RAYMOND JAMES

SPRING 2021

PRIDE PERSPECTIVES

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRIDE FINANCIAL ADVISORS NETWORK

The journey begins

Welcome to Pride Perspectives, a newsletter for the Pride Financial Advisors Network. The network, which champions advisors, clients, prospects and allies who identify with, support or serve the LGBT+ community, made its official debut in June 2020.

Similar to the other Advisor Inclusion Networks at the firm – the Black Financial Advisors Network and the Women Financial Advisors Network – it began as a grassroots movement among a small number of advisors. That led to a meeting with firm leadership, which fully endorsed the formation and launch of an organized network.

"Cultivating an inclusive environment where everyone's perspectives and contributions are welcomed and valued is an extension of Raymond James' culture," said Scott Curtis, president of the Raymond James Private Client Group and executive sponsor of the Pride Financial Advisors Network. "The Pride Financial Advisors Network, along with the Black Financial Advisors Network, the Women Financial Advisors Network and our associate-facing networks, has been integral in our mission to further diversity and inclusion within Raymond James and our profession."

The rollout began with introductions at the firm's advisor conferences in 2019. After months of development and planning, the network celebrated its official debut during Pride Month 2020.

Unfortunately, the global pandemic and resulting travel restrictions postponed our inaugural in-person Business of Pride Symposium in June 2020.

The journey begins (cont.)

We have certainly not slowed our plans and efforts to help forge the future of finance through equal opportunity, fair representation and valuable service in support of the LGBT+ community. Throughout this unprecedented period, the network's Advisory Council has continued to build out educational programs, fundraising events, networking opportunities and other initiatives. We're just getting started. And whether you're a like-minded advisor, advocate or ally, our network encourages you to thrive as your most authentic self, personally and professionally.

Our mission is clear: to pave the way for meaningful change so we can all move forward – together.

Sincerely,

RENÉE BAKER
Head of PCG Advisor Inclusion Networks

TOM HAKE
Network Co-Chair

MARTA SHEN
Network Co-Chair

Meet the council

The members of the Pride Financial Advisors Network Advisory Council are dedicated to improving outcomes for LGBT+ advisors and their clients by building a community of professionals to advocate education, access and inclusion in the financial services industry. Each is an accomplished professional whose communities have benefited from their diligence and expertise.

RENÉE BAKER
Head of PCG Advisor Inclusion Networks
She/Her/Hers

JOSHUA T. CHARLES, CFP®, CHFC®, CLU®
Branch Manager and Financial Advisor
He/Him/His

FRED ELLEDGE, CFP®
Financial Advisor
He/Him/His

TOM HAKE
Investment Management Consultant and Branch Manager
He/Him/His

BERNARDINE PERREIRA, CFP®, TEP
Financial Advisor
She/Her

MARTA SHEN, JD, CPA, CFP®
Senior Vice President, Wealth Management
She/Her/Hers

LYNNE WRIGHT, WMS℠
Senior Vice President, Investments and Wealth Management Specialist
She/Her/Hers

We invite you to learn more about the council at RJPFAN.com

Inaugural Business of Pride Symposium

The Business of Pride Symposium provides you with the opportunity to learn about topics that resonate with the LGBT+ community. You can connect with industry experts, Raymond James executives and a powerful network of like-minded advisors and advocates, all of whom are dedicated to helping you grow personally and professionally. The time is right to understand the ways our businesses can be positioned to represent and serve the financial planning needs of the LGBT+ community.

SAVE THE DATE

June 28 – 30, 2021

Virtual | On Demand

Stepping into the light

Financial advisor Lynne Wright, WMS℠, used to want to hide. Now, she's an award-winning advocate for diversity and inclusion.

For Lynne Wright, the dichotomy is undeniable.

She spent decades in a "deep-dive closet," she said, unwilling to share her true self with co-workers after a painful personal journey that included marrying a man to try to fit in, falling in love with a woman and being disowned by her family for decades.

For so long, she wasn't comfortable being out, let alone speaking out.

So, when InvestmentNews honored Lynne in October with the See It, Be It award as part of its Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion Awards program, she couldn't help but acknowledge the irony of receiving an award rooted in visibility.

"I was so hidden," she said. "I didn't want to be seen as a lesbian. I wanted to be like everybody else and blend. I was afraid."

But not anymore.

Lynne, the senior vice president of Wright Wealth Management of Raymond James in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is a member of the advisory council for the Pride Financial Advisors Network and has served on the Women Financial Advisors Network Advisory Council at the firm. Her professional coming out journey began when she joined the firm in 2001. Her role as vocal advocate has been growing ever since.

"I have been comfortable at Raymond James from day one," Lynne said. "This is a comfortable place to work as an out lesbian."

When she first arrived, however, it did not offer partner benefits, which Lynne had access to at her previous firm and needed to provide health insurance for her then-partner, now-wife Marci. So she approached firm leadership.

"I just didn't want to be silent about it," she said. "'The straight guy who sits next to me gets these for his wife, but I can't?' In 2001, I couldn't let that inequality go anymore. I was confident enough in my career at that point to come out professionally – fire me, fine. It was time to step up."

> "When Raymond James has the opportunity to do the right thing, it does the right thing."

And when Lynne has the opportunity to persuade, she persuades.

She jokes that her college major is a well-kept secret, but clearly she put that degree in speech and dramatic arts to good use. After graduation, she persuaded someone to give her a job selling weird little devices she knew almost nothing about. She was successful selling word processors, her ability to explain an intangible concept over the phone a precursor to her next job.

Thinking she fit the description, Lynne answered an ad for a "proven producer." When the man who interviewed her explained he was looking for someone with an existing book of business in financial services, Lynne didn't know anything about that, either. She got the job anyway.

"I wasn't sure what I was getting into," she said, "but I'm forever grateful."

What began with a lot of cold-calling – “I’ve got a municipal bond at 13%, how many do you want?” – evolved into a one-woman financial services practice. When her firm closed its Ann Arbor branch, Lynne relocated to a suburb of Detroit and began working with Prudential, but wasn’t happy there. She returned to Ann Arbor and joined Raymond James.

Within a few years, her business had become so successful she was no longer able to serve clients efficiently or effectively by herself. A solo advisor for the first 25 years of her career, she now leads a team of four women dedicated to her proven model of building meaningful relationships with clients to help them achieve their financial goals.

“I’m so proud of a 35-year career, of building relationships with families I feel very close to,” she said. “I’m proud of the business that I’ve built. I’m also extremely proud of the team that I’ve built. They’re hard-working, capable, caring. And they will continue the legacy of client-first service and the culture we’ve built at Raymond James.”

With a team to help her, Lynne suddenly had more time. A few friends knew just how she could spend it. But this time, Lynne had to be persuaded.

“I went kicking and screaming onto the Women’s Advisory Council,” she said.

She didn’t think she had a voice. There were so many other more articulate and outspoken women at the firm – let them step up, she thought. Her friends encouraged her. She went to a meeting, sat quietly and listened. She was impressed.

“It took me a couple of days, but they helped me find my voice and gave me space in that room to speak my truths,” Lynne said. “Since then it’s been like a firehose. I do have a lot to say and a lot to contribute.”

> “It’s important to me that younger women and LGBT+ people recognize they belong here, they are wanted here, they are welcome here. I don’t want another young financial advisor to think they don’t have a place here.”

When the Pride Financial Advisors Network launched in June 2020, it wasn’t hard to get Lynne onto the advisory council. She believes it is vital to have an organization that supports LGBT+ advisors and the communities they serve.

“Diversity is one thing and inclusion is another,” she said. “Diversity is being invited to the party and inclusion is being asked to dance. Our senior management is asking us to dance.”

The network’s role in that relationship is to help senior leaders understand how supporting the LGBT+ advisor community is a sound business strategy. Making LGBT+ advisors feel like they belong, are safe and have a seat at the table, she said, can improve profitability.

“The culture at Raymond James is real,” she said, “now let’s embrace the LGBT+ community.”

She believes the network has another important role to play: holding senior leaders accountable.

“Now that they’ve said, ‘Yes, this is important,’ show us with your resources,” Lynne said. “Can we get more unconscious bias training? I did the InvestmentNews diversity workshop and someone mentioned firms need more than a diversity officer, they need a diversity office – a department that focuses on diversity and inclusion. I’m grateful and thankful that our senior leaders have opened the door for us, but now let’s turn on some lights and make this a reality.”

Persuasive, indeed.

Still, Lynne will try to make the case she is not highly visible. People in Ann Arbor know her as the financial advisor, not the gay financial advisor. At Pride marches, she is somewhere toward the middle of the pack, not in front holding the banner. She has not, she said, been an outspoken lesbian.

But being a gay woman did make Lynne work hard because she believed she had to be better than the rest. The best financial advisor, the best friend, the best everything. She worked so hard at making real connections with people and building strong client relationships.

Those relationships turned out to be the story of her life.

The man who hired her for her first job all those years ago? She still keeps in touch, believing that without him her story would have been much different. She sent him the InvestmentNews video in which all the Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion Awards honorees were interviewed.

Someone was calling her a role model, a symbol of success.

For Lynne, it was a powerful affirmation.

She whistled to set up the only word that seemed suitable: “Wow.”

Professional guidance to help you grow your business

Raymond James offers a variety of coaching programs and workshops to help advisors refine and grow their practices.

GAP ANALYSIS

No one knows your business better than you do, but it's easy to develop blind spots, or spend too much effort making low-impact changes. The Gap Analysis brings an objective perspective with **a thorough assessment of your practice's infrastructure**, business goals and coaching readiness to identify your strengths, opportunities to improve, immediate needs and forward-looking priorities.

To learn more about Raymond James coaching opportunities, email Director of Coaching Liz Stiles at liz.stiles@raymondjames.com.

GROUP COACHING PROGRAMS

Refining Your Client Experience Playbook: Help your team focus on the **people, processes and technology** to deliver an exceptional (and repeatable) client experience with this three month program.

Developing New Business: Grow your business by **converting affluent prospects into clients** with this innovative approach designed by Oechsli, Raymond James Practice Intelligence Coaching and Raymond James Marketing.

Enriching Your Wealth Management Offering: This program, partnered with the Investment & Wealth Institute and Raymond James Wealth Planning team, will take you on a deep dive into financial planning topics, a process for **identifying opportunities with high-net-worth clients**, and the resources you can leverage to enhance your services.

CEG Capturing the Potential: This six-month coaching program sponsored by Raymond James and delivered by CEG Worldwide will fully equip you to **provide the wealth management experience** affluent individuals and families are looking for right now.

DRIVE

Introduces the tools and resources that Raymond James has to offer. After DRIVE, branch associates will be well prepared for ACCELERATE.

ACCELERATE

Is an intensive, highly interactive three-day workshop to help branch associates go deeper into the applications introduced in DRIVE.

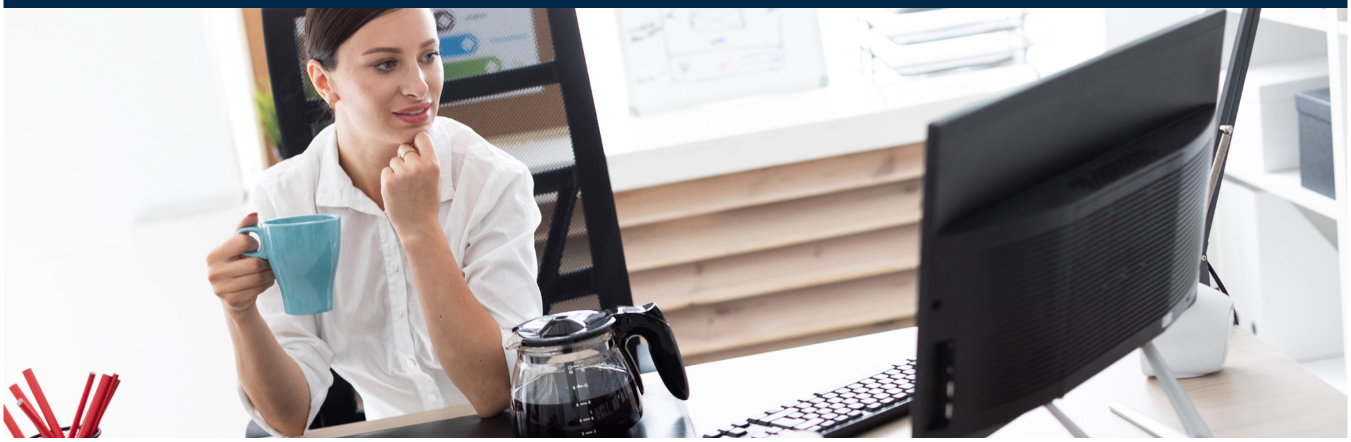
To learn more about DRIVE and ACCELERATE, email Branch Associate Development at branchassociatedevelopment@raymondjames.com.

100%

Score on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index

a national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees

VIRTUAL EVENTS



Virtual education and networking events

When the inaugural Business of Pride Symposium was postponed until 2021 by the global pandemic, network leaders weren't about to let a whole year go by without making a difference.

The month of October featured four virtual events – two for business, two for pleasure – to bring network members and allies together. We also gave back to the community, raising $10,925 for The Trevor Project.

- Webinar: LGBT+ Planning in a Changing World, with PFAN council members Marta Shen and Joshua Charles.
- Performance: Award-winning Broadway star Michael James Scott, known for the role of Genie in Disney's *Aladdin*, shares his experiences from both on and off the stage and performs songs from some of his popular roles.
- Webinar: Supporting LGBT+ Mental Health & Wellness, with speaker Cole Faust of Metro Inclusive Health
- Game: This is Jeopardy!

We look forward to offering more informative and fun events in the future.

New client brochure focuses on LGBT+ financial planning need

The Pride Financial Advisors Network collaborated with Raymond James Marketing professionals to create a 12-page brochure highlighting the financial planning needs of the LGBT+ community and underscoring the value of having a trusted financial advisor. The brochure offers guidance and planning tips on a variety of topics: combining their finances, providing for children, paying for gender confirmation surgery, caring for loved ones, charitable giving and more. We were deeply invested in bringing this brochure to life – and now it's ready to share.

RAYMOND JAMES | **Pride** Financial Advisors Network

GET INVOLVED

If you have have questions, feedback, ideas or want to get involved, please email us at pridefinancialadvisorsnetwork@raymondjames.com.

CONNECT WITH US!

Search #RJPride on LinkedIn and Twitter

Visit the public website: RJPFAN.com

Pride Financial Advisors Network