

FUND FINANCE FRIDAY

Player Profile – Gail Boyle

October 11, 2019 | Issue No. 49

Player Profile



We kicked off the Player Profile series earlier this year to connect our readers with leaders in the fund finance industry. This week we catch up with Gail Boyle on the current state of the market, career advice and the fund finance outlook. Gail is a senior banker in the Fund Finance space for MUFG Union Bank. Her clients and her practice are primarily centered in the Western U.S., and focuses on banking of Private Equity GPs via their specific fund borrowers – a highly successful, growing practice for the bank.

FFF: Tell us a bit about how you ended up in Fund Finance.

In 2007 I was solicited to lead our client expansion for subscription and capital call lending. The bank wanted to grow the niche business established with direct relationships and ancillary non-credit business. We had a growing presence with both local PE firms in Los Angeles and with larger firms with a national presence. It was a successful move for me, as well as the group, which established itself for future growth. I have had the chance to grow our business, market presence and be a part of this now well-established business.

FFF: The fund lending market has become rather competitive. How does your team differentiate itself in this market?

We have strong relationships with our clients and a nimble credit culture, and we understand the product very well. Our focus is to originate and distribute for clients that are meaningful to the MUFG franchise. We are also a market leader in HNW facilities, with expertise and proprietary experience to execute on transactions that fit our strategy. We are organizationally

very client-focused, and we have a culture and strategies to assist clients in maximizing their relationship across MUFG Union Bank for all products and services.

FFF: What market trends are you seeing in 2019 compared to 2018?

We are seeing larger fund managers be successful with their fundraising, especially within their flagship strategies, but it seems that mid-size or independent fund managers are taking longer to raise capital and perhaps needing to amend/adjust their respective strategies. We are also seeing more participation from sovereign entities across the sector, which requires specific knowledge to underwrite effectively to clear market. Additionally, we are finding more borrower interest in assuring expansive borrowing bases throughout the stages of a fund's lifecycle.

FFF: Who has had the most influence on your career?

There have been a lot of folks along the way; it certainly takes a large village. My MUFG colleagues throughout the years have been a guiding presence. We are an organization that fosters teamwork and collaboration, and I have been the beneficiary of many solid leaders and managers with strong skill sets. At the top of the list would be Terence Hatton, who is the Group Head in charge of Fund Finance. He has continued to provide solid, grounded leadership via example and guidance. He has a wealth of experience in the space pre-dating my 12 years, which continues to provide dividends. My time in Fund Finance has been the most gratifying time of my career, and so I am very grateful for the opportunity to move from corporate banking, which at the time I also certainly did enjoy. I would also say that many of my friends – in particular, my former running buddies (neither of whom were bankers) – were very influential. They were brutally honest and experienced sounding boards in the pre-light a.m. to talk about client situations and managing one's career, not to mention gender- and mother-related aspects of working one's entire life. Their influence kept me on track and focused.

FFF: What advice do you have for the young fund finance banker just getting underway in the sector?

My recommendation is to gain as much experience in the actual nuts and bolts of the space. This business calls for attention to detail and getting things right the first time. This means things like understanding who the LPs really are, knowing the importance of side letter reviews, and really understanding what is (and what is not) in a LPA or a credit agreement. Our clients are becoming much more sophisticated, and they are also relying upon teams of counsel to assist them in their objectives, so we need to pay attention to the details on the lenders' side. I would also say that specific hands-on knowledge of ancillary services and products is also helpful, not to mention a client-oriented attitude.

FFF: Any suggestions for the Fund Finance Association?

West Coast "Women in Fund Finance" events and outreach. I have had discussions and hope that the West Coast can gain from having events to bring those active in the space together for networking and the sharing of knowledge. I have found the outside speakers at the recent conferences to be getting better and more relevant, so thank you to the Association.

FFF: What do you like to do outside of the office?

I like to be active. I hike, work out and swim. I also am very family-oriented and enjoy spending time with family members whenever possible. I have been on a number of boards, including the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, but I am taking a bit of a break from outside charitable

boards at the moment. My husband and I have a list of travel objectives for the next few years to supplement prior travels.

FFF: Any bold fund finance predictions for the rest of the year?

I expect that the recent "trade war," Brexit and decreased interest rates will contribute to opportunities for those active in the distressed area. However, I also think that those opportunities will be more likely to present themselves in 2020 rather than later this year. I would say to expect the unexpected as the world has a way of presenting itself differently than expected. There will be continued pressure on lenders to manage exposure adroitly and carefully across all sectors, including our space.