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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

MEET THE 2025 POWER LEADERS IN LAW & ACCOUNTING (PART 2)



INVEST IN POSSIBILITY

Turn your Florida corporate tax liability into K-12 school funding



By [Jeff Zbar](#) – Correspondent, South Florida Business Journal
Jun 20, 2025



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Entrepreneurs, CEOs, families, corporations and nonprofits often need professional counsel skilled in helping navigate commonplace and complex events. Those needs can be greater in a dynamic and diverse market such as South Florida. Individuals and organizations face domestic and international issues that require elevated expertise.

Those advisors are often the attorneys and accountants trained to serve a global marketplace. They are the individuals named as this year's Power Leaders in Law & Accounting.

The list includes professional service providers who have helped clients for generations – and some of those they have mentored to become the next generation of leaders. [Check out Part 1.](#)

As South Florida has grown in prominence on the global stage, the importance of these professionals has grown in kind. Together, they possess the skills and acumen to guide clients of all kinds and caliber toward future success.

Yosbel A. Ibarra

Office co-managing shareholder, Greenberg Traurig

Miami





JUAN SILVA

Ibarra oversees the Miami office's continued growth, helps lead several community nonprofits, and recently advised clients on significant exits, strategic investments, the sale of an iconic Hispanic brand, and a significant expansion into Mexico.

Birthplace: Cuba

Education: B.S., finance

Most unexpected rece

changing technological advancements affecting client expectations.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Your job is to inspire others' success without exercising authority.



Message to future professionals: Working hard is required; focus on the long-term, big picture.

Highlight from my career: Opening GT's office in Brazil.

Top of my personal bucket list: Sharing the wonder of travel with my nieces and nephews.

Contact: www.gtlaw.com, 305-579-0706

Joseph M. Jackson

Managing partner of tax services, SWKJD

Coral Gables



INVEST IN POSSIBILITY

Turn your Florida corporate tax liability into K-12 school funding

Image: JaimeSN Photography

Jackson has over 25 years of experience and leads SWKJD's tax and advisory services. The firm is recognized as one of the Top 25 CPA firms in Florida.

Birthplace: South Miami

Education: B.B.A., University of Florida; executive M.S., taxation, Florida International University

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Your actions set the tone for your team's culture, expectations and performance.

Highlight from my career: Being a third-generation partner of a firm that has been around since 1953.

My latest cultural discovery: Visting Japan

Top of my personal bucket list: Travel the world, especially to Africa, New Zealand and Australia.

Contact: www.swkj-cpa.com, jjackson@swkj-cpa.com, 305-666-7229

Tansy Jefferies

Office leader, national transfer pricing leader, RSM

Fort Lauderdale and V





COURTESY OF RSM

Jefferies is an international tax principal and national transfer pricing leader for RSM, which serves the tax, audit and consulting provider to middle-market companies.

Birthplace: Reading, England

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees, Japanese and social and political studies, Cambridge University

What I would change in my profession: Find a way to fill out timesheets telepathically.

Message to future professionals

because relationships are key.



Highlight from my career: Becoming an owner at RSM in 2017.

My latest cultural discovery: Greenland.

Top of my personal bucket list: Visiting the mountain gorillas in Uganda/Rwanda.

Contact: www.rsmus.com; tansy.jefferies@rsmus.com, 954-462-6300

Neisen Kasdin

Office co-managing partner, Akerman LLP

Miami



GITTINGS PHOTOGRAPH

Kasdin heads the Miami office of the region's largest law firm. A land use and development attorney, he has led land use and zoning entitlements for Brickell

City Centre, the Miami Design District, the Faena District and the Magic City Innovation District.

Birthplace: Miami Beach

Education: B.A., Northwestern University; J.D., University of Florida

Why I chose my profession: I originally viewed law as a way into public service.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: I am less reactive and blunt.

Highlight from my career: Serving as mayor of Miami Beach during its renaissance.

My latest cultural discovery: Rediscovering the restaurant LPM.

Top of my personal bucket list: Golf at Augusta National.

Contact: www.akerman.com, neisen.kasdin@akerman.com, 305-374-5600

Steven F. Klein

Managing partner, Gerson, Preston, Klein, Lips, Eisenberg & Gelber, P.A.

Miami





MICHAELSPAINSMITH

Klein led the firm's strategic expansion into advisory services while guiding multimillion-dollar M&A transactions and high-net-worth estate planning. His focus on innovation continues to elevate client value and firm growth.

Birthplace: New York

Education: B.A., accounting, New York University

Why I chose my profession:



How my leadership approach has evolved with age: More listening, more mentoring and delegating wisely.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Great leaders build great teams; collaboration drives excellence.

Top of my personal bucket list: Break 80 with a beautiful Barolo in hand.
Great grandpops.

Contact: www.gpkleg.com, sfk@gpkleg.com, 305-351-7900

Christopher E. Knight

Managing shareholder, Fowler White Burnett

Miami



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COURTESY OF FOWLER WHITE BURNETT

This year, Knight led the firm through a strategic office expansion, including a new Jacksonville location, and the successful resolution of a high-

profile cryptocurrency case, all while deepening his involvement with civic organizations.

Birthplace: Coral Gables

Education: B.S., Clemson University, J.D., University of Florida

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Harnessing AI while preventing its misuse.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Trust others, give resources, watch them exceed expectations.

Message to future professionals: Fulfillment drives success, enjoy your practice area or pivot.

Top of my personal bucket list: Playing golf at Augusta National with my son.

Contact: www.fowler-white.com, cknight@fowler-white.com, 305-789-9200

Tiffani G. Lee

Deputy managing partner, Holland & Knight LLP

Miami





Image: Courtesy of Holland and Knight

COURTESY OF HOLLAND AND KNIGHT

As a member of the firm's South Florida litigation group, Lee concentrates her practice on the area of complex commercial litigation, and she serves as the firmwide diversity partner.

Birthplace: Opp, Alabama

Education: B.S., public relations, University of Florida; J.D., [University of Miami](#)

Biggest challenge facing the firm: How to better serve clients.



How my leadership approach has evolved with age: My non-negotiables have become clearer – integrity, courage, collaboration and communication.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Leaders must embrace an organization's values and protect its culture.

My latest cultural discovery: In April, I took an eye-opening vacation to Vietnam.

Contact: www.hklaw.com

Victor Lerro

Managing partner, LerroSarbey PLLC

Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale



COURTESY OF LERROSARBEY



Lerro started his firm with his wife, Maryann, in 1994. It has since grown to over 70 professionals in Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale, serving small and large businesses, as well as individuals.

Birthplace: Raised on Long Island, New York

Education: B.B.A., accounting, CVA-National Association of Valuation Analysts

Contact: www.lerrosarbey.com

Andrea Lewis

President, Palm Beach County Bar Association; shareholder, Searcy, Denney, Scarola, Barnhart and Shipley

West Palm Beach



COURTESY OF SEARCY, DENNEY, SCAROLA, BARNHART AND SHIPLEY

Lewis leads the organization composed of approximately 3,000 lawyers, judges, and legal professionals. She is regularly featured as a legal commentor on various national networks.

Birthplace: St. Petersburg

Education: Bachelor's degree, finance and real estate, J.D., Florida State University

Why I chose my profession: To make a meaningful impact on people's lives and better our community.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Carve your own path and inspire others to follow.

Message to future professionals: Work hard. Know your worth. Lead with integrity.

Highlight from my career: Being sworn in as president of our bar association and watching my then-4-year-old daughter recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Contact: www.palmbeachbar.org, alewis@searcylaw.com, 561-686-6300

William Lewis

Co-COO, Southeast Florida managing partner, Morgan & Morgan, P.A.

West Palm Beach





Image: Courtesy of Morgan & Morgan, P.A.

COURTESY OF MORGAN & MORGAN, P.A.

Lewis, who was named to his current post in 2024, has overseen expansion of the firm's Southeast Florida offices, which recovered over \$500 million for clients in the past year. He also won multiple seven-figure jury verdicts.

Birthplace: Buffalo, New York

Education: B.A., Colgate University

Why I chose my profession: I chose my profession for justice.



What I would change in my profession: Give courts more resources so cases can progress more efficiently.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Focus on culture and empowering others to lead.

Top of my personal bucket list: Golfing with my kids someday.

Contact: www.forthethepeople.com, wlewis@forthepeople.com, 561-227-5860

Jeremy Liss

Partner, Kirkland & Ellis

Miami



COURTESY OF KIRKLAND & ELLIS

Liss has extensive experience counseling clients on domestic and cross-border M&A transactions, carve-outs and restructuring, with deal sizes up to \$6 billion.

Birthplace: Detroit

Education: B.B.A., J.D., University of Michigan

Why I chose my profession: I love the art of a deal, negotiation and adding client value.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Remote/hybrid work altering culture and associate learning.

What I would change in my profession: More focus on professionals' mental health.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Keep an open mind; give benefit of doubt.

Top of my personal bucket list: Breaking 80 in golf.

Contact: www.kirkland.com, jeremy.liss@kirkland.com, 305-432-5888

Marc List

Shareholder and office

Boca Raton





COURTESY OF CBIZ

List leads a team of 80 professionals and specializes in assisting high-net-worth individuals and their businesses.

Birthplace: Flushing, New York

Education: B.B.A., Hofstra University; J.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Why I chose my profession:
provides access to various



Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Treat people as you would like to be treated.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Creating an individual identity when consolidation is extreme.

Message to future professionals: If you treat your job as a career, happiness and success will follow.

Contact: www.cbiz.com, mlist@cbiz.com, 561-922-3002

Enrique Llerena

President, FICPA Miami-Dade County chapter; partner, Caballero Fierman Llerena & Garcia

Miami

Llerena focuses much of his work in the government, not-for-profit and employee benefit plan sectors. With over 16 years of experience, he provides guidance on financial reporting, accounting and auditing matters, including federal and Florida single audits, and consulting services for all types of entities, including governmental entities.

Education: B.S. and master's degree, accounting, Florida International University

Contact: www.cflgcpa.com, 305-662-7272

Thomas H. Loffredo



Office managing shareholder; GrayRobinson

Fort Lauderdale



COURTESY OF GRAYROBINSON

Loffredo is a labor and employment attorney with over 30 years' experience advising corporate clients on litigation, compliance and risk management across diverse industries. He's a problem-solver in workplace and commercial disputes.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.S., Unive

Why I chose my profe

Seemed pre-ordained.



Biggest challenge facing my industry: Technology and modernization. We must maintain a level of human interaction.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Experience brings wisdom, fewer words, deeper listening and rare surprise.

Top of my personal bucket list: Live healthy, laugh often, and watch my grandchildren grow up.

Contact: www.gray-robinson.com, tom.loffredo@gray-robinson.com, 954-761-7499

Raimundo Lopez-Lima Levi

Managing director, AbitOs Accountants + Advisors

Coral Gables



COURTESY OF ABITOS A

Levi is a recognized authority in both domestic and international tax matters. He led AbitOs to be recognized as one of the *SFBJ*'s fastest-growing companies in 2024, and positioned the firm as a regional leader by *Accounting Today*.

Birthplace: Havana

Education: B.S., accounting, Florida International University; master's degree, accounting, St. Thomas University

Why I chose my profession: The challenge of promoting a tangible change excites me.

Highlight from my career: When AbitOs became a statewide firm in 2024, and expansion to other states.

My latest cultural discovery: “When being Jewish was a Crime” by Rachmiel Frydland

Contact: www.abitos.com, 305-774-2945

Richard Lydecker

Founding partner, Lydecker

Miami





COURTESY OF LYDECKER

Lydecker leads the full-service AV-rated national law firm he founded in 1994. Today it has offices throughout Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and California.

Birthplace: New York City

Education: B.A., English and psychology, State University of New York at Buffalo; J.D., Thomas M. Cooley Law School

Why I chose my profession:



What I would change in my profession: The way all lawyers treat each other: with mutual respect, commensurate with the profession.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Leadership is about service to the people you lead.

Top of my personal bucket list: I've checked them all off and I'm going back a second time.

Contact: www.lydecker.com, 786-638-5351

Scott Mager

Market managing principal, South Florida, Grant Thornton Advisors LLC

Fort Lauderdale



COURTESY OF GRANT THORNTON

Mager has nearly 35 years of public accounting experience. He is also an industry leader for the

South Florida private equity group.

Birthplace: San Antonio

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees, accounting, University of Florida

Why I chose my profession: It aligned well with my strengths: task-oriented, strategic and client-focused.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Balancing workforce needs with seasonal business demands.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: The significant amount of M&A activity.

Top of my personal bucket list: Alaskan cruise.

Contact: www.grantthornton.com, scott.mager@us.gt.com, 954-331-1146

Mark Margulies

National managing principal of tax services, Grant Thornton Advisors LLC

Fort Lauderdale





Margulies has held a range of leadership roles since joining the firm in 1999. He previously served as regional managing principal for the firm's Southeast region.

Birthplace: Davenport, Iowa

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees, accounting, University of Miami

Why I chose my profession: I really loved the idea of helping clients minimize tax exposures.

Biggest challenge facing the
evolving role of AI.



Most unexpected recent change to my profession: Influence of private equity investment in the profession.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Not everyone moves at the same pace. Great leaders meet people where they are.

Contact: www.grantthornton.com, mark.margulies@us.gt.com, 954-331-1116

Michelle D. Mason

Interim dean, College of Law, associate dean for enrollment, senior associate dean for experiential learning, Florida International University

Miami



COURTESY OF FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Mason was named interim dean this year. She served as founding associate dean for admissions and student services in 2001. Prior to joining FIU Law, she worked at Seton Hall Law School and Vermont Law. Mason teaches in the FIU Honors College as a faculty fellow.

Birthplace: Jersey City, New Jersey

Education: B.A., J.D., Rutgers University

Why I chose my profession: My mother's dream became mine – education, service, dedication and impact.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Lead by taking responsibility and demonstrating integrity in setbacks.

Message to future professionals: Work hard, know yourself, think boldly, and show grace and gratitude.

Top of my personal bucket list: Travel the U.S. with my husband, visiting beloved family and friends nationwide.

Contact: law.fiu.edu, masonm@fiu.edu, 305-348-8005

Brian Matlock

South Florida market leader, Forvis Mazars LLP

Boca Raton and Fort L





Image: Courtesy of Forvis

COURTESY OF FORVIS

Aside from leading the firm's South Florida operations, Matlock also serves as its national alternative investment fund leader. He has spent most of his career focusing on assurance (audit) for private equity, venture and hedge funds.

Birthplace: Fort Worth, Texas

Education: B.B.A. and



Why I chose my profession:

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What I would change in my profession: Public perception that accounting is boring. It is not.

Highlight from my career: Winner of 2025 Forbes Best-in-State: Top CPAs

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Always be developing the next generation of leaders.

My latest cultural discovery: I love going to Everglades parks and looking for alligators.

Contact: www.forvismazars.com, brian.matlock@us.forvismazars.com, 561-299-1820

Brad J. McCormick

President, Kubicki Draper

Miami



ANDREW C MILNE

McCormick joined the firm in 1992, spending the first half of his career as a trial lawyer before stepping away from the practice to manage the firm in 2009. He is also an equity partner and a member of the firm's executive board.

Birthplace: Coral Gables

Education: Bachelor's degree, liberal arts, Columbia University; J.D., St. Thomas University

Why I chose my profession: The law is in my blood -- my grandfather, father, sister, brother are/were lawyers.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Artificial intelligence.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Two words: I care.

My latest cultural discovery: Believe it or not, I am typing this response from a restaurant in Tangier, Morocco.

Contact: www.kubickidraper.com, bmc@kubickidraper.com, 305-374-1212

John Meagher

Office managing partner, Shutts & Bowen LLP

Miami





SHUTTS & BOWEN

Meagher, who chairs the firm's insurance practice group, represents insurance companies and third-party administrators in trial and appellate actions in state and federal courts. He is recognized by Best Lawyers in America and South Florida Legal Guide,

Birthplace: New York

Education: B.S., political science
Georgetown University



Why I chose my profession: I was better at persuading than trombone playing.

Highlight from my career: Winning a jury trial conducted entirely via Zoom during the pandemic.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Incorporating techn into the practice and dealing with rate pressure.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Be willing to step back and allow young attorneys to shine.

Contact: www.shutts.com, jmeagher@shutts.com, 305-379-9198

Nicholas G. Milano

Executive partner, Holland & Knight LLP

Fort Lauderdale



COURTESY OF HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP

Milano also serves as the firm's real estate practice group leader for the Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach offices. He focuses his commercial real estate practice on the representation of lenders, developers and borrowers.

Birthplace: New Jersey

Education: B.S., journalism, University of Florida; J.D., Samford University

Why I chose my profession: Transactional real estate is a family business. I knew I would have a fulfilling career.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: The threat of tariffs stalling the ability to finalize construction contracts.

Highlight from my career: Working on the sale of the shuttered Diplomat Hotel to see it come back to life.

My latest cultural discovery: Driving up U.S. 27 from Broward to Highlands County is like stepping back in time.

Contact: www.hklaw.com, 954-468-7804

Matthew W. Miller

Office co-managing shareholder, Greenberg Traurig

Fort Lauderdale





Image: Courtesy of Greenberg Traurig

COURTESY OF GREENBERG TRAURIG

Miller focuses his practice on mergers & acquisitions and other corporate matters, with specific industry experience in education, manufacturing, health care, automotive, employee outsourcing and leasing, and information technology.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.S., Unive

Why I chose my profes
different industries.



Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Having empathy for others.

Message to future professionals: You will have many highs and lows; stay the course.

Highlight from my career: Closing a transaction in 21 countries on the same day.

Top of my personal bucket list: Conquering the via ferratas in the Dolomites and Loen, Norway.

Contact: www.gtlaw.com, 954-768-8259

Jennifer Miller Brooks

Founding partner, Hamilton, Miller & Birthisel LLP

Fort Lauderdale





Image: Hamilton, Miller & Birthisel LLP

HAMILTON, MILLER & BIRTHISEL LLP

Miller co-founded the minority-certified law firm that consistently ranks among the 10 most diverse law firms in South Florida. For two decades, her practice has focused on civil litigation, and her transactional work includes maritime, cruise sector and marine industry clients.

Birthplace: Fairbanks, Alaska (dad was stationed there while in the Air Force)

Education: B.S., criminal justice

Contact: www.hamiltonmiller.com
379-3686



Leslie Miller Tomczak

Office managing partner, Akerman LLP

Fort Lauderdale



JOCK FISTICK / SOUTH FLORIDA BUSINESS JOURNAL

Tomczak is Florida Bar board-certified in construction law. Her practice focuses primarily on the representation of clients in a wide range of complex construction matters.

Birthplace: Colorado

Education: B.A., Florida Atlantic University; J.D., University of Florida

Why I chose my profession:

I wanted to help others navigate complex legal issues.



Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: It is important to delegate because it allows others to learn and evolve in their practice.

My latest cultural discovery: Arcade Fire concert in London's Royal Albert Hall.
It was an amazing venue.

Contact: www.akerman.com, leslie.tomczak@akerman.com, 954-759-8926

Brian F. Misiunas

Partner, Haller Robbins Epelbaum Misiunas

Miami

Misiunas has spent over two decades working in public accounting, as well as coordinating the planning and execution of various client engagements. He has experience in areas including aviation, private equity, real estate and family offices.

Birthplace: New York

Education: B.S., accounting, University of Florida; master's degree, taxation, Florida International University

Contact: www.hrem-cpa.com, 305-858-5800

Charise A. Morgan

President, Miami-Dade Bar, staff legal counsel, Zurich North America

Miami





COURTESY OF MIAMI-DADE BAR

Morgan is an accomplished litigator and community contributor. She previously served as an administrative law judge for the Georgia Department of Labor.

Birthplace: Baltimore

Education: B.A., political science and English literature; J.D., Mercer School of Law

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Lawyer fatigue, especially among good lawyers who love the profession.

Most unexpected reception
for trial and evidential



Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Leadership often means initiating difficult conversations.

Message to future professionals: Who you know really is better than what you know.

Top of my personal bucket list: Visiting Singapore.

Contact: www.miamidadebar.org, 305-371-2220

Tarlika Nuñez-Navarro

Dean, St. Thomas University College of Law

Miami Gardens



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

Nuñez-Navarro is the first alumna dean of STU College of Law. She has driven record enrollment, bar passage and rankings while mentoring future legal leaders and making history as Florida's first Colombian American circuit court judge.

Birthplace: Lake Placid, Florida

Education: Bachelor's degree, communication, University of Miami; J.D., St. Thomas University

Why I chose my profession: Leading as dean allows me to serve and give back.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Our industry is suffering from a lack of professionalism and decorum.

Highlight from my career: To be a small part in the journey of the young lawyers STU produces.

Top of my personal bucket list: Surfing in Portugal, which I will do this summer.

Contact: www.stu.edu/law, @tarlikanavarro

Robert Paradela

Office managing partner, Wicker Smith O'Hara McCoy & Ford, P.A.

Fort Lauderdale





COURTESY OF WICKER SMITH O'HARA MCCOY & FORD, P.A.

Paradela joined Wicker Smith in 1989 and was elected as one of the firm's four managing partners in 2024. His practice deals mostly with medical malpractice, auto negligence and bad faith claims, as well as overseeing the day-to-day operations of one of the largest offices in the firm.

Birthplace: Chicago

Education: B.S., J.D./M



Why I chose my profession: I wanted to be president of the United States.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: The advent of AI and how it will impact our associates and paralegals.

What I would change in my profession: Require some in-person attendance at depositions and hearings.

Top of my personal bucket list: Visit every continent on the planet.

Contact: www.wickersmith.com, rparadela@wickersmith.com

Gus Perez

Valuation services leader, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC

Fort Lauderdale

Perez focuses his practice on areas including arbitration, commercial litigation, complex valuations, financial reporting valuations, international arbitration, litigation support and mergers & acquisitions. He is a past board member and president of the American Society of Appraisers' Greater Miami Chapter.

Education: B.B.A., Universidad Metropolitana; MBA, finance, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Contact: www.cbh.com, 954-556-1720

Luis A. Perez

Office co-managing partner, Alberman LLP

Miami





AKERMAN LLP

Aside from leading the firm's Miami office, Perez is chair of its Latin America and the Caribbean practice, where he focuses on dispute resolution and handles commercial litigation and arbitration across the U.S. and Latin America.

Birthplace: Havana

Education: B.B.A., finance

Why I chose my profession:

the last one to be incorporated.



Biggest challenge facing my industry: AI and all the changes it brings. Embrace it, don't fight it.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: Breaking the mold of the traditional 9-to-7 job and facing totally flexible schedules.

Message to future professionals: Be patient; have goals, but focus on the task at hand.

My latest cultural discovery: Peruvian food.

Contact: www.akerman.com, luis.perez@akerman.com, 305-374-5600

Carlos Perez-Abreu

Managing partner, PAAST, P.L., Certified Public Accountants and Consultants

Coral Gables



Perez-Abreu has over 30 years of public accounting experience across various industries. In the past year, the firm successfully merged with another local CPA firm and opened a satellite office in Miramar.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.B.A., accounting, MBA, University of Miami

Why I chose my profession: The father of a good friend was a CPA, and I worked in an accounting department of a local business throughout college.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: CPA licensure changes nationwide – still evolving.

Message to future professionals: Be inquisitive in your daily work; don't just go through the motions. Build on your knowledge every day.

Top of my personal bucket list: Playing Augusta National, but I will golf in Scotland in June 2025.

Contact: www.paast.com, cperezabreu@paast.com, 305-567-0150

H. William Perry

CEO and managing sh

West Palm Beach





CAPEHART

In addition to managing the day-to-day operations of the firm, Perry practices real estate and business law, specializing in complex commercial and financial transactions. He has worked on infrastructure projects, including power plants, airports and large residential communities.

Birthplace: Jenkintown, Pennsylvania

Education: B.A., University of Pennsylvania; J.D., University of Florida College of Law

Contact: www.gunster.com, hperry@gunster.com, 561-650-0640

Eric Pinaluga



Co-founding partner, Kanner & Pinaluga

Boca Raton

Since joining the Florida Bar in 2001, Pinaluga has handled hundreds of thousands of personal injury cases. He is also an active member of the Broward County Hispanic Bar Association and the American Association for Justice.

Education: B.A., political science, University of Florida; J.D., University of Miami

Contact: www.kpattorney.com, epinaluga@kpattorney.com, 888-586-5555

Ron Ponzoli

Office managing shareholder, GrayRobinson

West Palm Beach



COURTESY OF GRAYROBINSON

The firm's litigation deputy section chair, Ponzoli focuses his practice on complex state and federal litigation involving religious organizations and business disputes. He was recognized this year by Best Lawyers and Super Lawyers.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: A.B., Lafayette College; J.D., University of Miami

Why I chose my profession: I enjoy the strategy and public speaking required for trial.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: How artificial intelligence is changing the industry.

Message to future professionals: There is no substitute for hard work and fearless determination.

Highlight from my career: Having successfully argued on appeal and shaped First Amendment law in Florida.

Top of my personal bucket list: Land a sailfish off my kayak.

Contact: www.gray-robinson.com, ron.ponzoli@gray-robinson.com, 561-268-5731

Lou Proietto



Office managing partner, Citrin Cooperman

Fort Lauderdale



Image: Courtesy of Citrin Cooperman

COURTESY OF CITRIN COOPERMAN

With over 34 years of experience in public accounting, Proietto is involved in all aspects of financial and tax planning, from acquisitions and operations to the sale of a business. This past year, his previous firm joined Citrin Cooperman.

Birthplace: Philadelphia

Education: B.S., Florida State University

Biggest challenge facing
younger people who s



What I would change in my profession: A more user-friendly IRS.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: From task-oriented to more people-focused.

My latest cultural discovery: Experiencing the culture and work ethic in Japan this past year has been eye-opening for me.

Contact: www.citrincooperman.com, lproietto@citrincooperman.com, 954-771-0896

Harold F. Pryor

Broward State Attorney

Fort Lauderdale



Pryor was elected the county's chief law enforcement official in 2020 and today leads a staff of 462. He is the first Black state attorney in Broward, and the first Black man to be elected state attorney in Florida.

Birthplace: Florida

Education: B.A., political science, University of Florida; J.D., Nova Southeastern University

Why I chose my profession: Laws can negatively and positively impact the people I love.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Pessimists complain. Optimists expect change. Real leaders make things happen.

Highlight from my career: Securing raises for the Office of State Attorney's support staff.

Top of my personal bucket list: Watch Daryl Hall & John Oates live.

Contact: www.browardsao.com, sao17@sao17.state.fl.us, 954-831-6955

Joshua Rader

Managing partner, Miami metro, Citrin Cooperman

Miami





TOLGA KAVUT

Rader has been in his post since the firm entered the South Florida marketplace in March 2024. Today, it has three South Florida offices and almost 150 professionals serving the marketplace.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.S., media
degree, accounting, No



Biggest challenge facing my industry: Replacing a large number of retiring professionals.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: The rise of outside capital coming into our industry.

Message to future professionals: Early adopters of new technologies will be ahead of the game.

My latest cultural discovery: Scotland.

Top of my personal bucket list: To live abroad.

Contact: www.citrincooperman.com, jrader@citrincooperman.com, 305-444-0999

Anthony Reh

Assurance market managing principal, Florida, BDO USA

Miami



COURTESY OF BDO USA

Reh has more than 25 years of experience in public accounting, working with public and privately held companies, both internationally and domestically.

Birthplace: Montreal

Education: B.B.A., accounting, University of Florida; B.S., M.S., taxation, Georgia State University

Why I chose my profession: As a second-generation accountant, I witnessed how fulfilling relationship-building is.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Firms are growing at a faster pace than the talent pool.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Always have a succession plan in place and ready.

My latest cultural discovery: The golf courses here feature more water (so I lose more balls).

Contact: www.bdo.com, areh@bdo.com, 305-420-8086

Cheo Reid

President, F. Malcolm Cunningham Sr. Bar Association

West Palm Beach

Reid is a deputy chief of police in Florida. He has served as the chair of the Florida Bar's Criminal Procedure Rules Committee.



Education: Bachelor's degree, Florida Atlantic University; J.D., Florida A&M University

Contact: fmcbsba.wildapricot.org

Melinda Robbins

Partner, Haller Robbins Epelbaum Misiunas

Miami

Robbins has over 20 years' experience working in public accounting. She joined Haller Robbins Epelbaum Misiunas in 1997, and today provides a full range of services for individuals and their closely held partnerships and corporations.

Birthplace: Utah

Education: B.S., master's degree, accounting, Weber State University

Why I chose my profession: A financial statement was a puzzle, very satisfying when complete.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Attracting, hiring and retaining staff.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Always be curious and continue learning. Practice patience and persistence.

Contact: www.hrem-cpa.com, 305-858-5800

Dwayne Robinson

President, Wilkie D. F
& Throckmorton

Miami





Image: Courtesy of Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton

COURTESY OF KOZYAK TROPIN & THROCKMORTON

Robinson focuses his practice on complex litigation. He has represented clients in dozens of appeals in federal and state court, and served as part of a litigation and appellate team that secured a victory before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Birthplace: New York

Education: B.S., journa

Why I chose my profession:
provide justice.



What I would change in my profession: The obsession with billable hours; focus on client service instead.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Praise in public; correct in private.

Highlight from my career: Being on a team that won a U.S. Supreme Court case.

Contact: wdfjba.wildapricot.org, drobinson@kttlaw.com, 305-372-1800

Adam Rogers

Office managing partner, McDermott Will & Emery

Miami



GITTINGS PHOTOGRAPHY

Rogers represents private equity funds, strategic investors, lenders, entrepreneurs and other operators as they pursue and execute mergers & acquisitions and other complex corporate transactions that drive innovation within the health care industry.

Birthplace: Far Rockaway, New York

Education: B.S., physical therapy, University of Florida; J.D., Duke University

Why I chose my profession: Intellectual curiosity and challenge, the ability to engage in meaningful work.

Message to future professionals: Things always seem to be getting exponentially more challenging. Let the noise pass through and focus on what you can control.

My latest cultural discoveries: “The Michael Singer Podcast,” and his book, “The Untethered Soul.”

Top of my personal bucket list: Traveling: A safari, Antarctica, Australia and Japan.

Contact: www.mwe.com, arogers@mwe.com, 305-329-4455

Lisa J. Roney

Office managing partner



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Fort Lauderdale

Aside from leading the firm’s Fort Lauderdale office, Roney is a partner in its audit and assurance group. She has over 20 years’ experience providing audit services in the areas of SEC reporting, Sarbanes-Oxley Act Section 404

compliance, interim financial statement reviews, merger & acquisition consulting, and internal control attestation.

Education: B.S.B.A., accounting, Indiana University, Bloomington

Contact: www.crowe.com, 954-202-2927

Gary C. Rosen

CEO and managing shareholder, Becker & Poliakoff

Fort Lauderdale



BECKER & POLIAKOFF

Rosen oversees governance, recruitment and business strategy. He represents public and private entities, including governments and corporations, and protects national clients' intellectual property through civil trademark and copyright infringement actions.

Birthplace: Worcester, Massachusetts

Education: B.A., Brandeis University; J.D., Catholic University

Why I chose my profession: A dismal ability in science and a penchant for arguing.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: AI, AI, AI.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: A bit more patience and a longer lens viewing decisions.

Message to future professionals: Invest in yourself; more education and training; spend time with people, not devices.

Top of my personal bucket list: More travel.

Contact: www.beckerlawyers.com, 954-987-7550

Robert Rosen

President, Gerstle, Ros

South Florida



Rosen began his career with the audit department of an international Big 8 accounting firm in New York and, in 1985, he and Mark Gerstle founded the firm. Rosen is experienced in audits of condominium and homeowner

associations, real estate developers, 401(k) and the areas of small business, corporate and individual taxation.

Education: Hofstra University

Contact: www.grgcpa.com, rrosen@grgcpa.com

Joseph L. Saka

CEO, Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors + CPAs

Miami



COURTESY OF BERKOWITZ POLLACK BRANT ADVISORS + CPAs

For more than 25 years, Saka has provided income and estate planning, tax consulting and compliance services, business advice and financial planning to entrepreneurs, high-net-worth families and family companies, and business executives in the U.S. and abroad. He leads the firm of more than 300 individuals working from five offices in Florida and New York. The firm has been named to Accounting Today's Top 100 Firms for 28 years and Inside Public Accounting's Best of the Best for 22 years.

Birthplace: Miami Beach

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees, accounting, Florida International University

Contact: www.bpbcpa.com, 305-379-7000

Patricia Sanchez Abril

Interim dean, University of Miami School of Law; professor, business law, Miami Herbert Business School

Coral Gables





JOSHUA PREZANT

A Miami native and accomplished legal academic, Sánchez Abril was named Interim dean in 2024. On UM's faculty since 2004, she was previously vice dean of the Miami Herbert Business School and interim dean of the university's Graduate School.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.A., Duke University; J.D., Harvard University

Why I chose my profession: The intellectual curiosity and personal care of so many educators throughout my life.

How my leadership at



Highlight from my career: Founding the Miami Law & AI Lab with Or Conen Sasson and seeing its impact.

My latest cultural discovery: Dan Harris' "10% Happier" podcast.

Contact: law.miami.edu, pabril@miami.edu, 305-284-6999

Roland Sanchez-Medina Jr.

President, The Florida Bar; founding partner, SMGQ Law

Coral Gables



SMGQ LAW

Sanchez-Medina Jr. focuses his practice in the areas of corporate and securities law. He previously served as president of the Cuban American Bar Association.

Birthplace: Oriente, C



Education: B.B.A., University of Miami; J.D., Boston College; L.L.M., taxation, New York University

Why I chose my profession: As an immigrant, I went into a profession that would help me provide for my family.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Generative AI and access to justice.

What I would change in my profession: The daily intensity and relentlessness of the work.

Top of my personal bucket list: New Zealand

Contact: www.smgqlaw.com, roland@smgqlaw.com, 305-377-1000

Mark Schellhase

Office managing shareholder, GrayRobinson

Boca Raton





COURTESY OF GRAYROBINSON

Schellhase provides comprehensive counsel to corporate entities, local governments, and sovereign governmental bodies throughout Florida. His practice focus includes complex commercial litigation and employment law matters.

Birthplace: Evansville, Indiana

Education: B.A., Purdue University
Florida State University



Why I chose my profession: It was a lifetime goal to graduate from law school and become a lawyer.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: The impact of constant connectivity.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Recognizing there are multiple ways to accomplish a task.

Message to future professionals: Show up consistently and find a way to add value.

Contact: www.gray-robinson.com, mark.schellhase@gray-robinson.com, 561-368-3808

Brett Schneider

Office managing director, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman

Boca Raton



AARPHOTO

Aside from leading the firm's Palm Beach County office, Schneider chairs the firm's labor and employment division. He is Florida Bar board-certified in labor

and employment law.

Birthplace: Los Angeles

Education: B.A., political science, University of Maryland; J.D., George Washington University

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: Changes to diversity and inclusion initiatives.

What I would change in my profession: More in-person collaboration.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: More patient and empathetic.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: The importance of positive reinforcement and recognition.

My latest cultural discovery: The band Goose.

Contact: www.wsh-law.com, bschneider@wsh-law.com, 561-835-2111

William N. Shepherd

Executive partner, Holland & Knight LLP

West Palm Beach





Image: Courtesy of Holland & Knight LLP

COURTESY OF HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP

Shepherd, who works in the firm's West Palm Beach and Washington, D.C., offices, has tried more than 40 jury trials to verdict. He serves at the Florida governor's appointment as a commissioner on the 15th Judicial Circuit Nominating Commission, and is the founder and co-chair of the American Bar Association's International White Collar Crime Institute in London.

Birthplace: St. Louis

Education: A.B., English, Georgetown University; Georgetown University, Law Center



Why I chose my profession: I became a lawyer to join the FBI.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: We are in a people business. Get out into the community, not just the virtual community.

My latest cultural discovery: Milos in West Palm Beach.

Message to future professionals: Keep reading.

Contact: www.hklaw.com, 561-650-8338

Paul Steven Singerman

Co-chair, Berger Singerman LLP

Miami



COURTESY OF BERGER SINGERMAN

Singerman is one of Florida's leading restructuring lawyers. Known for his client-centered approach, he guides clients through high-stakes bankruptcies and complex litigation.

Birthplace: Lima, Ohio

Education: B.A., J.D., University of Florida

Why I chose my profession: To help clients efficiently solve business problems.

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Recruitment and retention of talent and leveraging technology.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: I have learned the importance of being a mindful listener.

Message to future professionals: Stay focused, take care of yourselves and be kind.

Contact: www.bergersingerman.com, singerman@bergersingerman.com, 305-714-4343

Camille C.T. Smith

President, The T.J. Reddick Bar Association; assistant U.S. attorney,
Broward County

Fort Lauderdale





COURTESY OF THE T.J. REDDICK BAR ASSOCIATION

A Jamaican immigrant and first-generation lawyer, Smith serves as president of the T.J. Reddick Bar Association. She is also a federal prosecutor and community leader. Smith received the Spirit of Service Award from the National Black Prosecutors Association's South Florida Chapter.

Birthplace: Jamaica

Education: J.D., Florida Coastal School of Law

Why I chose my profession: To advocate for and empower others

Biggest challenge facing
and justice.



Most unexpected recent change to my profession: A significant increase in women lawyers.

My latest cultural discovery: Motek. I love Mediterranean cuisine.

Contact: www.tjreddickbar.com, tjreddickbar@gmail.com

Steven Solomon

Office managing shareholder, GrayRobinson

Miami



Image: Courtesy of GrayRobinson

COURTESY OF GRAYROBINSON

Aside from leading the

practice. He brings over 30 years of legal and financial consulting experience in distressed assets, fiduciary litigation and insolvencies, offering strategic counsel to stakeholders across Florida and beyond.

Birthplace: Miami



Education: B.S., accounting, J.D., University of Florida

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Understanding of the judiciary's role in preserving constitutional balance.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: The rapid emergence and impact of generative artificial intelligence tools.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: GrayRobinson's support and collegiality has allowed me to lead with greater conviction.

Message to future professionals: Dedicate yourself to civic causes that align with your passions.

Contact: www.gray-robinson.com, steven.solomon@gray-robinson.com, 305-913-0367

Mark J. Stempler

Office managing shareholder, Becker & Poliakoff

West Palm Beach





Image: Courtesy of Becker & Poliakoff

COURTESY OF BECKER & POLIAKOFF

Stempler is board-certified in construction law. He focuses on construction and government procurement litigation, representing clients in disputes involving defects, delays, contracts, liens, bond claims and insurance coverage issues.

Birthplace: New Jersey

Education: B.S., University of Miami; J.D., Florida International University

Most unexpected rece
depositions and media



How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Experience promotes greater patience and consideration of broader perspectives.

Highlight from my career: Battling Uber, during its emergence, in legal and regulatory disputes.

My latest cultural discovery: The “delish.diariess” on Instagram provides great restaurant suggestions.

Contact: www.beckerlawyers.com, 954-987-7550

Jeffrey Taraboulos

Managing partner, KSDT CPA

Miami



COURTESY OF KSDT CPA

Managing partner of one of Florida's fastest-growing CPA firms. This year, KSDT expanded its footprint, completing multiple M&A integrations, and continued developing offshore capabilities to better serve clients and scale operations.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees, accounting, Florida International University

Why I chose my profession: I enjoy helping people and solving complex problems.

What I would change in my profession: More innovation and less resistance to change.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: I am more strategic, patient and focused on developing others.

Top of my personal bucket list: Visit all Seven Wonders of the World.

Contact: www.ksdtcpa.com, jtaraboulos@ksdt-cpa.com, 305-216-5228

John Templeton

CEO and managing partner

West Palm Beach and





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Templeton leads the firm's audit and accounting services division. He provides accounting, auditing and advisory services for private enterprises in a variety of industries.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.A., Palm Beach Atlantic University; MBA, Florida State University

Why I chose my profession:
to serve my clients.



What I would change in my profession: Modify barriers to entry to public accounting through changes in the 150-hour rule, while requiring practical work experience.

My latest cultural discovery: Rick Atkinson's "The Fate of the Day," the second volume in his American Revolution trilogy.

Top of my personal bucket list: A trip to Greece. My grandmother was from Greece.

Contact: www.templetonco.com, john@templetonco.com 561-798-9988

Steven Templeton

Founding partner, Templeton & Co. LLP

West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale



© HEATHER HOLT PHOTO

Templeton founded the firm in 1990. Today, he has more than 45 years of public accounting and consulting experience working with clients in a variety of industries.

Birthplace: Jacksonville

Education: B.S., accounting, Florida State University

Why I chose my profession: I was exposed to great accounting professors at FSU.

Most unexpected recent change to my profession: Private equity roll-up acquisitions creating firms with unique business models.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Working on the business, rather than just in the business.

Highlight from my career: Launching a practice management solution used by premier firms nationwide.

Contact: www.templetonco.com, steve@templetonco.com 561-798-9988

Louis J. Terminello

Office managing partner, Greenspoon Marder LLP

Miami





MICHAEL MURPHY

Aside from leading the firm's Miami office, Terminello chairs its hospitality, alcohol and leisure industry group. He concentrates his practice on providing legal services to all tiers of the alcohol beverage industry.

Birthplace: New York City

Education: B.S., North

How my leadership at

and mentorship has grown significantly over time.



Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: Listen more than you speak.

Message to future professionals: Focus on client relationships and innovative solutions.

Top of my personal bucket list: Perfect my Italian.

Contact: www.gmlaw.com

Octavio A. Verdeja

Senior partner, Verdeja and Álvarez CPAs

Coral Gables



COURTESY OF VERDEJA AND ÁLVAREZ CPAS

Verdeja joined his father's firm in 1981 after working with [Ernst & Young](#). At the time, there were eight professionals; today, there are over 50. Verdeja specializes in the not-for-profit and education sector, with clients such as museums, art centers and children's organizations.

Birthplace: Havana

Education: B.B.A., accounting, University of Miami

What I would change in my profession: Accountants need to study public speaking. Numbers need to be explained.

How my leadership approach has evolved with age: Listen to youth, including sons and son-in-law partners.

Most impactful leadership lesson I've learned: I am always a psychologist before I am an accountant.

My latest cultural discovery: Traveling with my family, including 10 grandkids, throughout Europe.

Contact: www.va-cpa.com, oaverdeja@va-cpa.com, 305 446-3177

J.J. "Spike" Wicker

Shareholder, Wicker Smith O'Hara McCoy & Ford, P.A.

West Palm Beach



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COURTESY OF WICKER SMITH O'HARA MCCOY & FORD, P.A.

Wicker began his legal career with Wicker Smith in 1976. His civil trial practice has focused on matters of trucking and automobile liability, medical malpractice, premises liability, products liability and professional negligence.

Birthplace: Miami

Education: B.S., University of Florida; MBA, J.D., Samford University

Why I chose my profession while always



How my leadership approach has evolved with age: I try to incorporate mentoring at all levels.

Message to figure professionals: If there are two roads to get there, take the high road.

My latest cultural discovery: Yellowstone and the Tetons.

Contact: www.wickersmith.com, jwicker@wickersmith.com

Richard A. Wood

Managing shareholder, Fowler White Burnett

Miami



COURTESY OF FOWLER WHITE BURNETT

Wood plays a key leadership role in executing the firm's strategic initiatives. He leads all phases of new local office development, including supporting the firm's Fort Lauderdale expansion, while overseeing daily operations and driving long-term organizational growth.

Birthplace: Coral Gables

Education: B.A., University of Miami; MBA, J.D., Samford University

Biggest challenge facing my industry: Combating rising fraud in complex real estate transactions.

What I would change in my profession: Rebalance remote work to restore in-person collaboration.

Message to future professionals: Embrace change, stay ahead of AI and buckle up.

Top of my personal bucket list: Heli-skiing, South Pacific escape, and a healthy retirement with my wife.

Contact: www.fowler-white.com, rwood@fowler-white.com, 305-789-9200

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Law Firms in South Florida

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