which helps to create an investment or savings plan tailored to accomplish a clients' goals and investment objectives. This well-rounded knowledge assures that all aspects of ones' particular financial situation are considered before any recommendations are given.

Over the years, he has developed a specialty in the area of retirement planning. He works with local businesses to establish and maintain 401(k), 403(b) and pension plans that provide funds for retirement for hundreds of employees. In addition, he oversees the retirement plans for the University Student Union at California State University, Northridge where he serves on their Retirement Plan Committee and meets with plan participants on a regular basis. For individuals, Dennis has established thousands of IRA's, ROTH IRA's, Simple & SEP-IRA's to help clients fund their goal of a comfortable retirement.

In short, he is an excellent wealth manager and certainly the embodiment of a Trusted Advisor.

One of his greatest strengths and contributions, however, is his dedication to community service. Among his passions in this area is education. He is a board member and chair of the Audit Committee for the CSUN Foundation Board. He is also President of the Cal State Northridge Alumni Association Board of Directors (from 2007 - present). He is also a member of the North Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (from 2005 - present).





# Trusted Advisors

## HONOREES



### OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

## BRIAN E. KOEGLE

Poole & Shaffery, LLP

Brian E. Koegle is a partner in the employment and labor law department of Poole & Shaffery, LLP. With a focus on labor and employment law, he provides counsel to employers in a large number of industries with regard to hiring practices, employment contracts, wage and hour issues, compensation, discipline and termination matters.

He has represented employers in union grievance, arbitration and dispute resolution procedures and has defended a wide range of employment discrimination and fair employment practice cases. In addition, he has assisted employers in the design, drafting, modification and implementation of personnel policies, procedures and employee handbooks and with performance of personnel policy audits. Koegle counsels business owners with regard to a variety of business and commercial disputes, including trade secrets and protection of proprietary information, and has first chair trial experience in Southern California courts litigating those matters.

He has written several published articles on labor and employment-related matters and is a frequent speaker on these issues. In 2015, he calendared 36 non-paid speaking engagements for organizations such as PHIRA chapters, chambers of commerce, and other business organizations.

Giving back to the community, Koegle co-chaired the 2016 Celebrity Waiter Dinner benefiting the Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center, raising significantly more money than the year before to provide care and programs for the local senior community. By reducing costs and increasing sponsorship dollars, the event realized a 50% increase in net profits.

Going above and beyond his professional practice, Koegle chaired a local college bond campaign in June 2016. The \$230 million bond measure passed exceeding the required 55% threshold. This volunteer effort followed his chairing another successful bond campaign in November 2014 for the Saugus Union School District, where his three daughters attended elementary school.

### OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

## R. REX PARRIS

R. Rex Parris Law Firm

R. Rex Parris is recognized as one of the most successful and innovative trial lawyers working today. He handles a wide variety of cases, ranging from severe personal injury to class actions, products liability, business torts, mass torts, and environmental law litigation.

In 2016, Parris was appointed to a Los Angeles County advisory panel assisting a County Strike Team assess the conditions, regulatory compliance and potential public health and safety risks associated with existing oil and gas facilities in unincorporated Los Angeles County. He assists the Strike Team with recommendations on legislative and regulatory positions, and legal positions that the Board should take to support the overall safety of these facilities in relation to the surrounding communities. He has considerable expertise on this issue having represented numerous clients involving the oil and gas industry. He is currently representing thousands of residents impacted by Southern California Gas' Aliso Canyon storage facility well failure in Porter Ranch.

In addition to managing his trial calendar and the Firm's diversified practice, Parris also manages one of California's fastest-growing cities. As the mayor of Lancaster since 2008, he has gained nationwide media attention for his efforts to improve the well being of the city's residents. For example, gang violence dropped 82%, the city's downtown area was completely redeveloped during the worst economic downturn in over 75 years, and all of the city's municipal buildings were converted to solar power.

Parris also contributes his time and resources to a number of worthy philanthropic causes, including the American Cancer Society, Lancaster Child Abuse Task Force (which he founded), Antelope Valley War on Gangs (which he founded), Valley Volunteers Program (which he founded), the Antelope Valley Hospital Community Benefits Advisory Council, and a number of other organizations.



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from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
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