FROM WRESTLING WITH THE FISCAL REPERCUSSIONS OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, TO THE CONTINUING GLOBAL IMPACT OF Brexit, to charting a course for responsible data protection in the age of A.I., leadership of the banking sector has faced many key challenges during the past year. The good news locally is that many of the country’s top banking industry thought leaders are based in the LA region.

With 2021 well underway, and businesses focused intently on fiscal planning and protecting the bottom line, bankers are perhaps more essential than ever. There are some particularly stellar bank industry thought leaders and trusted advisors in the LA region – who happen to be women – and we’ve alphabetically listed some of the very best of them here, along with key information about their careers, practice and some relevant recent successes they’ve achieved.

These are the women we chose to recognize for exceptional leadership, knowledge, skill and achievements in banking across the full spectrum of banking responsibility along with the highest professional and ethical standards, and for contributions to the Los Angeles business community at large.
Verna Grace Chao, executive vice president in charge of City National Bank’s Treasury Management Solutions, started 2020 focused on building out the bank’s enter- tainment payments ecosystem — when the solutions her team creates became more important than ever. City National’s Treasury Manage- ment Solutions team offers business clients products to efficiently manage their funds and weather the fluctuations of cash flow.

When COVID-19 struck, many clients found themselves needing to work remotely, which required creative solutions to manage their business payments. Chao’s commit- ment to tech-enabled, user-friendly financial products was a boon to clients upended by the stay-at-home guidance. A number of Chao’s products have helped solve pain points for clients needing innovative pay- ment processing. For example, usage of one service that allows the client to pay vendors remotely by check, reducing low-value clerical activities and saving time, increased 700% from March 2020 through June 2020.

Patrick Chavez is a managing director and the philanthropic market executive for the West and Central North Divisions of Bank of America Private Bank. She is responsible for the West and Central North Regions, covering 11 states and 14 strategic markets, leading a team of 12 professionals handling all aspects of philanthropy for institutional non-profit clients (healthcare, education, and operating charities) and high net worth individuals and families, leveraging core functions in investment management, consultation, administration and grant making.

A big part of Chavez’s role is to help non- profit organizations, endowments, and foun- dations enhance their mission fulfillment and organizational stability through tailored strat- egies, fiduciary services, and administrative support. She oversees the integration and delivery of customized initiatives in invest- ment policy, governance, strategic planning, fundraising and grant making, among others. She is proud to be a third-generation Bank of America employee who began her career as a teller in La Mirada in 1989.

Jacky Dilfer is a commercial lending and SBA real estate lending expert — and she’s also a dedicated leader and trusted advisor, helping each of her clients grow their businesses, create job opportunities and better serve their communities. Her vast experience in commercial lending extends nearly two decades in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Greater Los Angeles area where she has led Business Finance Capital’s rapid growth as the organization’s executive director. In the last decade, Dilfer has arranged more than $5 billion in commercial and SBA loans ($2 billion since 2012), further cementing her position in the lending community as a relied upon business consultant, strategic advisor.

The effect of her leadership is demon- strated by the success of BFC and the entire BFC team’s commitment to upholding high business standards, regulatory compliance, and excellent client service.

A City National’s head of marketing, product and digital, Linda Duncombe is constantly innovating. She leads a team that is responsible for advancing the compa- ny’s brand and digital strategy, articulating its value proposition and supporting business development, and is a member of the bank’s Executive Committee.

Overhauling City National’s mobile app was a top priority for Duncombe when she joined City National in January 2019. It proved especially valuable to clients as many of them have been relying more heavily on digital banking platforms during the pandemic. Undaunted by the increased demands of her marketing and communica- tions responsibilities in this uncertain time, Duncombe never lost focus on the impor- tance of the app to the bank’s clients. The app — which includes more than 50 fea- tures and has reached more than 1 million logins— was one of the company’s largest capital projects ever.

Congratulations,

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: BANKING

Including our very own Linda Duncombe and Verna Grace Chao.

We congratulate

Dega Nalayeh

for being recognized among the elite 2021 Women of Influence: Banking by the Los Angeles Business Journal.

We salute your passion for leadership, philanthropic and community engagement, diversity education, and financial empowerment.

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