



## **SPEAKER BIOS**

**Holly Ahrendt** received her law degree from Indiana University School of Law - Indianapolis in 2006. She is licensed to practice law in Indiana. Holly is a Vice President, Leasing Counsel with Simon in Indianapolis. Holly's responsibilities include being a team lead providing direction and guidance to the team members, drafting and negotiating a variety of lease related documents, interpreting lease language, working closely with Leasing, and interacting with various departments on lease related matters. Prior to joining Simon, Holly spent six and half years at Washington Prime Group in the role of Vice President, Legal Leasing, the majority of her tenure as a department head of Legal Leasing where she was responsible for the Legal Leasing team who worked on various lease related matters for the company, interacted with various departments on various matters, and reported directly to the General Counsel.

**DAVID V. ALLEN** is counsel for the Mixed-Use Group of Brookfield Properties Development LLC, which acquired Forest City Realty Trust, Inc. in December of 2018. His responsibilities include construction, development, acquisitions, sustainability initiatives, and leasing. Prior to Forest City, David was a partner with Taft, Stettinius & Hollister, LLP, handling privately and publicly financed projects, condominiums, low-income housing tax credit transactions and many other types of development. Mr. Allen taught business law and ethics at Walsh University and served four years on Strongsville City Council. David is also a past a presenter and moderator in ICSC law seminars as well as past presenter, moderator and Chair of the Real Estate Law Institute for the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association. David is a graduate of The University of Akron School of Law and Baldwin-Wallace College. Mr. Allen belongs to the American Institute of Architects, the Gorilla Group, the British-American Chamber of Commerce and has published various articles on real estate development, ethics and entrepreneurship.

**Lanné Bennett** is an experienced Executive Vice President for National Accounts with over 25 years of experience in commercial real estate. She has worked with both landlords and tenants in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Bennett has worked with various restaurants, entertainment, immersive, and experiential concepts, retailtainment concepts, and other projects under NDA due to the IP.

Previously, Bennett held senior level positions at Samuels and Company, Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW), Starwood Retail Partners, Cypress Equities, Steiner and Associates, Colonial Properties Trust, and Glimcher Realty Trust. Madison Marquette has also been one of her clients. At Starwood Retail Partners, Bennett helped underwrite, purchase, and formulate comprehensive investment thesis for over \$7B in assets and underwrote over 200 assets throughout the US. Her knowledge of every major market in the US is unprecedented. Bennett's skill set also includes investment thesis, redevelopment, place making, merchandising, leasing, special projects, assignments, and analytics. Additionally, she and her husband owned and managed Gooeyz Gourmet Melt Sandwiches, a fast-casual, scratch kitchen restaurant with a full bar and live music on THE Ohio State University's campus.



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Bennett earned her Bachelor of Science degree from THE Ohio State University, where she was a D1 Athlete as a Varsity Cheerleader.

**Merisa Bowers** joined the Ohio Bar Liability Insurance Company (OBLIC) as Loss Prevention Counsel in January 2023 after 13 years in private practice. A born problem-solver, Merisa strives to support fellow attorneys through proactive policy development and risk management. Raised in Canton, Ohio, she earned her law degree *cum laude* from Case Western Reserve University School of Law (2009) and her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with Departmental Honors from the University of Cincinnati (2005). Throughout her career, she has been recognized by peers for her thoughtful approach to advocacy, receiving recognition from the National LGBT Bar Association as a Top 40 Under 40 Attorney in 2016 and regular SuperLawyers Rising Star designations. Merisa also serves as a City Councilmember in Gahanna where she and her family enjoy serving their community.

**MELISSA A. BREEDEN** is Vice President, Senior Legal Counsel at Realty Income Corporation, an S&P 500 REIT. The Company owns over 13,000 properties leased under long-term net leases. Ms. Breeden is located in the Phoenix office where she advises the Company on various leasing and property management related matters. Prior to joining Realty Income, Ms. Breeden was Of Counsel with Dickinson Wright LLP where she advised clients on numerous real estate and finance matters in the office, industrial, and retail asset classes. In addition, she worked at Simon Property Group for nearly 20 years in various legal department roles handling development, acquisition and disposition, and real estate finance matters for the Company. Ms. Breeden is a member of ICSC, the Association of Corporate Counsel, the Arizona State Bar Association, and the Indianapolis Bar Association.

**Kiamesha-Sylvia G. Colom** serves as the Real Estate practice group lead for the Indianapolis office. She focuses her practice in the areas of real estate transactions (acquisitions, dispositions, development, leasing, sale leaseback transactions, and real estate municipality work), real estate lending and commercial finance transactions, and related business transactions.

Kiamesha helps developers, corporate real estate departments, municipalities, tenants, and landlords achieve their real estate goals related to development projects, drafting and negotiating of lease documents, negotiating transfer documents, and ultimately getting the deal done.

Kiamesha has closed numerous SBA, USDA, and conventional commercial loans for commercial lenders and borrowers related to real estate, equipment, machinery, and C&I lending. She also co-manages the firm's LIBOR remediation work.

Kiamesha's extensive base of knowledge covers an array of commercial loan types, including government guaranteed lending, asset based line of credits, term loans, syndicated loan transactions, real estate and asset based transactions, and construction loans. Additionally, she has assisted banks with recovery of yearly financial documents, past due funds, liquidation, and government guaranteed purchasing processes.



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Kiamesha also assists minority, women, veteran, and disabled owned businesses with attaining state and city certifications. She is also the chair of the SBA Task Force, and a member of both Taft's CARES Act Title IV Task Force and Inclusion Task Force.

**Mark Cooper** is partner-in-charge of Taft Detroit, responsible for the strategic direction for the firm's Southfield and Detroit offices. He counsels a diverse set of clients nationwide on a variety of matters, including risk management, commercial disputes, real estate litigation, business torts and construction and contract disputes, and all aspects of insurance, from both a legal and business perspective.

Mark brings considerable first-chair experience in all facets of litigation, including numerous trials, and is skilled at alternative dispute resolution. He is a trained mediator and arbitrator. From mediating and arbitrating business insurance coverage disputes to advising on a broad range of commercial and business matters, Mark is frequently selected by peers for the most complex disputes. He advocates for his clients through various approaches depending on the client's desired objective.

**David DeVillers** is a partner at Barnes & Thornburg. From 2019 to 2021 David served as United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio. He also served as an Assistant United States Attorney from 2002 to 2019. During his time as a federal prosecutor with the Department of Justice (DOJ), David prosecuted a variety of offenses involving the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), the Continuing Criminal Enterprise (CCE) statute, money laundering, corruption, wire fraud, murder, international drug trafficking, and terrorism. As part of the DOJ, David spent a great deal of time overseas, specifically in Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Georgia, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine, where he was assigned as a legal adviser in combatting crime and corruption. Notably, he was sent to Iraq as a prosecutor adviser to the Iraqi High Tribunal for the Anfal (Kurdish Genocide) trial of Saddam Hussein, and while he was there, investigated additional crimes against humanity perpetrated by the former Iraqi regime.

**Shawn Dorsey** is the Director of Finance at Kaufman Development where he leads capital markets and closing efforts for Kaufman's current and future developments. His primary responsibilities include strategic analysis, proforma underwriting, financial analysis, debt/equity sourcing, and day-to-day execution. A core focus is also on building and strengthening relationships with bank-based lenders, life companies, debt funds, equity providers and the brokerage community. Shawn joined Kaufman in 2023 after spending over 12 years at a large regional bank based in the Midwest. His banking background includes various roles in business development, credit, and risk management within commercial real estate lending across various asset classes and markets in the United States.

**Dusty Elias Kirk** is a trusted adviser to clients in all aspects of real estate development, negotiating complex contractual arrangements for acquisitions and dispositions. Her real estate work has an emphasis on real estate litigation, including real estate tax-assessment appeals, land-use and zoning appeals, and eminent domain proceedings. Dusty counsels clients on an array of sustainability issues that impact development projects, including resolving disputes, managing risk avoidance, obtaining regulatory approvals, and transportation related issues.



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Dusty's work in real estate development includes handling the acquisition, financing and tax increment financing for commercial, retail, office, industrial and institutional properties, and obtaining economic incentives for development projects. She regularly handles issues involving public-private partnerships, and transportation issues including highway occupancy permits.

**Chris Ellis** is Senior Director, Originations for OH, MI, KY, TN, MO at Nuveen Green Capital. Chris has over 25 years of experience in commercial real estate, including working in areas of accounting, asset management, acquisitions, dispositions, underwriting, financing and investor relations. With his extensive experience, Chris has been pivotal to Nuveen Green Capital's growth and expansion in key states.

Prior to Nuveen Green Capital, Chris was Vice President, Investor Relations at White Oak Partners. Additionally, Chris spent 11 years with Washington Prime Group (formerly Glimcher Realty Trust), as Senior Director, Investments, where he sourced new acquisition opportunities, oversaw the financial underwriting function, managed the relationships with joint venture partners, and oversaw financial projections on development and redevelopment opportunities. He also spent 10 years at Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), in the Real Estate Accounting and the Real Estate Investment divisions, where he managed several portfolios, consisting of various property types, totaling over \$1.5 billion in market value.

A Certified Public Accountant, licensed in Ohio, Chris has been an adjunct professor at Max M. Fisher College of Business Center for Real Estate at The Ohio State University since 2018, teaching Real Estate Valuation and Argus Certification. In addition, he is a Board Member of Green Energy Ohio, a nonprofit promoting energy efficiency in Ohio.

Chris received his MBA from The Dauch School of Business at Ashland University and his undergraduate degree in Business Administration from The Ohio State University.

**Courtney Flowers** is an Attorney in Thompson Hine's Corporate Transactions and Securities practice group, focusing on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, commercial contracts, and general corporate governance matters. She excels at helping clients navigate challenging transactions and has published a number of practical articles that distill complex legal considerations for business parties. She holds degrees from Cleveland State University, the University of Chicago, and Case Western Reserve University School of Law. Courtney is a former history instructor at Wilber Wright College in Chicago and has worked in the Law and Economics department of ETH Zurich. She has been recognized as an Ohio Rising Star. Courtney is an active volunteer with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland and the Cleveland Municipal Bar Association, as well as other Cleveland-area organizations.

For over twenty years, **Johnna Goodmark** has represented clients in the acquisition, sale, leasing, and financing of commercial real estate. Formerly a Deputy City Attorney and chief real estate counsel for the City of Atlanta, Johnna brings a unique combination of government and private practice experience to her real estate practice. Johnna has closed some of the most complex and high-profile real estate deals in the metropolitan Atlanta area, including the sale of Underground Atlanta, the Atlanta Civic Center, and Turner Field, the "Gulch" and "Summerhill" redevelopment projects, and the construction financing and sublease of the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center. Johnna has extensive experience representing owners, developers,



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landlords, tenants, and financial institutions in a wide array of commercial real estate transactions. Johnna is a graduate of Tulane University School of Law and currently resides in Atlanta.

**ROY HARNESS, CPP®** is Senior Director of Security for wpg, a privately owned, Columbus, Ohio-based owner of shopping centers and office buildings. Mr. Harness' main responsibilities include managing all aspects of physical security for the portfolio, including negotiation/management of provider contracts, implementation of physical security technology, policy and procedure development and emergency response protocols. Most recently Mr. Harness led the planning, development and execution of the wpg Security Operation Center located in the Columbus office, providing 24x7x365 CCTV monitoring and response for the portfolio. Prior to joining wpg, Mr. Harness held various roles spanning 40 years in the military, law enforcement and corporate security. Mr. Harness is a Certified Protection Profession, Board Certified in Security Management by ASIS International. He holds a Bachelor of Arts & Sciences in Sociology from the Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Public Administration from Central Michigan University and currently resides in Dublin, Ohio.

**JESS M. HART** is Vice President and Associate General Counsel of WPG (f/k/a Washington Prime Group), a privately owned, Columbus, Ohio-based developer and lessor of a variety of enclosed shopping malls, open air shopping centers, and office buildings. Mr. Hart directs the efforts of the WPG Legal-Leasing group, which is responsible for managing all lease-related transactions for WPG's approximately 90 assets across North America. Prior to joining WPG, Mr. Hart served as the Manager, Leasing and Commercial Counsel for Signet Jewelers where he maintained similar responsibilities on behalf of brands like Kay Jewelers, Jared, Zales, and Piercing Pagoda. Mr. Hart is a graduate of The University of Akron School of Law and presently licensed as an attorney in the State of Ohio. He is also a 500-hour registered yoga teacher and teaches classes at GoYoga locations around Columbus. He resides in suburban Columbus with his wife, daughter and two dogs.

**WILL M. HENRY**, is a Partner in the Corporate Transactions & Securities practice group in the Cleveland office of Thompson Hine LLP, specializing in M&A, private equity, commercial contracts, and corporate organization and governance matters. He has extensive experience in middle-market M&A transactions, with a track record of leading deals ranging from less than \$1 million to over \$500 million. His clientele includes private equity firms and privately- and publicly-held companies, and his work involves both domestic and international transactions. Will is a graduate of The University of Texas School of Law and Case Western Reserve University. He has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America 2024 for Corporate Law and is one of only 21 lawyers in the United States to be recognized as a "Leading Individual" in sub-\$500 million M&A deals by the Legal 500.

**Brandin McMillen** is a Vice President and National Commercial Underwriter for the Fidelity National Commercial Services ("NCS") office in Columbus, OH. Additionally, Brandin serves as a State Underwriter (Ohio) for the Fidelity National Financial family of underwriters, which includes Chicago Title, Commonwealth Land Title and Fidelity National Title. Brandin transferred to the



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Columbus NCS office in August 2016, having spent 11 years with the Fidelity NCS office in Washington, DC. Brandin underwrites all aspects of complex commercial transactions for sites within the state of Ohio and across the country. He uses his unique approach as a lay underwriter to view the transaction from a business-minded perspective. His goal is to find a balance between the client's expectations and acceptable risk.

**Sam Mintzer** focuses his practice on a wide range of commercial real estate matters, and is particularly focused on the acquisition and disposition of assets in a variety of asset classes. Sam is experienced in running transactions and drafting and negotiating commercial real estate documents. Sam's practice also includes the representation of borrowers and lenders, as well as the representation of corporate landlords in the leasing of retail and industrial properties. Sam is particularly well versed in adding value through the creation and development of outparcels, as well as NNN properties.

**Renee Naylor** is a partner in Honigman's real estate practice group and head of the firm's hospitality and lodging industry group. Renee counsels clients in complex real estate transactions, including single-asset and portfolio acquisitions and dispositions, joint ventures, and debt and equity financings. As partner at Honigman, Renee has represented public and private REITs in billion dollars of transactions.

**Susheela Nemani-Stanger** is the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh's (URA) Executive Director. As the leader of the organization, she facilitates its mission to build a prosperous and equitable economy for all of Pittsburgh. Nemani-Stanger is the first woman and first person of Indian descent to hold the Executive Director position in the URA's 77-year history.

Before the URA, she served as Allegheny County Economic Development's Deputy Director. While there, she managed the project-related divisions including development, business expansion and attraction, affordable housing development and planning, in addition to providing oversight over the tax diversion and abatement program unit.

During a previous 13-year tenure with the URA, she directed the overall planning, financing, and implementation of significant mixed-use, transportation, infrastructure, and public space projects within the City of Pittsburgh. As the URA's Director of Economic Development, she formulated public-private partnerships related to the City's Tax Increment Financing and Parking Taxing Diversion programs and was instrumental in creating and financing the first Transit Revitalization Investment District in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

For a short time after the URA, Susheela led an effort for WQED's partnership with the Black Equity Coalition and POISE Foundation to produce a COVID-19 vaccine hesitation public health campaign.

A Pittsburgh area native, Nemani-Stanger returned to Pittsburgh to pursue a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs with a focus on urban and regional affairs after working in Philadelphia and Baltimore. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts from Mercyhurst University in Erie, PA. She lives in Squirrel Hill with her family.



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**David E. Nykanen** is the President and an owner of Midwest Title, a national title insurance agency based in Troy, Michigan. Mr. Nykanen is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the American Land Title Association, and the Michigan Land Title Association. He has been active in the real estate industry for over 25 years. Mr. Nykanen is deeply involved in its Real Property Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan, where he served as Chair in 2016–2017, among many other roles in the Section. Mr. Nykanen also served as Chairperson of the Oakland County Bar Association’s Real Estate Committee. Mr. Nykanen has been named a Michigan Super Lawyer® from 2009 through the present and has been selected for inclusion in the Best Lawyers® in America from 2011 through the present. Mr. Nykanen is a frequent author and speaker for the State Bar of Michigan, Institute for Continuing Legal Education, industry and trade groups, and numerous bar associations.

**Doug Parker** is the Co-Founder and CEO of Ecolumix, an ESG data intelligence and advisory company that measures corporate environmental, health, and safety (EHS) performance. At Ecolumix, Doug leads the team developing and deploying facility-level EHS data insights to clients related to benchmarking, supply chain evaluation, and due diligence. The Ecolumix team also works with law firms and corporate clients to advise them on EHS compliance and ESG strategy.

Doug formerly served as the Director of the EPA's Criminal Investigation Division overseeing a nationwide team of criminal investigators and matters related to the Deepwater Horizon disaster, the Volkswagen emissions cheating scandal, and the agency’s analytics-driven criminal enforcement initiatives. He also advised dozens of companies on complex enforcement matters and served as an independent monitor. He received his B.A. from Colby College and M.A. in Public Policy from Georgetown University.

As a leader within the real estate and construction industry, **Kelly Perlman** works with and supports our talented teams to provide an excellent client experience. She enjoys teaching/developing staff and is excited to introduce them to the real estate/construction industry. In addition to this role, she provides a variety of accounting and auditing services to clients in the real estate and construction industries and frequently works with owners, developers, and management companies.

Because of her technical real estate experience, she’s a member of the firm’s professional standards team, which provides staff and clients with guidance and information on new and proposed financial statement reporting standards. She has the benefit of working with a variety of clients and on a number of engagement types. While she primarily works in real estate, she also enjoys working with contractors in the construction industry as well as for-profit owners, developers, and management companies. One of her greatest accomplishments is the deep relationships she’s built with business leaders. They appreciate that she’s experienced and successful in optimizing efficiencies in testing and in meeting tight deadlines. She aims to deliver quality client service every day and have fun while doing it.

She’s often asked to speak at conferences on various technical and industry topics and has authored articles about buy-sell agreements, grants to nonprofit sponsors, and the OMB Super Circular. She belongs to the OSCP, AICPA, NAIOP (the Commercial Real Estate Development Association), the Ohio Housing Council, and the Affordable Housing Association of CPAs, as well



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as the Young Professional Academy of Dublin City Schools. Kelly received my B.B.A. from The Ohio State University.

**Karen R. Pifer** is a Partner in Honigman's Real Estate Department and is located in the firm's Bloomfield Hills, Michigan office. Ms. Pifer advises and represents clients in various types of real estate transactions, including the acquisition, sale, development, financing and leasing of shopping centers, office buildings, hotels and other real estate projects. She has significant leasing experience representing landlords in connection with retail and office leases. Ms. Pifer also represents borrowers and lenders in mortgage loan transactions and advises and represents clients in workouts, foreclosures and restructuring of debt transactions. Admitted to practice in the state of Michigan, Ms. Pifer received a J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School and a B.A. from Albion College and was named in The Best Lawyers in America for 2010-2023 and in DBusiness for 2013-2015, 2017 and 2018.

**William "Bill" Repasky** is a Partner with Frost Brown Todd LLP, working out of the law firm's Louisville, Kentucky office. He is a trial lawyer and former chair of the firm's Financial Services Litigation Practice group. He is a founding member of the firm's Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) Task Force. Bill is a frequent author and speaker about the CTA, its implementing regulations and the Act's expected impact on the nation's businesses. Prior to joining the firm, he was in-house counsel for National City Bank and National Processing Company. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan (B.A.) and Vanderbilt University Law School (J.D.).

**Harlan W. Robins, Esq.** assists clients in real estate transactions and structured finance including the acquisition of land acquisitions, joint venture formations, development and leasing for office, hotel, retail and shopping centers. He represents lenders in complex, multi-state workouts, deeds-in-lieu of foreclosure and foreclosure of real estate-secured loans, loan modifications and loan origination for permanent and construction financings, as well as mezzanine financing. Harlan has extensive experience in debtor-in-possession financing and performs real estate-related counseling in corporate bankruptcies and reorganizations.

**Alan K. Sable** is a member of the Pennsylvania bar and has over 26 years of experience offering legal advice in all areas of commercial real estate law, including: purchases and sales of office, retail, multifamily and affordable housing properties; office and retail leasing transactions; and real estate development transactions. Mr. Sable's experience also includes zoning, land use and permitting matters, as well as other commercial business transactions. In addition, Mr. Sable serves as counsel to receivers in receivership matters involving commercial real estate assets. Mr. Sable is a graduate of Colgate University and the Dickinson School of Law and, prior to forming Sable and Sable, LLC in 2016, was a partner in the Pittsburgh office of Reed Smith LLP.

**Amy E. Sable** is a partner at Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ms. Sable provides personalized, collaborative legal advice to small and mid-sized businesses in all areas of corporate law, commercial business transactions, debt and equity financing transactions and employment law with a special focus on providing outside general counsel services to emerging and established business entities. In addition, Ms. Sable serves as counsel to receivers in





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receivership matters involving commercial real estate assets. Ms. Sable is a graduate of Lafayette College and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and has been a member of the Pennsylvania Bar for over 29 years. Prior to joining Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP, Ms. Sable was a founding member of Sable and Sable, LLC.

**Jim Schwarz** represents real estate developers in the acquisition, development, financing, leasing and sale of real estate. He served as developer's counsel in connection with the development and financing of the largest shopping mall in the United States, the Mall of America. Jim also has experience negotiating leases for regional developers, as well as ground leases for hotel sites adjacent to retail developments.

**Maxwell Briskman Stanfield** is a Partner at Meyer Unkovic & Scott, LLP, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is a transactional attorney with over a decade of experience. His practice is concentrated primarily in four areas – entertainment and media law; corporate and business law; mergers and acquisitions; and commercial real estate. Maxwell was voted for inclusion in the inaugural 2021 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America: Ones to Watch*, and again for the 2022, 2023 and 2024 editions. An honor based on rigorous peer review and achieved by less than 1% of all practicing attorneys nationwide. He is a graduate of Washington & Jefferson College and Southwestern Law School.

**Adam Valente** is President of Continental Hospitality Group, a developer, owner, buyer, and joint venture partner of high-quality lodging properties across the U.S. In his role as President, Mr. Valente oversees new investment activity, portfolio management, and working with team members with parent company Continental Real Estate Companies on all hospitality project initiatives including development, investment analysis, financing, ownership, and disposition. Prior to forming CHG, Adam was Managing Director – Investments with Rockbridge, a hospitality private equity firm with over 25 years of experience investing in real estate and operating companies. Mr. Valente was responsible for originating, underwriting, and structuring new investments. During his tenure the firm executed approximately 170 transactions worth over \$5 billion – of which Adam was responsible for originating, underwriting, and/or closing approximately 100 investments valued at over \$3 billion. Prior to joining Rockbridge, Mr. Valente worked for PKF Consulting, a leading hospitality industry advisory firm. At PKF Consulting he was a senior consultant where he managed numerous valuations and related engagements for institutional capital, brands, and owner-operator clients. Prior to PKF, he performed various operational roles in the hospitality industry prior to and during completing his Bachelor of Science in Hotel & Restaurant Management, summa cum laude, from the Conrad N. Hilton College at the University of Houston.