

From Queens College to Careers in Business: A Conversation with Top Industry Leaders

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ROBERT W. LEHMAN '83
Partner, Global REIT Leader,
Ernst & Young LLP

Bob is a partner and the firm's Northeast Real Estate Area leader. He also is the Ernst & Young Global Director of Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) Services. He has over 30 years of diverse service and extensive experience in audit, accounting, and consulting services for public and private entities.

Bob has served as the coordinating partner and lead assurance partner for clients that have extensive national and international operations including Fortress Investment Group, LLC (1998–2003); Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. (2004–2008); and SL Green Realty Corp. (2004–2008). He also led efforts in advising and serving as the lead assurance partner to two of the largest IPOs in 2013, the Brixmor Property Group (since 2009) and Empire State Realty Trust (since 2010).

Bob has been involved in numerous merger and acquisition due diligence assignments and has significant experience in working through the complexities on the accounting for the acquisition of distressed assets.

Bob received a Bachelor of Arts in accounting from Queens College, City University of New York. He is a licensed certified public accountant in the states of New York and New Jersey and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Bob also represents Ernst and Young as a board associate member of the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts (NAREIT) Board of Governors.



HARRIS M. HOROWITZ '78
Managing Director-Global Head of Tax,
BlackRock, Inc.

Harris M. Horowitz is BlackRock, Inc.'s Managing Director-Global Head of Tax, responsible for the company's global tax matters, including corporate and product taxation. Before joining BlackRock, he was a tax partner at Ernst & Young LLP and was a member of the firm's financial services tax practice with a focus on asset managers, funds, financial products, and capital markets. Harris also served as the National Tax Leader of Ernst & Young LLP's Investment Company tax practice.

He joined BlackRock in February 2007 following BlackRock's acquisition of Merrill Lynch Asset Management. At BlackRock, Harris is a member of the company's Finance Leadership team and is a member of the firm's Government Relations Steering, Enterprise Risk Management, and Corporate Capital Committees. Harris is also the Co-Chair of the Securities Industry & Financial Markets Association's Asset Management Tax Committee. He is a certified public accountant and graduated from Queens College, City University of New York.



FREDA S. JOHNSON '68

**Moderator
Finance Professional**

Freda spent her entire professional career in the public finance industry. During the first half of her career, she had a significant tenure at the rating agency Moody's Investors Service—first as a municipal bond rating analyst and then as head of the Public Finance Division for twelve years. She was the first woman at any rating agency to hold this position and the first woman executive vice president at Moody's.

For many years, she was the most senior woman out of approximately 40,000 employees at the Dun & Bradstreet Corporation, which owned Moody's until it went public. The second half of her career was spent as president of Government Finance Associates, Inc. (GFA), an independent public finance advisor consulting on debt and financial management and strategic planning for large and complex state and local governments and public authorities. Some of her clients included the States of Alaska, Louisiana, and Vermont; the Massachusetts Port Authority; the Detroit Metropolitan Airport Authority; the American Red Cross; and many others.

Freda has been honored by *The Bond Buyer*, the daily publication of the public finance industry, and Northeast Women in Public Finance (NEWPF), which together annually present an award in her name to two trailblazing women in public finance—one from the public sector and one from the private sector. Past winners of the Freda

Johnson Award include Denise Nappier, treasurer of the State of Connecticut; Gina Raimundo, governor of Rhode Island; Kym Arnone, past chair of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board; and Carole Brown, CFO of the City of Chicago, among others.

Freda is a founding member of NEWPF, for which she also serves on the Board of Directors and on the Executive Committee, and she started NEWPF's mentoring program. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Queens College Foundation, is active with Carnegie Hill neighborhood groups, and works to expand the participation of women in our government.

She is the editor and marketing guru for her husband, J. Chester Johnson, who writes both poetry and nonfiction. She has also been a member of the Board of Directors of Four Way Books, a selective publisher of poetry and short fiction, and the Co-Chair of the Senior Program Committee of the Harvard Business School Club of New York. She was an adjunct professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Business, past president of The Municipal Forum of New York, and treasurer of the National Board of Directors of The Transition Network, a not-for-profit organization which works to promote women.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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