

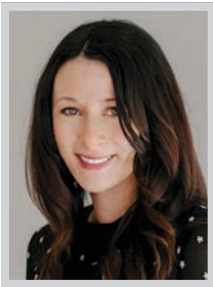
WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: ACCOUNTING



Many of the nation's leading fiscal thought leaders are based in the LA region and happen to be women. We've alphabetically listed some of the very best of them here, along with key information about their careers and relevant recent successes they've achieved.

Methodology: The professionals featured in these pages did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from nomination materials submitted to the Los Angeles Business Journal. Those selected for inclusion were reviewed by the editorial department and chosen based on a demonstration of impact made on the profession and on the Los Angeles community.

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BRIDGET AHERN

Partner; People Advisory Services & Global Business Travel Compliance Leader
EY

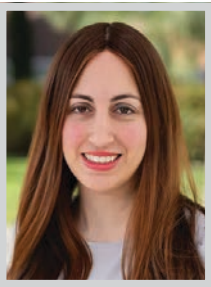
Bridget Ahern is deeply embedded leader in the Los Angeles entrepreneurial community. In addition to her client work, she serves as EY’s Entrepreneur of the Year co-director for Los Angeles, which just announced their 41st winners. Every year, she elevates dozens of local founders and celebrates the innovation happening throughout the city. In this way, she plays a pivotal role in strengthening LA’s reputation as a business- and entrepreneur-friendly community. Ahern also helps create a meaningful platform for LA based entrepreneurs—connecting them with visibility, validation, and access that can be transformational for both their businesses and their confidence as leaders. She works closely with founders across industries, and ensures they feel seen, supported, and championed.



JESSICA ALLEN

Partner
PwC LLP

Jessica Allen has made an extraordinary impact on the LA market this year through her leadership, connectivity, and unwavering commitment to our people, clients, and community. She has become one of the most visible and impactful partners across the market, supporting strategic initiatives while continuing to deliver exceptional service. Allen wears numerous hats across the market, each of which meaningfully contributes to the strength of our people and culture. She serves as the lead partner for three public companies this year and leading a client through its IPO process. She has developed a strong reputation as both a client and people connector and is consistently bringing together critical subject matter experts across her accounts to deliver the best of the firm to clients.



LIMOR AMRANI

Senior Tax Manager
Manela & Co

Limor Amrani is a senior tax manager at Manela & Co. whose depth of expertise, leadership, and sustained impact have made her stand out. With nearly two decades at the firm, Amrani plays a critical role in managing and reviewing highly complex tax matters for high-net-worth individuals, corporations, partnerships, trusts, and nonprofits. She is a trusted advisor in IRS and California FTB audit defense, civil tax controversies, estate and succession planning, and tax-exempt compliance. Amrani is also known for her forward-looking approach to tax strategy, advising clients on multi-state apportionment, 1031 exchanges, payroll tax issues, and evolving federal and state legislation. Most recently, she guided clients through CARES Act NOL carrybacks and the Employee Retention Credit, helping them unlock significant liquidity.



BELVA ANAKWENZE

Entertainment Business Manager
Abacus Financial
Business Management

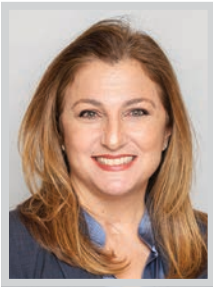
Belva Anakwenze has achieved remarkable professional success in the past 12-18 months. As principal of Abacus Financial Management Group, she has driven significant growth in client base, revenue, and employee count, further establishing the firm’s prominence in entertainment business management. Anakwenze’s industry impact has been recognized through multiple prestigious accolades, and she has expanded her thought leadership through “The Earn Up,” a YouTube financial show for creatives launched in partnership with Patreon, where she serves as host, writer, and executive producer. Her expertise was showcased at SXSW 2024, where she presented on “Wealth Creation for Creatives,” further cementing her authority at the intersection of finance and creative industries.



ANGELICA NOUVA BAIZA

Director
PwC LLP

Angelica Nouva Baiza is a director in PwC’s Asset and Wealth Management practice. She serves a diverse portfolio of multinational corporate advisors, private equity firms, and alternative investment funds. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a remarkable ability to evolve her role and expand her impact—from leading critical audit areas and coordinating cross-border procedures, to overseeing multiple audit issuances, guiding clients through complex accounting and reporting matters, and driving seamless execution across global teams. Her ability to adapt, grow, and consistently deliver high-quality results has made her an invaluable leader within the practice. One of Baiza’s most notable accomplishments has been her leadership of audits for multinational asset and wealth management clients.



NANAZ BENYAMINI

Partner, Tax Department
SingerLewak

Nanaz Benyamini has over 14 years of experience as a tax-exempt specialist, providing compliance and consulting services to nonprofit organizations. She began her career with Deloitte & Touche in 1996 and continued her career through the position of tax senior manager in Deloitte’s Los Angeles Tax Exempt Practice. Benyamini specializes in taxation of nonprofit organizations and has extensive experience advising her clients on the unique tax topics facing nonprofit organizations. Her expertise includes the tax and operational requirements of nonprofit organizations and unrelated business income. In addition to her expertise in the area of nonprofit organizations, Benyamini also has a background in for-profit taxation, including individuals, flow-through entities, and S corporations.



GALINA BERKOVICH

Partner
Duffy Kruspodin, LLP

Galina Berkovich, CPA, has helped shape the growth and evolution of Duffy Kruspodin, LLP through decades of leadership, operational innovation, and talent development. As a long-standing partner, her influence extends far beyond client engagements. She has played an instrumental role in building the systems, culture, and leadership framework that have supported the firm’s continued success and expansion throughout Southern California. One of Berkovich’s most significant accomplishments was serving as one of the original members of the firm’s Executive Committee when it was first established. During a pivotal stage of the firm’s development, she helped guide strategic decisions that strengthened operations, supported growth initiatives, and reinforced the firm’s commitment to exceptional client service.



KELLY BUCK

Partner, Audit & Assurance Services
Windes Audit | Tax | Advisory

Kelly Buck is a highly respected leader within Windes and the Southern California accounting community, recognized for her technical excellence, collaborative leadership style, and commitment to developing people and organizations. As a partner in Windes’ Audit & Assurance Services practice, Buck provides audit, accounting, and advisory services to privately held businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout the Los Angeles and Long Beach regions. Her experience spans publicly traded and privately held entities across industries including professional services, manufacturing, distribution, technology, and the nonprofit sector. At Windes, Buck is a trusted partner and mentor, contributing to firm leadership, talent development, and consistent delivery of high-quality client service.



ASHLEY BURGIN

Partner
Gursey Schneider, LLP

Ashley Burgin, CPA, tax partner at Gursey Schneider, has spent more than a decade providing high-net-worth individuals, families and their closely held businesses with holistic and comprehensive corporate, income and estate tax planning services. Burgin joined the firm as an associate in 2016, and she was named partner in January of 2026. This achievement is a culmination of her ability to provide clients with the highest level of service as well as her technical mastery of evolving tax strategies and changing laws. Burgin’s tax practice is defined by her sincere engagement with every client. She is often retained during a complex transaction that demands a sophisticated advisor, and finds that these relationships endure after the transaction.

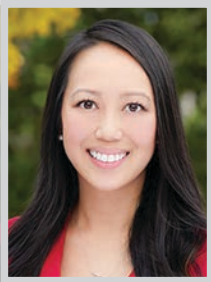


RELL BURR

Director, Administration
Fineman West & Co LLP

Rell Burr stands out from others in this field as her contributions extend far beyond the responsibilities of a traditional administrative leader, making her an indispensable part of our organization’s success and growth. Throughout Burr’s tenure, she has demonstrated an exceptional understanding of our firm’s structure, operations, and strategic goals. Her learned knowledge of how our accounting departments function has enabled her to develop and implement administrative and technology processes that support efficiency, productivity, and long-term scalability. She has been instrumental in building and refining our business processes, IT infrastructure, and Accounting systems, ensuring that our systems (people and process) effectively support the evolving needs of the firm while keeping our data safe and in compliance.

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: ACCOUNTING



MARY ANN NGUYEN
Senior Tax Director
Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman

As the senior tax director at Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman LLC, Mary Ann Nguyen leads one of the largest and most dynamic tax practices in Los Angeles, overseeing a team of more than 170 tax professionals who serve clients in the entertainment, sports, and ultra-high-net-worth sectors. Her career has been defined by a commitment to elevating the standards of tax practice, driving efficiency, accuracy, and scalability across the firm, while championing the development of the next generation of tax leaders.

Nguyen’s role sits at the intersection of technical excellence, operational strategy, and people leadership. She is responsible for designing and implementing the processes, procedures, and workflows that enable the firm’s tax department to operate at a high level each year.



KELLY O’NEIL
Lead Managing Director
CBIZ CPAS P.C.

Kelly O’Neil, CPA, is a highly accomplished audit and assurance leader whose career reflects both sustained excellence and meaningful impact across the accounting profession. A shareholder in the Los Angeles office and Southern California Attest Practice Leader, O’Neil has been a trusted advisor to clients since 2007, bringing strategic insight to complex financial challenges.

Recognized nationally for her work in audit and consulting, O’Neil serves public and large privately held companies across a diverse range of industries, including many backed by private equity and venture capital. Her ability to navigate intricate accounting matters—particularly in areas such as compliance, operations, and internal control environments—has made her an invaluable partner to corporate management teams.



JADIE ON
Director, Accounting Services
Fineman West & Co LLP

Jadie On has made a meaningful and lasting contribution by building and leading our bookkeeping department while expanding our accounting and business management services across a variety of industries, including entertainment, real estate, manufacturing, public relations and marketing, and legal industry. On identified an important need within the firm and helped bridge a critical gap between bookkeeping, tax, and audit services.

Through On’s efforts, client information flows more efficiently between departments, resulting in stronger internal processes. She has played a key role in reviewing, strengthening, and modernizing many of the firm’s client service procedures, helping the firm operate more effectively while maintaining a high standard of quality.



YELENA PAPIRYAN
Partner
Duffy Kruspodin, LLP

Yelena Papiryan, CPA, has distinguished herself as a highly respected tax advisor whose expertise in international taxation has helped clients successfully navigate increasingly complex global business and compliance environments. As a partner at Duffy Kruspodin, LLP, she has built a reputation for delivering sophisticated tax guidance while making complex issues understandable and actionable.

A defining accomplishment of Papiryan’s career has been her leadership in developing and expanding the firm’s international tax specialization group. Recognizing the growing needs of clients with international operations, investments, and reporting obligations, she helped establish specialized capabilities that support cross-border tax planning, compliance, and risk management.



TARA PARKER
Partner
BPM

Tara (Wilson) Parker is a trailblazer in the accounting profession and a transformative leader at BPM LLP. In November 2024, she made history as the firm’s first Black woman partner. With more than 17 years of public accounting experience, Parker is recognized for her deep technical expertise in partnership taxation and real estate investments. She advises clients in real estate, professional services, consumer business, and manufacturing, and most recently launched BPM’s first REIT-focused tax practice.

Parker’s client impact is significant. She has guided clients through multimillion-dollar commercial property acquisitions, designed innovative tax structures for investment funds, and provided trusted counsel on complex stock option strategies.



FOR THE BUSINESS YOU LEAD.
FOR THE LIFE YOU WANT.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Stacey Summers, Tax Manager, and Kori Schneider, Director of Business Management

We are incredibly proud to celebrate this outstanding recognition and to have such inspiring leaders represent Lucas Horsfall and our shared values. Your dedication, passion, and commitment to excellence reflect the very best of who we are and the impact we strive to make every day.



STACEY SUMMERS
Tax Manager

KORI SCHNEIDER
Director of Business Management

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LORI ROCK
Managing Director
CBIZ

Lori N. Rock’s career is distinguished by deep technical expertise, sustained leadership, and a consistent record of delivering high-impact results for a broad range of clients. As a managing director in CBIZ’s California region, Rock has built a nearly 20-year career in public accounting focused on complex tax compliance and strategic business consulting. Her work spans both publicly traded and privately held companies across diverse industries—including retail, distribution, manufacturing, technology, and service sectors.

One of Rock’s most notable strengths is her specialization in accounting for income taxes and uncertainty in income taxes, highly technical areas that require precision, sound judgment, and a deep understanding of regulatory standards.



JACKIE SAWIRIS
Partner
Duffy Kruspodin, LLP

Jackie Sawiris, EA, MBA, MAFM, has established herself as a dynamic leader known for her strategic thinking, client advocacy, and commitment to advancing specialized advisory services. As a partner at Duffy Kruspodin, LLP, she plays an important role in shaping the firm’s future while helping clients address increasingly complex financial and business challenges.

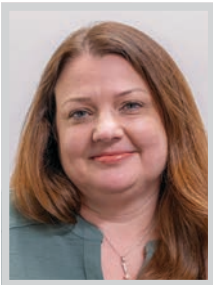
A major milestone in Sawiris’ career was her admission to partner in 2025, recognizing her leadership, professional accomplishments, and contributions to the firm’s continued growth. This achievement reflects years of dedication to serving clients, developing specialized expertise, and helping drive strategic initiatives across the organization. Sawiris currently oversees the firm’s Industry Specialization Group.



AMANDA SCHLANK
Partner, Assurance & Advisory
SingerLewak

Amanda Schlank joined SingerLewak in 2006 and brings extensive public accounting experience as an auditor serving privately held companies, publicly traded companies, and nonprofit organizations. She advises on complex accounting and financial matters, with areas of expertise that include internal controls, financing transactions, mergers and acquisitions, SEC compliance and reporting, and audits performed in accordance with the Uniform Guidance.

Schlank serves clients across a broad range of industries and is known for her practical, solution oriented approach. She excels at translating complex accounting requirements into clear, actionable guidance that supports strategic decision making and long-term business objectives.



KORI SCHNEIDER
Business Management Director
Lucas Horsfall

Kori Schneider first joined the Gettleson, Witzer & O’Connor (now Lucas Horsfall) team as an intern in the summer of 2003. Now as a director, Schneider works on a portfolio of business management and tax clients that includes leading Hollywood talent, both on and off camera, as well as successful real estate professionals and investors/entrepreneurs many of whom have been with her for over a decade.

Schneider experience and vast expertise in a wide range of fields enable her to serve as a trusted member of her clients’ professional advisory teams, working closely with their attorneys and investment brokers. She plays an integral role in such specialties as human resources and personnel management, budgeting and financial planning, estate planning, real estate acquisitions, project management and tax planning.



CYNTHIA SCHOELEN
Partner
BPM

Cindy Schoelen, partner at BPM LLP, is a transformative leader whose decades-long career has significantly shaped the accounting profession in Southern California. With more than 30 years of experience, her path from IRS agent to entrepreneurial firm founder to BPM partner reflects a rare combination of technical expertise, business acumen, and people-centered leadership. She is widely recognized for her ability to build lasting client relationships, develop high-performing teams, and guide organizations through periods of meaningful change.

Schoelen’s leadership has been particularly impactful during times of transition. She played a critical role in guiding her team through its 2023 combination with BPM, leading due diligence efforts and helping determine the strategic fit for the future.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Congratulations to Katie Hagen and Mary Ann Nguyen on being recognized in the Los Angeles Business Journal's 2026 Women of Influence: Accounting



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Katie Hagen
Director



Mary Ann Nguyen
Senior Tax Director