

PROGRAM

BEVERLY HILLS BACK TO BUSINESS  
FALL VIRTUAL COLLABORATIVE

OCTOBER 21, 2020 | 9 AM - 7 PM (PT)

BEVERLY HILLS  
BACK TO  
BUSINESS



CO-PRODUCTION



CHAMBER  
of  
COMMERCE

O'GARA  
BEVERLY HILLS

FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

Welcome to...

BEVERLY HILLS  
BACK TO  
BUSINESS<sup>▲</sup>

October 21, 2020

Thank You To Our Program Sponsors

Support Our Members By Visiting

Them Through The Live Link Ads

# Agenda

All keynote sessions will be available to watch on demand after they debut.

Speaker names are hyperlinked for additional information.

## 9:00 AM | State of the City of Beverly Hills

Southern California broadcast icon, Fritz Coleman, will join Beverly Hills Mayor Lester Friedman to discuss the current State of the City from the beautiful and historic Greystone Mansion.

Lester Friedman | Mayor of Beverly Hills

Fritz Coleman | Southern California Broadcast Icon

## 9:15 AM | Networking Break

## 9:30 AM | The Economy of Professional Sports

President & CEO of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Stan Kasten, and Owner & Chairman of the Board of the Los Angeles Chargers, Dean Spanos, explain the effect COVID-19 is having on the team's financial model.

Stan Kasten | President & CEO, Los Angeles Dodgers joined by Mario Solis | NBC4 Sports

Dean Spanos | Owner & Chairman of the Board, Los Angeles Chargers joined by Hayley Elwood | Team Reporter

## 10:15 AM | State of Luxury

Emmy Award winning TV news producer, luxury expert and strategic communications PR consultant, Ann Shatilla, returns with her "State of Luxury with Ann Shatilla" business seminar. This time, insightful business information in an in-depth conversation with Anish Melwani, Chairman & CEO, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton Inc., North America. LVMH is known as the world leader of luxury with over 70 Maisons, and is the only group present in all five major sectors of the luxury market; Fashion & Leather Goods, Perfumes & Cosmetics, Wine & Spirits, Watches & Jewelry, and Selective Retailing. PR business tips with her "Pandemic PR" session will follow this interview. Both are informative regarding the current pandemic, and business leaders will not want to miss either.

Anish Melwani | Chairman & CEO, LVMH (Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton) North America

Ann Shatilla | Emmy Award winning TV News Producer, Luxury Expert & Strategic Communications PR Consultant

## Immediately Following State of Luxury | In the Kitchen at the Beverly Wilshire, A Four Seasons Hotel

As the landmark Beverly Wilshire enjoys a reopening, we get a sneak peek into their culinary world.

Amir Nematipour | Executive Sous Chef, Beverly Wilshire Hotel

## 11:45 AM | Networking Break

## 12:00 PM | O'Gara: Curators of the Extraordinary

The O'Gara experience sets the bar higher than any other dealer group due to innovative thinking and a drive to push the entire industry forward. O'Gara has the largest selection of highline vehicles in the Western Hemisphere. Learn more about the bespoke O'Gara brands, strong business community ties, and culture of giving back.

## 12:15 PM | Taking Flight: What is Next for Global Air Travel, and How Does it Impact Southern California's Economy?

As the aviation authority for the nation's second largest city and hub of one of the world's most populous metropolitan areas, Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) provides an airport system to serve a major portion of the Southern California market via LAX and Van Nuys Airports. CEO, Justin Erbacci, weighs in on how he is balancing the unique challenges impacting the commercial aviation industry due to COVID-19, and what it means for the region's economy.

Justin Erbacci | CEO, Los Angeles World Airports joined by Blair Schlecter | VP Economic Development & Government Affairs, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

## Immediately Following Taking Flight | Is Private Aviation the Future?

Advent Jets CEO, Scott Buss, discusses the role private aviation has played throughout the pandemic and his outlook on the future of flying private.

Scott Buss | CEO, Advent Jets joined by Blair Schlecter | VP Economic Development & Government Affairs, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

## 12:45 PM | Urban Mobility: Where Do We Go From Here?

Three of the top experts in the field of emerging mobility and transportation delve into the future plans for accessibility and sustainability. Harry Campbell, John Rossant and Emily Warren discuss the outlook on community planning and business growth.

Harry Campbell | Owner, The Rideshare Guy

John Rossant | CEO, CoMotion

Emily Warren | Senior Policy Advisor, Nelson Nygaard

Moderated by Blair Schlecter | VP Economic Development & Government Affairs, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

## 1:45 PM | Exploring Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace

Michele Ruiz, best selling author and expert in the field of empowerment, diversity and inclusion will offer her insights on mitigating unconscious bias and management communication strategies.

Michele Ruiz | Emmy Award winning TV News Anchor & Best Selling Author joined by Martin Van Der Werff | The Very Creative Firm

## 2:15 PM | The World of Commercial Real Estate Post COVID-19

Some of the top experts in the field of real estate and commercial investment discuss what 2021 will look like for the market, and where investment opportunities may be. Curt Northrup, Michael Lushing, Larry Green, and Drew Planting examine the challenges in real estate, and how we need to evolve our practices and develop our city to meet Angelenos' needs post COVID-19.

Larry Green | Managing Director, L Green Investment

Michael Lushing | Principal, Lushing Realty Advisors

Drew Planting | Founder & Managing Partner, GPI

Moderated by Curt Northrup | Real Estate Agent, Douglas Elliman Beverly Hills \*Curt will be in the Expert Chat room from 3:00 - 3:30.

### 3:00 PM | California Election & Business Policy Issues and Their Impact on the Economy

Los Angeles Business Federation CEO, Tracy Hernandez, leads a discussion with several esteemed panelists including Spencer Kallick, Philip Recht, and Kelly O. Scott as they delve into key new laws and ballot measures impacting businesses.

Spencer Kallick | Partner, Allen Matkins

Kelly O. Scott | Partner, Ervin Cohen & Jessup \*Kelly will be in the Expert Chat room from 3:30 - 4:00.

Philip Recht | Partner, Mayer Brown \*Philip will be in the Expert Chat room from 4:30 - 5:00.

Moderated by Tracy Hernandez | CEO, Los Angeles Business Federation

### 4:00 PM | Networking Break

### 4:15 PM | Best Business Practices for Navigating Challenges & Opportunities Using LinkedIn

With over 675 million members, LinkedIn is arguably the most powerful platform for businesses of all size, industry and location. It provides a wealth of shared information and connections. Jordyn Dahl, News Editor for Small Business at LinkedIn will share valuable insights from the LinkedIn community, and provide tips to get the most out of it for your business growth and career opportunities.

Jordyn Dahl | Small Business Editor, LinkedIn News

**Keep watching for a short, but important message about our upcoming Military Veterans Job Fair.**

Steve Bettini | Military Veterans Recruiter, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

### 4:45 PM | The Economic Importance of the Beauty Industry

At a time when authenticity, originality and a work-from-home culture is driving trends, how will the 500+ billion dollar global beauty industry adapt to new expectations and continue to thrive? Sennen Pamich gives us his perspective.

Sennen Pamich | President, Coty Professional Beauty and Retail Hair, North America joined by Mary Atherton | Communications Director, Coty Professional Beauty

## 5:15 PM | Will Entertainment Ever Be the Same?

The entertainment industry has been one of the hardest hit due to COVID-19. We are joined by the Recording Academy's Qiana Conley, BAFTA's Matthew Wiseman, and the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts' Rachel Fine, to discuss the current state of entertainment, and how the arts are surviving.

Qiana Conley | Executive Director, Recording Academy (Grammys) Los Angeles Chapter joined by Katy Gaspar | Grammy U Student

Matthew Wiseman | CEO, British Academy of Film & Television Arts (BAFTA) Los Angeles Chapter joined by Kathryn Busby | EVP, TriStar Television & Chair of the Board, BAFTA LA, and Wayne Watkins | Head of Partnerships, BAFTA LA

Rachel Fine | Executive Director & CEO, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts joined by Mark Slavkin | Director of Education, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

## 6:00 PM

### Join Us in Celebrating the 2020 Best of Beverly Hills Golden Palm Award Honorees

Fred Hayman Visionary Award: Mr. John Bendheim

Above & Beyond Award: Cedars-Sinai Health System

Above & Beyond - Small Business Award: Meraki Fitness

Innovation Award: Spago Beverly Hills

Innovation - Small Business Award: UMBERTO

Honoring Beverly Hills Police Department & Fire Department

### Expert Chat Room Schedule

11:30 AM - Danny He, Soapbox

12:00 PM - Julio Cerne, XrossWorld

3:00 PM - Curt Northrup, Douglas Elliman Real Estate

3:30 PM - Kelly O. Scott, Ervin Cohen & Jessup

4:30 PM - Philip Recht, Mayer Brown

## Breakout Sessions

These sessions are available to watch on demand all day.

### What's in Store for the 2020 Retail Holiday Shopping Season and Beyond?

Three of Beverly Hills' most revered retailers; Thomas J. Blumenthal of GEARYS, Tara Riceberg of Tesoro, and Daniel Zahir of Edelweiss Chocolates discuss the current challenges and opportunities facing them this holiday season, and their outlook on retail in 2021.

Thomas J. Blumenthal | President & CEO, GEARYS

Tara Riceberg | Owner, Tweak & Tesoro

Daniel Zahir | Creative Director & Chocolatier, Edelweiss Chocolates

Immediately followed by ...

### A Few Minutes with the California Retailers Association

Find out how the California Retailers Association is helping their members through this unprecedented time for business.

Rachel Michelin | President, California Retailers Association

### Pivots that Worked: How a Local Restaurateur Grew His Business During the Pandemic

Peter Garland of Porta Via not only managed to stay open, he actually launched his third location during the pandemic.

We'll find out what he did, and how you can apply his success to your business.

Peter Garland | Owner, Porta Via Restaurants joined by Todd Johnson | President & CEO, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

Immediately followed by ...

### A Few Minutes with the California Restaurant Association

Find out how the California Restaurant Association is helping their members survive the most difficult year imaginable.

Jot Condie | President & CEO, California Restaurant Association joined by Todd Johnson | President & CEO, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

## Banking in 2020 and Beyond

US Bank's Brian Hernandez breaks down what big banks are doing differently in light of COVID-19, and how they can serve small businesses.

Brian Hernandez | SVP Business Banking Market Leader, US Bank joined by Cesar Hernandez | VP Business Banking Sales Manager, US Bank

## You Thought Influencer Marketing and E-Commerce Was Only for Big Brands? Think Again.

XrossWorld CEO, Julio Cerne and Soapbox CEO, Danny He will explain the benefits of using Influencer Marketing and E-Commerce to increase sales. They will show you how to drive traffic to your site by using influencers, and how to turn that traffic into revenue by incorporating e-commerce effectively into your business. Then, Julio will show you how to structure and execute an influencer marketing campaign to drive a Call To Action (CTA). Points covered include finding the right people, how to engage influencers, deciding what CTA, structuring a narrative, managing the campaign, and ultimately building your tribe.

Julio Cerne | CEO, XrossWorld \*Julio will be in the Expert Chat room from 12:00 - 12:30.

Danny He | CEO, Soapbox \*Danny will be in the Expert Chat room from 11:30 - 12:00.

## Customers May Be Gone, But Not Gone Forever

Dan Pfister, Founder of Strategic WinBack Services will walk you through a proven system for winning back clients and customers, regardless of your industry.

Dan Pfister | Founder, Strategic WinBack Services

## How to Make Money with Instagram

Deborah Deras (aka The Social Media Goddess) takes you by the hand, and guides you through the fundamentals of using Instagram for business, not selfies. This in-depth lesson is packed with specific, easily applicable steps to start driving sales.

Deborah Deras | Keynote Speaker, Entrepreneur, Author, Master Results Coach and Social Media Strategist

## Entrepreneurship in Beverly Hills

The Beverly Hills Incubator is a subcommittee of the Next Beverly Hills Committee, which fosters entrepreneurship among the next generation of business leaders in Beverly Hills. In June we were introduced to two companies in their most recent cohort as they discussed the Incubator process from inception to pitch day. Today we get to see those companies present their business ideas to a panel of professionals for feedback.

Derrick Ontiveros | Chair, Next Beverly Hills Committee

Noelle Freeman | Vice Chair, Next Beverly Hills Committee

Noah Etessami | Chair, Beverly Hills Incubator

Ethan Bazarganfard | Co-Founder & Facilitator, Beverly Hills Incubator

Sher Chaudhary | Co-Founder & Facilitator, Beverly Hills Incubator

Ryan Ross | BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant, CEO & Co-Founder, TopDog

Phillip Oh | BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant, CTO & Co-Founder, TopDog

Noah Gould | BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant, Director of Marketing, TopDog

Aaron Raimi | BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant, Co-Founder, MeetJew

Daniel Ebrahimi | BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant, Co-Founder, MeetJew

Ivan Nikkhoo | Panelist & Managing Partner, Navigate Ventures

Yair Vardi | Panelist & Co-Founder, Fusion LA Accelerator

Thea Knobel | Panelist & VP of Platform and Marketing, GSV Ventures

Frederik Kofoed | Panelist, Common Living

To provide the greatest amount of talent and content, all sessions were recorded in the days leading up to the collaborative.

# Acknowledgements

## Host

Ariana Escalante

## Producers

Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce  
Quay Entertainment, Inc.

## Creative Direction

The Very Creative Firm

## Public Relations

NINICO Communications®

## Virtual Event Platform Direction

Candice Davis; Innovatis Group  
vFairs

## Event Consultation

Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Staff

Tiffany Davis, Nancy Davis, Katy Gaspar, Alyssa Porter;

Quay Entertainment, Inc.

Fransiska Weckesser, Martin Van Der Werff,

Camilla Borel-Rinkes;

The Very Creative Firm

Nicholas Adams, Ashley Alexander, Sarah Farrant;

NINICO Communications®

Kim Ruggles; Kim Ruggles Events

Curt Northrup; Douglas Elliman Real Estate

Nacole Gray, Lia Avanesian;

O’Gara Coach

Julio Cerne; XrossWorld

Danny He; Soapbox, Inc.

Bobbe Joy Dawson & Vicky Mense

Armand Gazarian; Best of Beverly Hills Television

## Acknowledgements

O'Gara Coach Company, LLC

Cedars-Sinai Health System

Meraki Fitness

AsomBroso Tequila

Design Printing

Second Time Around Watch Company

True Spec Golf

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

Eat Speak Travel

Century City Chamber of Commerce

Olga Lorencin Skincare

Bliss by Adeline

US Bank

Advent Jets

Motev LLC

Network Experts

VydeoMedia.com

GrowSalesIQ

Strategic WinBack

Hired Virtual

First Republic Bank

California Restaurant Association

California Retailers Association

Tamara ZumMallen Acupuncture

Contact [membership@beverlyhillschamber.com](mailto:membership@beverlyhillschamber.com) if you are interested in participating in future events.

# THANK YOU TO OUR INCREDIBLE SPONSORS & PARTNERS!



FOUNDER'S  
CIRCLE



CO-PRODUCER



PRESIDENT'S  
CIRCLE



BENEFACTOR'S  
CIRCLE



PRODUCTION  
PARTNERS



TO INQUIRE ABOUT SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR SPRING VIRTUAL COLLABORATIVE  
CONTACT [MEMBERSHIP@BEVERLYHILLSCHAMBER.COM](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@BEVERLYHILLSCHAMBER.COM)



RR

# GHOST

ROLLS-ROYCE  
MOTOR CARS  
BEVERLY HILLS



**GALVIN - GAUSTAD - STEIN LLC.**

**W E A L T H M A N A G E M E N T**



**Galvin, Gaustad & Stein LLC | Wealth Management**  
**Congratulates Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce on being**  
**an Outstanding Example of Inspiration and Innovation for All**

Warm Regards,  
Mark P. Stein CFP® | Principal

9595 Wilshire Blvd | Suite 900 | Beverly Hills, California, 90212 | O. 310. 300. 4055 | C. 602. 677. 5488 | [Mark@ggsadvisors.com](mailto:Mark@ggsadvisors.com)

- Financial Wealth Management Providing Global Clients with Comprehensive Personalized Concierge White Glove Services
- 100% Custom Curated Portfolio Design and Management | Tax Efficient and Socially Responsible | GIPS Compliant; The Global Investment Performance Standards
- Barron's List of Top 2019 Financial Advisors | Complimentary Portfolio Analysis for Chamber Members and Guests

Chairman's Circle Gold Member/Sponsor Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce



151 S. El Camino Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212

**KENNEDY WILSON**

is proud to support

## **The Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce**

and to be a member of  
our thriving local  
business community.

---

### **Kennedy Wilson (NYSE:KW)**

is a global real estate investment company.

We own, operate and invest in real estate both on our own and through our investment management platform, focusing on multifamily and office properties located in the Western U.S., U.K. and Ireland.

[www.kennedywilson.com](http://www.kennedywilson.com)



**MOTEV**

GLOBAL EXECUTIVE TRANSPORTATION

It's HOW YOU GET THERE.

RESERVATIONS:  
[motev.com/book-a-ride](https://motev.com/book-a-ride)

NORTH AMERICA  
323.844.0282

INTERNATIONAL  
800.775.0696

20,695 trees planted in areas in need of reforestation. Every ride plants trees!

For details on our response to COVID 19 visit  
YouTube: [Motev Is Being Prepared for Everything](#)



You need an on-trend promotional video.  
We can help.



Click to watch Ariana show you Vydeo

Affordable · On-Trend · Highly Effective

# Membership & Sponsorship *Join Us*



CHAMBER  
*of*  
COMMERCE



---

# RESERVED

BY QUAY ENTERTAINMENT®

A PRIVATE CLUB  
FOR ENTERTAINMENT  
EXPERIENCE ENTHUSIASTS  
COMING SOON

TO INQUIRE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP  
[QUAY@QUAYENTERTAINMENT.COM](mailto:QUAY@QUAYENTERTAINMENT.COM)



The Law Offices of

**Murray D. Fischer, Esq.**

and

**Judith K. Manouchehri, Esq.**

would like to congratulate  
**John Benheim**  
on receiving the  
**Visionary of the Year Award.**

We are proud to support the Beverly Hills Police & Fire Departments on their outstanding commitment to our business and residential communities.

We affirm our commitment to getting Beverly Hills businesses Back to Business. We are here to help all such businesses reach their goals.

Please call or email us for any assistance in City business and/or real estate matters.

Murray: [mdfrelaw@earthlink.net](mailto:mdfrelaw@earthlink.net); (310) 276-3600  
Judy: [jkmlawcorp@gmail.com](mailto:jkmlawcorp@gmail.com); (310) 490-4195

**NINICO**  
COMMUNICATIONS®

**STRATEGY AND  
MESSAGE HAVE  
NEVER BEEN  
MORE IMPORTANT.**

**LET'S TALK. WE CAN HELP.**

**BLISS** by adeline

Glass artist Adeline takes tempered glass and fuses it in her kiln to form one of a kind works of art.

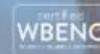
For the finest (and environmentally friendly) gift of art - visit  
[www.BLISSbyAdeline.com](http://www.BLISSbyAdeline.com)

All pieces are made to order in her Los Angeles studio.



We Change Lives

CUSTOMIZED  
WELLNESS  
PROGRAMS



**Meraki  
Fitness**

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

We create shows, videos,  
live events and  
brand activations.

*We love telling your story and we live  
for creating what moves you.*

**We are the very creative firm.**

**\$2,000 discount on your next corporate  
video of \$10,000 by the end of year.\***

*\*Conditions apply as required within.*



Live events



Show production



Brand activation



Video production

THE VERY  
CREATIVE  
FIRM

[www.theverycreativefirm.com](http://www.theverycreativefirm.com)  
[fransiska@theverycreativefirm.com](mailto:fransiska@theverycreativefirm.com)

**KR**  
KIM RUGGLES  
EVENTS

KIM RUGGLES EVENTS

**Time is something  
you don't get back.**

**Don't waste it by  
planning your own  
event.**

Whether it's a virtual, future in-person or  
hybrid event, we will help you bring out the  
best in of your company and brand.

**CONTACT US FOR A FREE CONSULTATION**

**Kim Ruggles Events**  
**(310) 529-4258**  
**[kim@kimrugglesevents.com](mailto:kim@kimrugglesevents.com)**

# BOOST YOUR BRAND AMBASSADORS ON-DEMAND



## xross | WORLD



Small  
business,  
big impact.



U.S. Bank supports the small businesses and business development programs that build and sustain our community. We value the role small businesses play in providing jobs, contributing to local charities, and shaping the identity of our community. Local businesses are proof that with vision and determination, we can create our own possibilities. [usbank.com/communitypossible](https://usbank.com/communitypossible)

U.S. Bank is proud to support the 2020 Beverly Hills Back To Business Fall Virtual Collaborative.

Always open at [usbank.com](https://usbank.com) or with the U.S. Bank Mobile App.



Member FDIC. © 2020 U.S. Bank 42494c9/20

EAGLE ONE FOR BUSINESS  
SMALL BUSINESS LOAN

# Grow your small business.

Designed with flexibility and convenience in mind, the Eagle One for Business loan can help you meet a variety of business goals.

Choose between a line of credit or a term loan<sup>1</sup> from \$25,000 up to \$500,000. Get access to working capital for your remodel, expansion or other initiatives.



FIRST REPUBLIC BANK

Member FDIC and Equal Housing Lender 

CALIFORNIA RETAILERS SUPPORT  
SAFE SHOPPING FOR ALL



**#SAFESHOPPING4ALL**



**#WearAMask2StayOpen**





# HILLARY JOHNS TRIAL LAWYER

PROFESSIONAL CIVIL TRIAL REPRESENTATION

OFFICES IN BEVERLY HILLS AND THE BAY AREA

## EXPERIENCE MATTERS

The attorneys at Hillary Johns, Trial Lawyer have decades of experience in civil trial representation. Our attorneys provide representation throughout California and in several states in the areas of.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- COVID-19 Compliance and back to work compliance
- Corporate Law and Compliance
- Employment Law Compliance
- Business Law and Litigation
- Defamation and Torts
- Entertainment Law
- employment law litigation
- Intellectual Property Law
- Estate Planning and Litigation
- Civil Litigation And Trial Representation
- Real Estate Transactions and Litigation
- Family Law
- Alternative Dispute Resolution

Ms. Johns is Licensed in California and in the District of Columbia

**CALL FOR YOUR CONSULTATION TODAY**

**(310) 492-4009**  
HJohnsesq@gmail.com  
www.HillaryTrialLawyer.com



This posting does not create an attorney client relationship or contractual agreement for legal services. This post, our websites, testimonials or online review or ratings should not be construed as legal advice or a guarantee of results in a particular matter. For specific legal advice, you should consult with legal counsel licensed in your state.

# VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR COLLABORATIVE

CONNECTING EMPLOYERS WITH VETERAN TALENT

NOVEMBER 12, 2020 | 10 AM - 3 PM

ARE YOU AN EMPLOYER LOOKING TO HIRE VETERANS  
OR OTHER SKILLED JOB SEEKERS? JOIN US FOR OUR  
VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR COLLABORATIVE!

REGISTER AT: [EVENTS.BIZZABO.COM/VETERANS](https://EVENTS.BIZZABO.COM/VETERANS)



CHAMBER  
of  
COMMERCE



Advocacy  
Economic  
Development  
&  
Government Affairs

*Join Us*



CHAMBER  
of  
COMMERCE

THE  
WORLD'S  
MOST  
EXCLUSIVE  
TEQUILA

100% BLUE AGAVE  
**ASOMBROSO**  
*Fine Tequilas*



please drink responsibly. you can also "join the club" at [atequila.com/agave-club](http://atequila.com/agave-club)

## Guest Speakers

Speakers are listed in alphabetical order.



### Ethan Bazarganfard

Co-Founder & Facilitator | Beverly Hills Incubator

Digital Marketing and Brand Strategy | Flighthouse

After graduating from the University of Southern California in 2018, Ethan pursued a career in brand strategy and marketing, constructing business and cultural initiatives for global brands, talent, and causes.



### Steve Bettini

Military Veterans Recruiter | Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Steve has 23 years of experience in healthcare as a recruiter and recruitment manager. Steve is also a Veteran, serving in the Army for 20 years in various positions, retiring as an E-8 (select) First Sergeant. Steve currently is the Military Veterans Recruiter at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, he started his current position in May of 2017. As the Military Veterans Recruiter Steve is responsible for external sourcing of Veterans, community outreach, compliance, and retention of the Veterans currently working for Cedars-Sinai. Prior to working at Cedars-Sinai, Steve worked at Kaiser Permanente for 15 years as a nurse recruiter and recruitment manager. Steve also worked for Providence Health System as the nursing recruitment manager for four years. Steve's military career included being trained as a combat heavy engineer and stationed at Ft Stewart Ga for five years, as well as serving overseas in Germany for five years. The last ten years of his career Steve was assigned to the Los Angeles Recruiting Command as a Station Commander, Senior Guidance Counselor, and First Sergeant.



## Thomas J. Blumenthal

President & CEO | GEARYS Beverly Hills

Thomas J. Blumenthal is one of the foremost curators of luxury in the country and a noted speaker on the history and trends of the luxury industry. For the past 17 years, he has served as President and CEO of GEARYS Beverly Hills, a Beverly Hills icon since 1930. Under his leadership, GEARYS has expanded its range of fine jewelry and home entertaining goods to include three Rolex Boutiques and the very first free-standing Patek Philippe Boutique in the United States. A native Angeleno, Blumenthal has served as president of the Rodeo Drive Committee for four years as well as the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce for two. He is the former Vice President of the Maple Counseling Center in Beverly Hills. In 2005, the Beverly Hills City Council presented him with the Pioneering Spirit Award for his significant contributions to the city. To this day, he actively supports the various community leaders and organizations in Beverly Hills. Throughout his career, Blumenthal has utilized his position as a respected businessman and prominent community figure to advance causes close to his heart and give back to the institutions that have helped make him the man he is today. Currently, Blumenthal serves as the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Mount St. Mary's University, where he has been involved since 2002. He continues to serve on numerous philanthropic boards and committees throughout California.



## Kathryn Busby

EVP | TriStar Television

Chair of the Board | BAFTA LA

Kathryn Busby is an American film and TV producer, and as of January 2020 was named Executive Vice President of TriStar Television, a division of Sony Pictures Television. Prior to her time at SPT, Busby spent time as TNT and TBS' VP of Original Programming, where she had a hand in developing and producing scripted originals including "Black Box," "Wedding Band" and "Sullivan & Son." She has also served as Senior VP of Production at New Line Cinema, executive producing the "Sex and the City" movie, and as Senior VP and Head of Development at Carsey Werner, overseeing "Grounded for Life." Busby started her career in TV as director of comedy development at Universal TV. She was elected chair of the board of directors of BAFTA Los Angeles in August of 2019.



## Scott Buss

CEO | Advent Jets

Tenacious, self-directed, and resourceful business development strategist with the ability to drive revenue missions via skillful sales techniques. Capable of harvesting speculative leads into highly lucrative deals through the establishment of a vast network of pivotal partnerships, business process outsourcing, astute marketing collaborations, and an eye on the operational bottom line. Notably accomplished in building and fortifying long-lasting client rapport through enduring trust, client service excellence, as well as communicating supreme command of products and services with reliability and precision. Inspire teams through enthusiasm and a wealth of expertise. Promote a culture of shared goals and success through training and hands-on guidance. I am an aviation expert that explores and connects the synergies between the private jet industry and the unlimited number of luxury lifestyle VIP brands. My strength and passion as a networking specialist is developing and merging new business ideas. I have a strong focus on sales and incorporate luxury travel & high end products into the private aviation space. In addition to aircraft and worldwide private jet charter sales, I love to create VIP experiences for HNW clients and businesses around the globe. I have lived my life and formed my business on TRUST and TRANSPARENCY. My career is a lifestyle never a job .... You can spend as much energy being negative as you can be being positive ... SO BE POSITIVE, AND PAY IT FORWARD!!!!



## Harry Campbell

Founder | The Rideshare Guy

Harry Campbell is the founder of The Rideshare Guy, a blog, podcast and Youtube channel for Uber and Lyft drivers and the author of The Rideshare Guide. Over the years, Harry has established himself as one of the leading rideshare industry experts with appearances in thousands of top media publications like The New York Times, CNN and NPR and his site is trafficked by hundreds of thousands of visitors every single month. In addition to the media side of the business, Harry and his team are active industry consultants, advisors and investors in the mobility space.



## Julio Cerne

Co-Founder & CEO | XrossWorld

Julio Cerne Chaves is the co-founder and CEO of Leben & Cerne Co. XrossWorld, an AdTech Influencer marketing platform for digital marketers formed in January 2018. Before relocating to the US from Australia, he successfully co-founded and managed three startups. His greatest achievement so far was a private education company called International College of Capoeira Pty Ltd where he and his team led the college to private acquisition. His tenure of 14 years as an entrepreneur has ventured him to build two startups and one not-for-profit organization. While his personal interests have included many fitness pursuits, one constant has been his dedication to the Brazilian Martial Art of Capoeira. What started as a hobby over 20 years ago developed into a passion that ignited his entrepreneurship. His life's journey has always been about finding a solution rather than focusing on the problem. Whenever he puts that practice into play, he achieves success. His solutions-centered approach will lead this new venture, the team and the customers to success.



## Sher Chaudhary

Co-Founder & Facilitator | Beverly Hills Incubator

Digital Marketing and Brand Strategy | Flighthouse

Sher helps build product and content strategies for global brands, talent, and causes. He holds degrees in applied mathematics and business from USC, where he presided over the University's entrepreneurship network.



## Fritz Coleman

### Southern California Broadcast Icon

Fritz Coleman was NBC4's weathercaster on the weekday editions of Channel 4 News airing at 5 and 11 PM. A Southern California broadcasting icon, he is well known for his sense of humor and extensive knowledge of weather. As a part of the longest-running evening news team, Coleman joined NBC4 in 1982 as the weekend weathercaster and moved to weekdays in 1984, and has since been named "Best Weathercaster" in nearly every major newspaper in Southern California. Coleman recently retired after serving the Southern California community for 39 years. He devotes much of his free time supporting events, frequently organizing evenings of entertainment to benefit local nonprofit organizations. Coleman has garnered several awards and honors for his dedication to community service including Humanitarian of the Year Awards from Shelter Partnership and the California Hospital Medical Center. The City of Los Angeles named Coleman a "Treasure of Los Angeles," and the United States House of Representatives gave him the Humanitarian of the Year Award for his fundraising efforts on behalf of the American Red Cross. Coleman moved to Los Angeles in 1980 from Buffalo, New York, where he worked as a radio personality and a stand-up comic at various clubs in California. He has made a number of appearances on the "Tonight Show" as well as worked on multiple series/specials that aired on NBC4 which earned him four Los Angeles area Emmy Awards. A Navy veteran, Coleman is originally from Philadelphia and attended Salem College in West Virginia and Temple University in Philadelphia where he studied radio, television and film.



## Jot Condie

### President & CEO | California Restaurant Association

Jot Condie joined the California Restaurant Association (CRA) in May of 1999 as the association's vice president of government affairs and public policy, serving as the restaurant industry's chief lobbyist in California. He was promoted to the position of president & chief executive officer on May 17, 2004. Before joining CRA, Jot was the legislative director for the California Manufacturer's Association, where he lobbied on behalf of California's Fortune 500 companies. He also served as the chief lobbyist for the Southern California Air Quality Alliance, a consortium of aerospace, manufacturing and high-tech companies with an interest in air quality regulation issues. Before joining the Manufacturer's Association, Jot worked in the State Capitol as staff director for Assistant Assembly Majority Leader, directing a staff of policy consultants and legislative aides. Prior to serving as staff director he was a legislative director for the Assembly Minority Whip and managed political campaigns in state legislative races. He is past president of the national Council of State Restaurants Associations, served as Vice Chairman of Operations for Visit California, served two terms as a Board of Director for the National Restaurant Association, and serves as a board adviser to the California State University Hospitality & Tourism Management Education Initiative.



## Qiana Conley

Executive Director | Recording Academy (Grammys) Los Angeles Chapter

Qiana Conley is the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Recording Academy/GRAMMYS working with the organization's largest chapter and some of today's most influential music creators and professionals in guiding event programming, Membership & Board engagement and national & local Advocacy efforts for ¼ of the entire academy membership body. Through partnerships with GRAMMYS on the Hill, MusiCares and the GRAMMY Museum Foundation event sponsors Netflix, Shake Shack, etc. She's been a significant addition to the Membership and Industry Relations team, the champions of today's new, relevant, diverse and inclusive membership. Conley began in music in 1999 at Epic Records in Promotions/A&R while contributing to iconic pop and urban album projects and then as Director of Creative/A&R, Television and Film, she worked for publishers Notting Hill Music Publishing (UK) and ole (Canada) and with Simon Cowell's record labels Syco Records/Sony Music. In 2010 she founded cue the creatives where she began Music Supervising, and later executive producing and directing content and media projects for media companies such as Nickelodeon, Lifetime, and Lionsgate. Qiana is known amongst her peers for her innovative and unique connection to talent, media and professionals across genres, media platforms, and music markets.



## Jordyn Dahl

Small Business Editor | LinkedIn News

Jordyn is an award-winning journalist who spent the past five years living in Beijing, China working as a reporter and in the foreign policy space, writing for Forbes and MIT Technology Review. She now focuses on small businesses as part of an international reporting team at LinkedIn.



## Deborah Deras

**Keynote Speaker, Entrepreneur, Author, Marketer, Results Coach and Social Media Strategist**

Deborah Deras is one of the top Latina speakers and influencers in North America. As a sought-after keynote speaker, she has spoken on stages for large corporations such as NBC, General Electric, J.P. Morgan, British Petroleum, Procter & Gamble, Macy's, Kaiser Permanente and State Farm Insurance. In 2012, the eWomen's Network placed her in the top 15 speakers of North America and Hispanic Lifestyle awarded her the title of Latina Influencer of 2017. She is also a past nominee for Latina Business of the Year for both the Latin Business Association and National Latina Business Women's Association. She was presented in 2016, with a Latina Leadership award by New York Life Insurance. In 2018, she received a Women of Influence Award in Ontario, California at the All Women Rock conference. As a highly endorsed entrepreneurial educator through the Small Business Association, she has touched the lives of hundreds of small business owners by consulting and training them on marketing strategies that drive traffic to their business and maximize their sales and profits in the process. She has facilitated workshops at El Camino College, Santa Monica College and taught for 16 years as an adjunct professor at the University of Phoenix.



## Hayley Elwood

**Team Reporter | Los Angeles Chargers**

Hayley Elwood is in her seventh season with the Chargers and works as the franchise's team reporter. Her duties include video and editorial work for the team's various platforms, hosting the Playmakers podcast and acting as the team's preseason sideline reporter. Additionally, Hayley has worked two Super Bowls as a host/reporter for the NFL and was the in-arena host for the Los Angeles Lakers for Kobe Bryant's final season.



## **Justin Erbacci**

**CEO | Los Angeles World Airports**

Mr. Justin Erbacci serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). He has been with LAWA since October 2016, and was appointed as CEO by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti in June 2020. As CEO, Mr. Erbacci has oversight of Los Angeles International (LAX) and Van Nuys (VNY) general aviation airports. He leads the team responsible for transforming LAX into a world-class airport for the modern traveler. He manages more than \$14 billion in programs to revolutionize how guests access the airport, to modernize all of LAX's terminals and to significantly improve operations, and the overall guest experience. He also oversees programs to bring innovation and sustainability to VNY, one of the nation's busiest general aviation airports. Mr. Erbacci oversees the largest airport police force in the United States, and works with his public safety team and outside government stakeholders to ensure the protection of the public and property. As Interim CEO for the first six months of 2020, he guided LAWA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also led the formulation of creative solutions to the significant fiscal pressures due to the dramatic downturn in travel. Mr. Erbacci previously served as LAWA's Chief Operating Officer, and was responsible for LAWA's multibillion-dollar modernization program. He first joined LAWA in October 2016 as Chief Innovation and Technology Officer (CITO) and Deputy Executive Director. Mr. Erbacci brings more than 20 years of experience in global executive leadership from inside and outside of the aviation industry.



## **Noah Etessami**

**Chair | Beverly Hills Incubator**

Noah Etessami is the current Chair of the Beverly Hills Incubator. While a member of the Next Beverly Hills Committee, Noah helped form the Incubator initiative in 2018, and has been a mentor/facilitator ever since. Noah was born and raised in Beverly Hills. He is a USC Alumni, and works in venture capital.



## Rachel Fine

### Executive Director & CEO | Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

Rachel Fine is the Managing Director for the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. Prior to assuming her position 2015, Rachel was Senior Consultant at the DeVos Institute of Arts Management. Drawing upon an 18-year career in the arts as a versatile administrator, educator, and fundraiser, as well as a professional classical musician, Fine served as Executive Director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO), establishing LACO as orchestra-in-residence for the Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA in an ongoing and mutually beneficial collaboration; successfully shepherding LACO through the challenges of the Great Recession; and expanding the reach of the Orchestra with prestigious debuts beyond Los Angeles. In addition, she served in leadership positions at such institutions as the Los Angeles Children's Chorus, where she helped found the Young Men's Ensemble, a rare choral group for young men with changing voices, for The Juilliard School, Santa Fe Opera, and the Aspen Music Festival, as well as the renowned San Francisco-based period ensemble Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. Fine includes Management Fellowship at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Leadership L.A., and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission's Arts Leadership Initiative among her many accomplishments. She is a founding mentor of the Los Angeles Emerging Arts Leaders' mentorship program.



## Noelle Freeman

### Vice Chair | Next Beverly Hills Committee

Noelle Freeman is a digital marketing expert and the founder of The DMS Agency. After earning degrees in advertising, public relations and communication studies from Chapman University, Noelle started her social media marketing career in the film industry where she executed digital marketing campaigns for major motion pictures such as Safe Haven starring Julianne Hough, Paranoia starring Liam Hemsworth and Harrison Ford, and The Family starring Robert De Niro and Michelle Pfeiffer, among others. Noelle has also worked with major brands such as Coca-Cola, Virgin America and Zappos, building strategic online partnerships for theatrical campaigns. In 2014, Noelle founded The DMS Agency which specializes in building brands by curating their online presence. The DMS Agency has a diverse portfolio of clients ranging from beauty brands like Neutrogena to social activism causes such as Autism Awareness and The Miss California Organization. The DMS Agency is based in Beverly Hills, California with work featured in Seventeen Magazine, Yahoo, Business Insider and MSN. Noelle plays an active role in the community and serves as the Vice-Chair for Next Beverly Hills, a committee of talented young leaders chartered by the Mayor and the City of Beverly Hills to engage millennial residents through innovative initiatives that address their lifestyle, economic and civic needs, and to inspire them to make Beverly Hills a better place for all. In 2021 she will join the Beverly Hills Human Relations Commission as their youngest commissioner. Noelle is also the host of The Social Weekly, a podcast that provides social media insight and advice to industry professionals from around the world.



## Mayor Lester Friedman

Mayor | City of Beverly Hills

Mayor Lester Friedman was elected to the Beverly Hills Council in 2017. Previously he served on the Beverly Hills Traffic and Parking Commission from 2011 through 2017 and served as its Chair in 2015. He was also Chair of the Beverly Hills Taxi Review Committee and served on the Blue Ribbon Commission for Santa Monica Blvd Reconstruction. He is a 2009 graduate of Team Beverly Hills. Professionally, Mr. Friedman is an attorney. He also serves as a mediator and Judge Pro-tem. He is a past Chairperson of the State Bar of California, Board of Legal Specialization and served on that commission from 2009 through 2014. He serves as a Director and Management Chair of the California Applicant's Attorneys Association. He has been selected as a Super Lawyer from 2005 through 2020 and named a Best Lawyer from 2009 through 2020. He is a graduate of UCLA and attended Southwestern School of Law. Mr. Friedman was a staff member of the Coach John Wooden UCLA Basketball teams from 1968 through 1973 during which time they won five straight NCAA National Basketball Championships. He has served as the Official Scorer for UCLA Men's Basketball at Pauley Pavilion since 1995. He also is the Official Scorer for the PAC-12 Conference Basketball Tournament held each March in Las Vegas.



## Peter Garland

Owner | Porta Via Restaurants

Peter Garland left behind a burgeoning career in public relations to open Porta Via. Porta Via, which means “to go” in Italian, began in 1993 as a casual cafe in a 600 square foot space on the 400 block of North Canon Drive, which at the time was the quietest street in the Beverly Hills business district. The original idea was to serve the clients of the four celebrity hairstylists on the block. The concept of serving simply prepared food using the best of locally sourced ingredients took off. While the restaurant has its fair share of celebrity customers, all clients are treated with equal respect. It has proven to be a successful formula that has helped Porta Via expand twice into a full-service restaurant with a thriving neighborhood bar, which led the charge to turn North Canon Drive into a thriving restaurant row. Porta Via is a neighborhood restaurant at heart, and was honored to be one of a handful of restaurants to be invited by Rick Caruso (the Grove) to be part of his Palisades Village project in the Palisades. Expansion continues, as a third Porta Via location recently opened in Calabasas.



## Katy Gaspar

Grammy U Student | Belmont University

Katy Gaspar is a Los Angeles native currently studying Music Business and Legal Studies as a Junior at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. She is an active member of several student organizations on campus including Grammy U, Service Corps, CMA EDU, Belmont University Pre-Law Society, Young Entertainment Society, Belmont University Copyright Society and Women in Entertainment. Katy has been an integral member of the Quay Entertainment team as an intern since January of 2020. She plans to attend law school after graduation, and looks forward to a career in the entertainment industry.



## Larry Green

Managing Director | L Green Investment & Development

L Green Investment & Development's Managing Director is Larry Green. A well-known and respected industry expert, Green has over 30 years of experience in investing, developing, and managing real estate throughout the United States and internationally. Green has a long history of creating significant value investing in and developing single tenant, grocery anchored, boutique & regional mixed use properties. He has strong relationships with many local, national and international brokers and tenants. He also has worked extensively with private & institutional investors. For decades he also led the US Development business for Westfield (Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield), where he helped grow their portfolio from a handful of properties to one of the most valuable real estate portfolios in the world. He played a critical role in the transformation of the company's award winning properties including Westfield Century City, Topanga, Culver City, UTC, Mission Valley, Roseville, San Francisco Center, & Valley Fair. Larry Green is a graduate of the University of Southern California and a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI). He has been an active participant in a variety of charitable organizations and LA public schools. Today he serves on the Board of Directors of Southern California Special Olympics, LA Sports & Entertainment Commission, LA Chamber of Commerce and the US Maccabiah Games.



## Danny He

Founder & CEO | Soapbox Inc.

Danny He is an established professional across multiple businesses and industries. He was a partner and general manager at a Michelin recommended restaurant in New York City, a client executive for IBM serving the Walt Disney Company, a digital product manager for Royal Caribbean, and an operations officer for a consumer packaged goods group. He is the founder and CEO of Soapbox Inc, an e-commerce management software that helps make selling online easier for businesses of all sizes. Soapbox also recently launched their 3PL (3rd Party Logistics) managed services offering, so e-commerce has never been easier or more manageable!



## Brian Hernandez

SVP Business Banking Market Leader | U.S. Bank

Brian Hernandez serves as the Business Banking Market Leader for the Greater Los Angeles area overseeing more than 60 full time employees with a focus on small businesses revenue sizes up to \$25 million. Brian has more than 13 years of banking and financial services industry experience, beginning his career with U.S. Bank in 2009 as a Business Banking Specialist after a long career in the finance and lending market, including mortgage refinancing and financial advising. Throughout his tenure with U.S. Bank, Hernandez has garnered expertise navigating different roles and strives to lead his team with operational excellence and customer-focused strategy. He is looking forward to growing market share within the greater Los Angeles area with a heavy concentration on commercial and industrial lending. Brian is active in the community volunteering with Junior Achievement, PreciousLife Shelter and Giving Children Hope. He earned a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Cal State San Bernardino and is a previous winner of 5 Annual Pinnacle Awards. When not working he enjoys watching the Los Angeles Angels and Los Angeles Lakers, as well as spending time with his wife, three children, and pets.



## Cesar Hernandez

VP Business Banking Sales Manager | U.S. Bank

Cesar Hernandez serves as the U.S. Bank Business Banking Vice president for the North Los Angeles area overseeing a team of Business Bankers with a focus on small businesses with revenue sizes up to \$25 million. Cesar has more than 20 years of banking and financial services industry experience, beginning his career with Downey Savings & Loan in 1999 as a Personal Banker. He has held positions as Branch Manager, Business Banker, and Loan Officer. Throughout his tenure with U.S. Bank, Cesar has garnered expertise navigating different roles and strives to lead his team with operational excellence and customer-focused strategy. He is looking forward to growing market share within the Northern Los Angeles area with a heavy concentration on commercial and industrial lending. Cesar is active in the community, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, Junior Achievement, and the Los Angeles Mission. He is a current Board Member of the U.S. Bank Los Angeles Development Network, and Vice President of the Nosotros Latino Business Resource Group, where they engage employees through volunteerism and development opportunities. When not working he enjoys playing sports, rooting for the Dodgers, as well as actively supporting his two daughters, one is a dancer the other a basketball player.



## Tracy Hernandez

CEO | Los Angeles Business Federation

Tracy Hernandez is the Founding Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed), a nonprofit, massive grassroots alliance of 180 top business networks that counts among its more than 400,000 business members a diverse demographic, industry sector, and geographic array of small and large employers of over 3.5 million people in Southern California. BizFed works to advocate for positive public policy, legislation, manageable regulations, taxes and fees, and foster business owner civic and community engagement. In addition, Ms. Hernandez is President of IMPOWER Group, Inc., a business advisory company specializing in startups or strategic transition utilizing unlikely partnerships to achieve greater impact. During the past 17 years in California, Tracy has given back to the Los Angeles community by contributing her time, talents, and expertise to a broad range of local civic, educational, and charity organizations. She has served on the Board of Directors of MEND (Meeting Each Need with Dignity), LA's Best after school program, Valley Presbyterian Hospital, The American Institute of Architects, and Project Grad. She is currently active on the Board of Directors at Woodbury University Business School, Valley Economic Alliance and the Long Beach Symphony.



## Todd Johnson

President & CEO | Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

After nearly 10 years of casual dining management experience, in 1998, Johnson joined Lawry's Restaurants where he learned the ins and outs of the upscale dining environment. He was promoted to General Manager at the Tam O'Shanter Inn in 2001. One year later Johnson returned to Lawry's The Prime Rib, Beverly Hills as General Manager and served in that role until 2011. After 25 years of managing day-to-day restaurant operations, Todd Johnson used his culinary service experience and knowledge to lead The Lawry's Carvery division as the Director of Operations. As the newest concept in the more than 70-year-old company, Johnson excelled in creating systems, maximizing efficiency and developing a team of professionals who could provide a prime dining experience in a quick service setting. In 2014, he joined Grill Concepts where he saw growth opportunity for himself and the restaurant group's multiple concepts. Throughout his restaurant career, Todd Johnson played an active role with many business associations although the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce was always a top priority. Because of his passion for the Chamber, Johnson joined the Board of Directors in 2003. He served as Chairman of the Board in 2010, and played an instrumental role in leading the organization through a staff restructuring in 2010. Johnson continued to serve on the Board in various capacities including CFO and Restaurant Committee Chair until 2015 at which time he accepted the offer to lead the Chamber as the President and CEO. In this role he is responsible for leading the day-to-day operations of the organization, the third largest standalone Chamber in Los Angeles, comprised of more than 820 members with an operating budget of nearly \$1.5M.



## Spencer Kallick

Partner | Allen Matkins

Spencer B. Kallick transacts land use entitlements and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance for large scale development projects, employing an astute combination of legal, policy, and practical knowledge. His experience entitling all real estate products is matched only by his long-standing city, county, and state relationships. A former assistant city attorney handling land use matters for a number of California cities, including Beverly Hills, Manhattan Beach, South El Monte, and Indio, Spencer's shared understanding of the process gives him an advantage when advocating on behalf of his clients' projects. Problems get resolved faster, and entitlements go smoother when all parties speak the same language and understand each other's point of view.



## Stan Kasten

President & Owner | Los Angeles Dodgers

For four decades, Stan Kasten has been a highly respected sports figure and developed a reputation for creating winning franchises, relying on three pillars – scouting and player development, enhancing the fan experience and community outreach – to establish franchises built for long-term success on and off the field. Since Kasten became the Dodgers' President and CEO on April 30, 2012, the team has topped the Majors in attendance each season while continuously making improvements to Dodger Stadium to keep the league's third-oldest stadium among the best facilities in baseball. The franchise's unprecedented success under Kasten led Major League Baseball to award the Dodgers the 2020 All-Star Game, bringing the league's jewel event back to Los Angeles for the first time since 1980. Kasten has been a member of numerous MLB, NBA and NHL ownership committees during his professional career and is also a former trustee of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. In 1999, Kasten became the first sports figure to hold the title of president of three different teams in three different major sports simultaneously, doing so with MLB's Atlanta Braves, the NBA's Atlanta Hawks and the NHL's Atlanta Thrashers. Kasten, the Los Angeles Sports Council's 2013 Executive of the Year, is on the board of directors for the LA84 Foundation as well as LA2028, the group organizing 2028 Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Games.



## Thea Knobel

VP Platform & Marketing | GSV Ventures

Thea Knobel is the Vice President of Platform and Marketing at GSV Ventures. She is focused on the investor and startup community, brand strategy, strategic portfolio support for founders, and GSV backed initiatives like the ASU+GSV Summit. Thea has venture capital investment experience at 2 VC funds and the Techstars LA Accelerator. At Techstars Thea worked on the venture team for the LA Accelerator sourcing and evaluating startups. She also was a Marketing Associate in the program working with founders on designing their communications strategies.



## Frederik Kofoed

Sales Operations Lead | Common Living

Frederik is currently the Sales Operations Lead at Common Living, a venture-backed startup in the Real Estate property management space. Frederik previously worked as an Associate at Techstars, and holds a Master's in Finance from USC.



## Michael Lushing

Principal | Lushing Realty Advisors

Michael G. Lushing is a third generation Los Angeles real estate professional and prides himself in creating long symbiotic relationships with his clients that would make his father and grandfather proud. Mr. Lushing's niche and expertise is focused on working with regional, national and international retailers' and expansion plans and strategies throughout the United States. He is equally comfortable working with a local retailer looking to grow their brand as he is working with an international retailer looking to create a strategy for a national expansion plan. He also represents landlords, on a select basis, looking to fill their storefronts with quality retailers that have the financial resources and understanding to succeed with their businesses. Mr. Lushing currently represents retailers such as MUJI, Catimini, FROST Gelato, Pussy and Pooch and Sunsations. In addition, he is working to fill a flagship retail location on the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica. He represented MUJI with both their Hollywood and Santa Monica locations, Catimini with their Beverly Hills, Honolulu and Seattle locations, and is completing deals with FROST Gelato in Dallas, Austin, Houston, San Diego and Orange County, and Pussy and Pooch's Beverly Hills flagship location. Over the course of Mr. Lushing's thirty year career in retail real estate, he has worked in-house for such prominent REIT's as Westfield, Taubman, General Growth and Vornado. He is a graduate of Beverly Hills High School, California State University, Northridge and he recently completed a Master's program in Psychology from Antioch University. Mr. Lushing currently sits on the boards of The Rotary Club of Beverly Hills and The Maple Counseling Center in Beverly Hills.



## Anish Melwani

Chairman & CEO | LVMH (Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton) North America

Anish Melwani as Chairman & CEO, LVMH for North America oversees and coordinates the activities of the LVMH Group across 70+ Maisons. Prior to joining LVMH in 2015, Mr. Melwani was a Senior Partner in the New York Office of McKinsey and Company global management consulting, where he co-led the Global Strategy & Corporate Finance practice and supported clients across industries. Mr. Melwani is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Board of the United Way of New York City where he serves on the Marketing Committee, and the National Retail Federation's Board of Directors. He holds a BA in Economics from Harvard University. LVMH is a family-run multinational corporation and conglomerate headquartered in Paris, France and is the only group present in all five major sectors of the luxury market; Wine & Spirits, Fashion & Leather Goods, Perfumes & Cosmetics and Selective Retailing. LVMH is known as the world leader of luxury.



## Rachel Michelin

President | California Retailers Association

Rachel Michelin is President of the California Retailers Association (CRA), the most significant voice representing the retail industry in California's public policy arena, at the State Capitol, in City Halls and with regulatory bodies across the state. Michelin oversees a diverse board and membership representing retail throughout the state and nation from small brick and mortar, to franchises to national retailers and on-line merchants. Rachel has led associations for over 20 years with visionary leadership including strategic growth and engagement, increasing revenue, developing partnerships, statewide influence and public awareness. Rachel has demonstrated success through a strong bipartisan leadership network she has built with key influencers in the public and private sectors. Rachel was reappointed by Governor Brown to the State Board of Optometry, where she has served since 2014. Prior to California Retailers, Michelin led California Women Lead as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director since 2002. She also served as Program and Policy Director for the California Elected Women's Association for Education and Research (CEWAER), Communications Director and District Director for members of the State Assembly. Rachel is a Senior Fellow of the American Leadership Forum - Mountain Valley Chapter and received her Bachelor of Arts from the California State University, Fullerton majoring in Communications - Journalism and minor in Political Science.



## Amir Nematipour

Executive Sous Chef | Beverly Wilshire Hotel, a Four Seasons Hotel

"What I always try to instill in my cooks is that you can taste the love that was put into a dish while it was being prepared," says Amir Nematipour. "To me it is one of the most fundamental points to cook with passion and love, and that really does translate to delicious food." Born in Tehran and raised in Amsterdam, Nematipour's passion for food first began at the age of five when his grandmother exposed him to Persian Cuisine. He quickly moved up the ranks to become Sous Chef of their flagship property, the Jumeirah Beach Hotel. During this time, his passion for culinary continued to blossom and he expanded his repertoire by studying the art of Japanese cuisine extensively. After five successful years in UAE, Nematipour moved his career across the world to California where he would take the role of Executive Sous Chef at Brentwood Country Club and then, Banquet Chef at Beverly Wilshire. Nematipour is actively involved in setting up a non-profit company with a few other Chefs and Restaurateurs in the area to preserve and transport leftover food from hotels and restaurants in Los Angeles to homeless shelters. With over 18 years of experience in the field, he strives to instill classic techniques to produce an array of fresh seasonal food, while never losing the love and passion behind the plate. "I also try to educate my team that recipes are merely guidelines at best; you need to add the final finishing touch."



## Ivan Nikkhoo

Co-Founder | Fusion LA Accelerator

With over 36 years of experience in various senior capacities internationally, Ivan brings deep domain expertise in software and SaaS, eCommerce, marketplaces, platforms, and internet. He has an extensive background in venture capital, private equity, operations & management, sales & marketing, and tech M&A. He has a strong global network with longstanding VC, PEG, and CEO level relationships and regularly hosts a series of Tech CEO Dinners in several cities around the world where he brings together CEOs, financial sponsors, PEGs, and industry executives to discuss the latest trends and developments.



## Curt Northrup

Real Estate Agent | Douglas Elliman Beverly Hills

Curt Northrup is a Real Estate Agent with Douglas Elliman in Beverly Hills. Curt's passion for intensive research, development focused knowledge and sophisticated market analysis give all his clients confidence their choices are best of breed. And while many clients are simply looking for a home for their family, they all want strong investments that pay dividends now and for many years to come. Leveraging his vast network of relationships in entertainment and real estate, he has built an impressive client list of former colleagues and sophisticated buyers and sellers. His career began 25 years ago with the William Morris Agency, which laid the foundation for a successful rise in the entertainment business, including his producing over 300 hours of prime time television and handling alternative programming for NBC. While his day to day as a producer was creating programming and producing hit shows, his real passion was real estate: buying, developing and selling properties for profit. Those interests and a desire for a deeper knowledge of the property business led to a complete transition to real estate in 2013. Curt is a member of the Beverly Hills Rotary, the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce, The International Committee for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and is the exclusive corporate member of the Estate Managers Coalition. His hobbies include mountain biking, music, and Norse mythology. He currently lives in Brentwood with his wife, Olga Lorencin, and his daughter Mila.



## Derrick Ontiveros

### Chair | Next Beverly Hills Committee

Derrick Ontiveros is a software engineer based in Beverly Hills. With over 20 years of software development experience, Derrick has created social networks, software systems, and mobile applications used every day by millions of people. His work and businesses have been featured in The New York Times, Forbes, Variety, and TechCrunch. Derrick currently serves as CTO of Mia Share, an innovative startup providing alternative financing via income share agreements (ISAs) for people pursuing higher education. He is also a partner at JobStats, a software company producing unique software solutions to help managers and business owners track and foster positive employee performance. Derrick is the current Chairman of Next Beverly Hills, a City committee chartered by the Mayor and the City of Beverly Hills to engage residents between the ages of 25 and 45 through innovative initiatives that address their lifestyle, economic, and civic needs.



## Sennen Pamich

### President | Coty Professional Beauty and Retail Hair, North America

President of Coty Professional Beauty and Retail Hair North America, Sennen Pamich is a 25-year beauty industry veteran with a wealth of international experience across professional and consumer beauty businesses. He began his career at P&G, followed by assignments at Johnson & Johnson and Bulgari in Europe and Asia. In 2009, Sennen moved to the U.S. with The Colomer Group, where he led the company's Professional Division for the Americas. He took on the role of Global President for Revlon Professional Beauty following the merger of the two companies in 2013, adding retail brands to his remit in early 2017. After a stint in private equity, specifically in the beauty space, Sennen joined Coty in 2018, and leads an organization of hundreds out of the Calabasas, California, headquarters as well as from hubs in New York and Toronto, marketing an iconic portfolio of beauty brands such as Wella Professionals, Clairol and OPI. Italian-born and educated in the UK and the US, Sennen is a passionate promoter of the transformational power of beauty for professionals and consumers alike.



## Dan Pfister

### Founder | Strategic WinBack Services

Dan Pfister is a partner at The Business Source Corp. They've generated over 50,000 customers and have worked with brands like Fidelity Investments and Tony Robbins. Dan built a customer win back process they've used since 2016 and based on the success of it, he founded Strategic WinBack Services.



## Drew Planting

Founder & Managing Partner | GPI

Mr. Planting is a Founder of and Managing Partner at GPI. Prior to establishing GPI, Mr. Planting was a Senior Partner at the J.H. Snyder Company, where he created and directed the company's value-added acquisitions division, which provided a profitable element to the firm's already robust development activities. While at the J.H. Snyder, Mr. Planting was responsible for identifying and acquiring over one million square feet of commercial office and retail. Under his management, these assets were rehabilitated and stabilized, and then either exited or refinanced for maximum equity returns. Prior to joining the J.H. Snyder Company in 2001, Mr. Planting was a partner at Maguire Partners where he headed the development, leasing, and management of the 3.6 million square foot commercial component of Playa Vista (part of the 1,000 acre master-planned mixed-use development of the former Howard Hughes aircraft plant). Prior to Maguire Partners, he was a Director at Cushman & Wakefield where he started his real estate career. During his 16 year tenure at Cushman & Wakefield, he headed institutional accounts for a number of Fortune 1000 companies including Chubb & Son, Dow Jones, Viacom, MTV, Pacific Bell, Texaco, and Interpublic Group. He was among the top one percent of brokers and negotiated some of the largest leasing deals in the country at the time including the AT&T Center (200,000 square feet), MTV's western regional headquarters (100,000 square feet), and Dow Jones's administration facility in Midtown Manhattan (300,000 square feet). Mr. Planting received his B.A. in Economics with Honors from the University of California, Berkeley. He is an active member of the Urban Land Institute and the International Council of Shopping Centers. He is a guest lecturer at the UCLA Anderson School of Management and the USC Lusk Center for Real Estate Development.



## Aaron Raimi

BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant

Co-Founder | MeetJew

My name is Aaron Raimi and I'm the founder and CEO of MeetJew. I'm 24 years old, I live in San Diego, and I go to UCSD. I founded MeetJew when the Quarantine began to create long-term relationships, community, and unity amongst Jews in a fun, positive, and inclusive environment.



## Philip Recht

Partner | Mayer Brown

The Managing Partner of Mayer Brown's Los Angeles office and co-leader of the firm's Public Policy, Regulatory & Political Law practice, Phil Recht represents clients in legislative, regulatory, enforcement and litigation matters before and involving federal, state and local governments. He also handles grants, approvals, permits and other government transactions. He has particular expertise in transportation, infrastructure, tribal gaming, health care, trade association, government contracts, and election law matters. Legal 500 ranks Phil as a "Leading Lawyer" for Government Relations in the United States. He was named in 2019 to The National Law Journal's inaugural list of "Government Relations Trailblazers." Phil also has extensive government experience. Prior to joining the firm, he served as Chief Counsel (1994-95) and Deputy Administrator (1995-99) for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the US Department of Transportation. He also worked as a Legislative Assistant in the Office of US Rep. David L. Cornwell (Ind.) (1976-78), as a consultant with the Joint Center for Political Studies in Washington, DC (1975) and as a Legislative Aide with the Office of US Rep. John Moakley (Mass.) (1975).



## Tara Riceberg

Owner | Tweak & Tesoro

Tara Riceberg's introduction to the design and entertaining world came through Tesoro, her family's home design store that specialized in one-of-a-kind, handcrafted items from artisans around the world. For nearly ten years, Tara showcased talented houseware designers, advised customers on home décor, entertaining, and gifts, and traveled abroad sourcing stunning one-of-a-kind items. Tara not only styled homes for clients in Los Angeles, New York and Washington D.C. but also has had a pop-up retail store in Los Angeles for eight years. Tara then combined her passions of home design, entertaining and travel when she opened TWEAK. Being selected as one of the 50 best and brightest US retail stores of 2008 according to Home Accents Today earned her a seat on their retail advisory board. TWEAK has been named to several Best of LA lists and is featured annually on LA's number one morning news show, KTLA Morning News. Tara is a NY NOW retail advisory board alumna. She's been a contributing editor to GDA Magazine and has been awarded several Retailer Excellence Awards. She has lobbied Congress on behalf of the National Retail Federation and is often quoted in various news publications, like WSJ, on tariffs. Tara subscribes to the "less is more" concept of retailing—you don't have to offer everything under the sun; you just have to offer the best! She hopes her customers come happy, and leave even happier. Only then is her job done.



## Ryan Ross

BHI Spring 2020 Cohort Participant  
CEO & Co-Founder | Play TopDog Inc.

Ryan Ross is a go-getter with the interpersonal skills to motivate a team and the drive to turn a vision into reality. He has a proven background in leadership and entrepreneurship. With Phillip Oh, Ryan founded TopDog, a platform that enables video game players (gamers) of all skill-levels to turn their hobby into earnings. B.S., University of Oregon.



## John Rossant

CEO | CoMotion

John Rossant personally leads the CoMotion team. He is the Founder and Chairman of the New Cities Foundation, a major global non-profit institution dedicated to improving the quality of life and work in cities. He previously led the team producing the famous World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland every January and has been the producer of major World Economic Forum conferences in China, Latin America, Southeast Asia and Africa. He has also played key roles in Monaco, with the Monaco Media Forum and the ongoing Prince's Roundtable on Philanthropy. In 2010, French President Nicolas Sarkozy asked John to organize the first global summit on the future of the Internet, the e-G8. John has worked with heads of state and government and leading CEOs from around the world. John is the co-author of the forthcoming Hop, Skip, Go - How the Mobility Revolution is Transforming Our Lives, HarperCollins.



## Michele Ruiz

### Emmy Award Winning TV News Anchor & Best Selling Author

Among her many pursuits, Michele Ruiz is a serial entrepreneur, bilingual communication specialist, author and keynote speaker. Her passions include: unveiling and mitigating unconscious bias, exploring technology, and developing and investing in new business ventures. Additionally, Michele is fervently immersed in empowerment, diversity and inclusion, as well as change management communication strategies. Michele's several ventures include co-founding BiasSync, a science-based technology company designed to help organizations effectively assess and manage unconscious bias in the work environment. Michele is also the founder & CEO of Ruiz Strategies, which develops and executes transformational communications strategies for major companies around the globe. The consulting firm is responsible for helping organizations maximize today's most powerful and effective communication strategies to effect meaningful change management and employee engagement to enhance diversity and inclusion goals. Michele's deep entrepreneurial experience has been foundational in her quest to educate, inspire and empower business owners. Her online mentoring program, Possibility Architect, is for female entrepreneurs determined to scale their businesses over \$1 million in annual revenues with corporate and government clients and is based on her own experience and success.



## Blair Schlecter

### VP Economic Development & Government Affairs | Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

Blair Schlecter is the Vice President of Economic Development and Government Affairs for the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce. In his role, Blair advocates for businesses in the Beverly Hills area on a variety of policy matters at the local, state and federal level and plans and executes a number of economic development efforts to attract and retain businesses and ensure a vibrant economy. Blair is also deeply involved in urban planning and transportation issues, including serving as Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee of the Los Angeles County Business Federation and involvement in organizations such as LAEDC's e4 Mobility Alliance.



## Kelly Scott

Partner | Ervin Cohen & Jessup

Kelly O. Scott, Esq., head of ECJ's Employment Law Department, has practiced law for more than 30 years. His experience includes representation of employers in all types of employment matters, including class actions, wrongful termination, discrimination and harassment, retaliation, wage and hour claims and advice and/or training for compliance with various employment laws. A distinguished thought leader, Mr. Scott has been quoted by a wide variety of news organizations, including CNN Entertainment, the Associated Press, Thomson Reuters, and E! News. He is also a published author and frequent speaker on employment law matters. Southern California Super Lawyers® has recognized Mr. Scott every year since 2005, and he maintains a Martindale-Hubbell peer review rating of AV Preeminent. He is an adjunct professor at Azusa Pacific University and has served as Chairman of the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.



## Ann Shatilla

Emmy Award Winning TV News Producer, Luxury Expert & Strategic Communications PR Consultant  
Emmy Award winning national and international TV news producer, former news anchorwoman, veteran luxury lifestyles business media expert and Strategic Communications and Crisis Management consulting expert for luxury businesses, Ann Shatilla reports on the latest news, business trends, and tips seen in luxury retail, hospitality and lifestyle topics daily at the world news level. Her business PR & Marketing consulting is through her L.A. Media & Business Boot Camp. Topics include, but are not limited to: State of Luxury Business as of June 2020; Open for Business in a Pandemic; Stepby-Step Insider Tips on RE-opening More Safely Than You Already Just Did; Creating On Site "Code of Safety Ethics"- How to Do It Word-for-Word and Then How To Create Public Awareness for it; Flex Business-How It's Done to Immediately Pivot, Refocus, Grow Again and Mitigate Risk; Plus Much More. How to Find the New News Angles to Promote Your Business in this Times of Major News and Then How to Pitch to the Public and Media; Why "Balancing" and "Finessing" the Messaging is Mandatory Right Now when Marketing, Much More Than You Realize; How To Do It Marketing and PR for Your Business , the New Way in This New Uncertain Landscape....Because the Entire Promotional Rule Book of PR Just Changed Completely; Tips on How to Set Up and Execute Luxury Standard Zoom Meeting Calls; Making Sure You and Your Company Holds Up the Luxury Standard When You're on Camera Representing Your Business Virtually. Insider Tips on Looking and Sounding Just Like You are There.  
Contact: [CovidTVNewsShow@gmail.com](mailto:CovidTVNewsShow@gmail.com)



## Mark Slavkin

### Director of Education | Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

Mark Slavkin is Director of Education for the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills. The Wallis is dedicated to engaging arts learners of all ages, from K-12 school partnerships, to courses for young artists, to a range of activities to engage adults as audience members and as art-makers. Mark served as Vice President for Education at the Music Center: Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County from 2001-14. He directed a wide range of programs and services that helped advance arts education in schools and communities across Los Angeles County. He also played a key role in the development of the Los Angeles County Arts Education Collective. He continues to co-chair the Leadership Council for this initiative. Mark chairs the Board of Directors for the California Alliance for Arts Education, the statewide policy and advocacy organization.



## Mario Solis

### Weekend Sports Anchor and Sports Reporter | NBC4 Southern California / KNBC

Mario Solis is NBC4 Southern California's award-winning weekend sports anchor and weekday sports reporter. Solis has more than two decades of sports broadcasting experience. He has covered nearly every major sporting event, including the Olympic Games and the World Cup. In addition to his duties as sports anchor and reporter at NBC4, Solis is also recognized as the Spanish-language announcer for HBO's "World Championship Boxing" and play-by-play announcer for the Los Angeles Rams on ESPN Radio 1330 AM. Prior to joining NBC4, Solis worked as a sportscaster for the Telemundo Network and its owned Southern California station KVEA 52. He also was an executive producer and host on several network and local programs, including "Marcador Final," which became the longest running and highest rated sports wrap-up show in Los Angeles. During his career, Solis has fronted a number of sports-related radio shows and has picked up the microphone for countless national and international sporting events. He has been a Lakers special correspondent on TWC, sideline reporter for NBC's Arena Football, the play-by-play announcer for Fox's NFL Sunday-Latin America, Major League Soccer on Telemundo, host/analyst for Major League Baseball telecasts on KVEA and the blow-by-blow announcer for boxing telecasts on HBO, HBO PPV, Showtime, Fox Sports and FS1. Solis has received numerous accolades for his work and for his efforts as part of a sports broadcasting team, including several local Area Emmys, Golden Mikes and a regional Edward R. Murrow Award for Best Sports Reporting. He was also honored by the National Hispanic Media Coalition for excellence in broadcast journalism. And, he remains active in the Los Angeles-area community.



## Dean Spanos

Owner & Chairman of the Board | Los Angeles Chargers

Under the leadership of Dean Spanos, the Los Angeles Chargers continue to make bold moves that position the franchise for long-term success in the nation's second-largest media market. Thanks to Spanos' senior leadership and strategic direction, the Chargers opened the 2020 season in their iconic, new SoFi Stadium home just months after successfully unveiling new team uniforms and updated branding that helped usher in a new era in the team's storied history. Dean's leadership is also present throughout the National Football League. As a member of the NFL's Management Council Executive Committee (CEC), he played an integral role in negotiating the NFL's current labor agreement. Spanos also sits on the NFL's Business Ventures Committee – having served as Chairman in 2015 – which has oversight regarding various league commercial activities, including consumer products, sponsorship, events, marketing and new business initiatives. In addition to his current committee work, Spanos also owns previous committee time that includes membership on the NFL's International and Legislative Committees. The Spanos family has a multi-generation commitment to community involvement and is recognized both as one of the NFL's most philanthropic families as well as one of Southern California's most active and caring contributors to local causes. Their financial contributions of more than \$15 million and their emotional support for youth, sports, education and our brave men and women in uniform has been a hallmark of their team ownership and legacy.



## Yair Vardi

Panelist & Co-Founder | Fusion LA Accelerator

Yair Vardi is a founding partner of Fusion LA - a venture-backed accelerator for Israeli start-ups in the US. Fusion invests \$110K in each company and selectively accepts 6-9 teams every 6 months to go through an intensive go-to-market and mentorship-driven program. Over the past 3 years, Fusion has backed 50 early-stage companies, and was voted Israel's best accelerator program for 2020 (Geektime). During the program, Fusion facilitates meetings between the Israeli founders and Venture Capitalists, tech executives & like-minded entrepreneurs in LA and Silicon Valley. 70% of alumni have raised funding of \$500K-\$5M post program & 25% have relocated the founding team to the US. Prior to co-founding Fusion LA, Vardi oversaw US-Israel technology and innovation partnerships at the Consulate General of Israel in Los Angeles. Vardi completed military service as an officer in Israel's Intelligence Corps, Unit 8200. Vardi utilizes his technology and entrepreneurial expertise in his volunteer work for several educational organizations - Serving on the board of American Jewish University (AJU), and mentoring for TAMID Group, IAC Eitanim & Hillel at UCLA. In 2018, Forbes Magazine named Vardi to its annual "30 Under 30" Israel list.



## Emily Warren

Senior Policy Advisor | Nelson Nygaard

Emily Castor Warren is a shared mobility pioneer with a wealth of experience in transportation policy and technology regulation. She develops innovative policy frameworks and builds consensus to advance safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility outcomes. After starting her career as a legislative aide on Capitol Hill and advising local governments on public infrastructure finance, Emily joined Lyft on its first day of operations in 2012. During her tenure there, she founded several operational departments and led national teams focused on transportation policy, public transit partnerships, and community engagement as Lyft expanded across all 50 states. Emily later joined Lime, where she led the central policy and research team as the company scaled its electric scooter service to 100 cities and 15 countries. Emily's deep understanding of technology allows her to craft creative policy solutions that bring new mobility options to market, while ensuring industry accountability. Her wide-ranging experience on issues such as datasharing, operator permitting, transit innovation, mobility-as-a-service integration, and micromobility safety standards makes her an invaluable advisor for policy reforms at all levels of government. As transportation agencies face pressure to solve rising challenges affecting community livability amid rapid technological change, she offers fresh thinking to guide policymakers from strategy development to implementation. Emily serves on the advisory board of the UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies and as a board director for the Shared Use Mobility Center and Boston's LivableStreets Alliance. She maintains advisory affiliations with Fontinalis Partners, a venture capital firm focused on the transportation sector, and Superpedestrian, an electric bike and scooter hardware and software company.



## Wayne Watkins

Head of Partnerships | British Academy of Film & Television Arts (BAFTA), Los Angeles Chapter

A long career in the entertainment industry, Watkins' experience and expertise spans music (as an executive with Capitol Records), theatre, film, and television in creative and executive capacities. He was recruited to BAFTA LA in 2012 as the non-profit's first Director of Sponsorship & Business Development.



## Matthew Wiseman

CEO | British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), Los Angeles Chapter

A London native, Wiseman has worked for BAFTA Los Angeles since 2002 in numerous key roles, most recently as Chief Operating Officer. Wiseman's numerous achievements to date include the expansion of the organization's renowned events series, the growth of its acclaimed student and educational programs, leading the organization's Games activity across North America, and evolving the British Academy Britannia Awards into BAFTA's biggest event outside the U.K.



## Daniel Zahir

Creative Director & Chocolatier | Edelweiss Chocolates

Daniel Zahir is the Creative Director of Edelweiss Chocolates, a 5th-generation family run chocolatier that has been handcrafting confections in the heart of Beverly Hills since 1942. Enjoying a long and lavish history that planted its roots in Beverly Hills during the Golden Age of Hollywood, a career at Edelweiss was hard for Daniel to pass up, especially with all the fond memories of coming to age while working within its storied walls. Daniel began working in his family's business throughout his years at Beverly Hills High School and continued in a limited capacity while studying towards his BA in Political Science and Minors in Business Management and Middle Eastern Studies at UC Irvine. In 2016, Daniel sought to sharpen his confectionary skills and enrolled in a chocolate studies certification program for working confectionary professionals at the Barry Callebaut Chocolate Academy in Chicago. Through a series of targeted and intensive workshops Daniel sought to gain tools to take Edelweiss into the future, both honoring its rich, illustrious history and tradition and expanding the business into exciting new markets. As Creative Director, Daniel has overseen a multi-year rebranding effort to give the company a fresh look and feel while maintaining the integrity of its history and tradition. Through an extensive study of aesthetics from the 1940's in Beverly Hills and in Switzerland, Daniel has navigated the company through a logo refresh, packaging redesign, rebuilding the company's e-commerce site, completing an overhaul and remodel of the Brentwood Country Mart location, adding new lines of product and is working on plans to remodel the original Beverly Hills shop and factory.

JOIN US FOR THE  
SPRING VIRTUAL COLLABORATIVE  
**MAY 2021**

SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES ARE NOW AVAILABLE  
CONTACT [MEMBERSHIP@BEVERLYHILLSCHAMBER.COM](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@BEVERLYHILLSCHAMBER.COM)

---

BEVERLY HILLS  
**BACK TO  
BUSINESS**



CHAMBER  
*of*  
COMMERCE