

Panel Luncheon Bios

The Business Case for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Secured Finance

Herschel Frierson, Crowe LLP

Herschel Frierson is the Strategic Networks Leader and a Principal at Crowe LLP with over 26 years of experience. In his role, Herschel is responsible for expanding the firm's influence with network partners, including associations and creating new opportunities and deepening existing relationships. Herschel focuses on key networks for all industries across the firm and in the market. Herschel also serves on the firm's leadership team with the Inclusion Excellence Council which focuses on Diversity and Inclusion for the Firm. Herschel also oversees the Firm's Business Resource Groups.

Herschel Frierson is the 27th Chairman of the Board of Directors with the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) and is a lifetime member. Herschel in 2020 was named by Accounting Today as one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Accounting. Herschel has done podcasts with Financial Executives International (FEI) as well as done fireside chats with Aaron Anderson, VP and Treasurer of PayPal Holding, Inc., and Michael Fiddelke the CFO for Target. Herschel also led a chat with Kathy McLay the President and Chief Executive Officer of Sam's club. Herschel has worked with professional associations including being the keynote speaker for the AICPA we're about success program and leading discussions with the Indiana CPA society, North Carolina CPA Society as well participating in a DE&I round table for the Institute of Internal Auditors GAM Conference. Herschel now serves as an advisory member for the University of Texas McCombs School of Business Accounting Program and was recently named to the Butler University Lacy School of Business Dean's Advisory Council. Herschel has been highlighted in various publications and articles. Herschel continues to work with companies and organizations throughout the Country in their DE&I efforts as well as mentoring students, young professionals and organizations in their path forward.

In 2018 Herschel Received the Frank Ross National Outstanding Member of the Year Award from NABA. Herschel has served on various committees and advisory boards in the community. In the past, Herschel served as a National Director with NABA, the chair of Organizational Effectiveness and Personnel. He has also chaired Membership where he focused on Student and Professional Membership Development and Growth. Herschel has served as the Central Region President for NABA. Chairman of the Audit Committee for NABA, chairman of the National Ethics Committee, served as a member of the Audit Committee, secretary to the Central Region, served in various capacities for the Central Region Student Conference and Indianapolis Chapter President. Herschel has also been involved with Center for Leadership Development, Academy of Finance, 2012 Indianapolis Super Bowl Host Committee Member; NFL Community Impact. Herschel is a lifetime member of Kappa Alpha Psi, Inc.

Alexandra Mills, Bank of America

Alexandra Mills serves as Vice President and Senior Asset-Based Credit Officer for Bank of America in Houston. Alexandra is responsible for managing a portfolio of asset-based structured loans for private and public companies in a variety of industries. She is also part of Bank of America's LIBOR Transition group.

Alexandra is an active community volunteer, and she has been a member of Rotary International for over 15 years. She is also an active supporter and volunteer at The Posse Foundation.

Cassandra Mott, Blank Rome

Cassandra Mott is partner with Blank Rome LLP in the firm's Finance, Restructuring and Bankruptcy practice group. She represents commercial banks and non-bank lenders, as well as private and public company borrowers and private equity portfolio companies, in a variety of commercial finance transactions, with a particular focus on leveraged buyout

financings related to acquisitions and recapitalizations. According to Chambers USA, she is an “exceptional practitioner with great business sense.”

Cassandra is a frequent author and speaker on a variety of industry and diversity, equity and inclusion matters and was recently named both a “Top Woman in Asset-Based Lending” by ABF Journal and a woman who is “Leading the Way Forward: Women in Secured Finance” by the Secured Finance Network.

Jevaughn Sterling, Amegy Bank

Jevaughn Sterling is an Executive Vice President at Amegy Bank of Texas. Jevaughn is married to Tanya and together they have three children: Eric, Leah, and Ryan. He also enjoys golf, soccer, swimming, and reading.

He is presently a Regional Commercial Banking Manager who is responsible for leading the Bank’s strategic growth efforts in South Houston. He builds awareness of the bank’s full-service capabilities through active business development and community involvement.

From 2009 to 2017, Jevaughn oversaw Amegy Bank’s US Small Business Administration loan programs. He and his team provided capital to fast growing companies in Texas with loan originations of over \$400 million. Under his leadership, Amegy Bank was consistently ranked among Houston’s top small business lenders.

In 2012, Jevaughn was named Top 40 under 40 by the Houston Business Journal.

Jevaughn hails from Montego Bay, Jamaica where he earned a soccer scholarship (while representing his country on the national team) to attend Howard University in Washington, DC. Jevaughn graduated magna cum laud with a BBA and an MBA.

Being the recipient of numerous academic and athletic awards, Jevaughn has developed a strong desire to “give back” to his community. Jevaughn currently serves on the Advisory Board for the Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce. Sterling. He was recently appointed to the University of Houston’s Board for Visitors Task Force on Third Ward Schools. Throughout the years Jevaughn has served on several boards including the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce; Quillian Memorial Center, First United Methodist Foundation, The Arc of Fort Bend County, Sweetwater Country Club Board of Governors, and The Fort Bend Society of Commercial Realtors. Jevaughn is a Leadership Houston alumnus of Class 34, and current American Leadership Forum Senior Fellow.

Lauren Sparks, Agility

Lauren Sparks founded Agility 2020, Inc., the entity that proposed a federally chartered bank, primarily owned and led by women. Today, Agility Bank is open and operating in Houston as the first women-owned and led Minority Depository Institution founded for its purpose in the country. With over three decades of community banking and risk management experience, Lauren is uniquely qualified to foster the growth of a digital-forward community bank.

As a business owner herself, Lauren executed exceptional opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially women. In 2009, she formed Third Party Resources, Inc. (3PR Inc.), a woman-owned consulting firm specializing in community banks and financial service firms. 3PR serves more than 30 community banks at any given time and has become a preferred vendor for one of the world’s largest software providers.

Lauren is also a 2021 recipient of the Houston Business Journal’s Women Who Mean Business Award as an Outstanding Business Leader in Finance. This award recognizes women in [leadership](#) roles that have demonstrated excellence in their careers and [community](#).