

Louis Fanzini Named to Jersey Shore Finance Alliance "Ones to Watch in 2020 "

Louis Fanzini, CPA recognized as one of JSFAs® "Ones to Watch in 2020" showcasing dynamic and influential finance executives on the Jersey Shore.

HOLMDEL, NJ, UNITED STATES, April 22, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "Lou is an astute business leader who has led transformation of the finance function at several organizations." John Bernardi from JSFA said. "His unique experience as an auditor, FASB staff member, investment banker, and equity research analyst combined with his deep financial operations experience make him a natural choice for our list."

[Louis \(Lou\) Fanzini](#) is the Global Financial Controller at Vonage, a publicly held business cloud communications provider headquartered in Holmdel, New Jersey. Under his watch, Fanzini led the integration of four international acquisitions, created a SOX compliance team, implemented a new ERP and installed a "continuous improvement" philosophy aimed at developing staff and employing best practices.

JSFA recently sat down with Fanzini to discuss his career, his goals for the future, and why Finance leadership is important.

JSFA: What do you like best about being Global Financial Controller?

Lou Fanzini: I love being a finance leader. I am involved in every significant project, strategy session and critical decision the company makes. My formal responsibilities are controllership and accounting, but I bring benefit to the company by being more of a strategic business partner implementing the company's overall strategy in order to maximize shareholder value. I get to interact with the CEO and the board as well as with other key stakeholders of the company.

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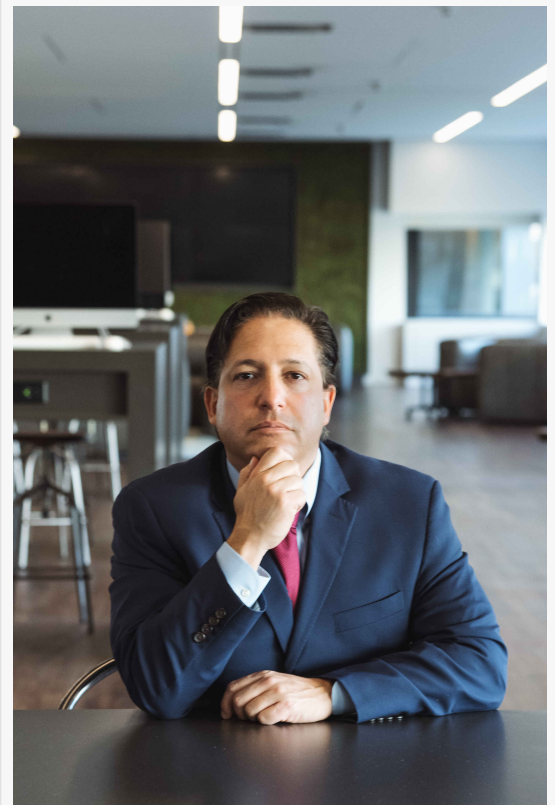
Lou is an exceptional leader and has won the respect of all his staff. I've learned a lot from Lou during his tenure and consider myself lucky to have been given the opportunity to work for him.”

Jennifer Trace Global Director of SOX Compliance.

JSFA: Who was an influential boss of yours and what lessons did they teach you about management and leadership?

Lou Fanzini: I've had many great mentors over the years that I am extremely indebted to. One that stands out was

early in my career at J.P. Morgan. The corporate controller, David Sidwell, was very influential within the banking industry as well as with the SEC and the FASB. I supported him in various



Louis Fanzini

banking industry groups that he led. I absorbed as much as I could by watching how he interacted with people and how he prepared for meetings. The best advice he gave me was to be sure that I experienced as much as I could from all different perspectives so that when the time comes to, for example, sit in the CFO chair, I would have well-rounded experience and be ready for it. He advised that it would be most valuable if, in addition to traditional controllership experience, I spent time in the front office as an investment banker and consider a rotation at the FASB. That advice was invaluable because, besides the actual work experience, the added benefit was that I was able to meet with and advise countless CFOs treasurers, controllers, presidents of companies both large and small and talk to them about their practices and processes. That gave me great insight as to what the best companies in the world do. I have always tried to “pay it forward” when mentoring others since he was very generous with his time to people like me who were just starting out.

JSFA: What does being a leader mean to you?

Lou Fanzini: I believe versatility is extremely important. A leader often has to play a variety of roles such as driving, delegating, supporting and coaching. A leader also needs to adapt their style and approach to match the needs of different individuals and teams. Sometimes it's participative leadership - a “hands on”, driving leadership style, or full delegation - a “hands off” style which is more of a supporting, encouraging leadership role. The key is to know when and how to adjust your style as appropriate. I also realize that Finance is a powerful function. Business decisions often hinge on our financial expertise and analytical skills. Possessing the ability to influence, collaborate and communicate effectively are essential skills that bring value to the organization. Finally, always be approachable. It's easy for my direct reports to keep in contact with me as they can always call or text me no matter where I might be.

JSFA: What is important to you when building out your organization?

Lou Fanzini: I look for people who have diverse experiences and opinions. I deliberately select



Lou Fanzini, CPA



Louis Fanzini (all photos courtesy of Yuliya Jakobczuk Photography)

people who can bring different perspectives. Also, a leader needs to set the expectation that their organization and people are consistently learning. I look to recruit people who share my vision of creating a climate that fosters personal excellence as well as nurturing a commitment to a common vision and shared values. This helps promote collaboration and convey confidence in the team's ability to excel.

JSFA: What was the most important lesson you have learned in your career?

Lou Fanzini: Keep it simple but relevant to the nonfinancial person who will have to act on it. For example, when presenting to the board of directors, avoiding technical financial terminology is important to ensure they understand your message. I try to save them from having to ask to explain terms and processes that are not essential to the decision-making process.

JSFA: What do you think will be required of a future finance executive?

Lou Fanzini: Finance roles are evolving with the rise of automation as well as the continued complexity of globalized markets and regulatory drivers. Finance executives will have to spend more time on strategic leadership, organizational transformation, performance management and big data/technology trends.

JSFA: What advice can you give to those just starting their careers?

Lou Fanzini: I have found that building organizational relationships can be invaluable. A successful leader needs to cultivate a broad network to exchange ideas and rally support. That active network must be maintained with people inside and outside the organization who can serve as advisors, information sources, sounding boards, opinion leaders or collaborators. Benchmarking an organization that is best in class helps you align goals while striving to reach that level. Of course, I also think about what I can offer in return so that the relationship will be mutually beneficial.

In compiling this list, JSFA considered up-and-coming finance executives who, as exhibited by their credentials and achievements, demonstrate passion, enthusiasm, and a strong commitment to Financial leadership.

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