

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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1. **Name** – Alexandra Sawyer
2. **Hometown** – Washington, DC
3. **Fun Fact** – I was born and raised on Capital Hill – we are few and far between.
4. **Employer and Position** – Guidehouse, Director in Financial Services Banking, Insurance & Capital Markets Practice
5. **Describe your journey in the financial services industry and how your career has evolved to your current position.**

My journey in Financial Services started when I was first at Arthur Andersen in their IT Audit group. One of my first big clients was Sallie Mae. It was there that I started to first learn about Financial Services. When Enron happened and I had to find a new job I knew I wanted to stay in consulting, I went to a small firm where my client was Freddie Mac. I then joined Navigant in 2005 where I continued my work with banks and the GSE as part of their in the Financial Services practice. Over the years I continued to work at a number of financial service firms including JPMorgan Chase, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, Farmer Mac to name just a few.

6. **What do you love most about what you do?**

What I love most about what I do and being in consulting, is the constant learning. I enjoy learning about how each firm does things differently, but I enjoy leveraging my knowledge to bring better processes, controls, and compliance to my clients. Additionally, I enjoy how there is a new challenge, new news and regulations to stay on top of. The conversation in FS is always evolving and changing. Keeping up with that requires learning on your own and from others.

7. **Hobby?**

I would say that my hobby is food. I love reading about it, experimenting in the kitchen, following chefs online, eating at great restaurants and just trying new things. Each year I try a new thing to “master”. This year is sourdough. I think many people did this during Covid, but I was working on other food things – bread, bagels, and just other things. So now getting around to starting my own sourdough starter...a humbling process.

8. How long have you been a member of WHF?

I have been a member of WHF since 2021.

9. Please describe your involvement with WHF.

My involvement over the years has evolved with WHF. I have gone from attending policy lunches and always attending the Annual Symposium to more recently, becoming more involved through helping to co-chair the 2024 Annual Symposium (“Riding the Wave of Change – Empowering Resilience”) and most recently filling a vacated Board seat.

10. What have you gained from being a member?

There are two things that come to mind when I think about what I gain from WHF. One is networking. It is a great to be able to meet women in DC who are interesting and accomplished in the FS field. Second is the ability to learn through attending events and programs.

11. How do you make the best use of your day?

I think we all procrastinate in some way or put things off that might be hard to that we don't really want to do. For me to be productive I really try to prioritize the most important things and set expectations with those that I work for and work with. Additionally, I think it's important to take time for yourself to regroup and recenter – that could mean a workout or just stepping away for a walk or lunch. It's always good to clear your head, I find that clearing my head allows me to come back with a new perspective.

12. Who or what inspires you?

I am inspired to see people do well and how I can help others succeed. It is inspiring to me to see what people can overcome and how people can evolve and grow.

13. What is the best advice you have ever received?

Not sure if it is the best advice but it has stuck with me – always ask people about their expectations of you, which could mean what the expectation as for completing a task or a more lofty goal. Knowing the expectations that others have for you allows you to know where you stand and how to meet or exceed those expectations.

14. Who do you look up to the most and why?

I wouldn't necessarily say there is one person I look up to. As said, I am inspired to see people do well and accomplish things they set their mind to. I am also inspired by people that follow what they know they are good at but also willing to take risks when something seems uncomfortable or outside what they think they can do.