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MEMBER NETWORKING

CHAPTER BUSINESS

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

Christopher Aguilar
MCF Corporation

*Financial Services –
Private Equity Placement*

Member Since: March 2006

Christopher Aguilar serves as General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of MCF Corporation. He oversees the legal and regulatory activity of the company's three wholly owned subsidiaries, which include its investment bank and broker/dealer Merriman Curhan Ford & Co., MCF Asset Management, LLC and Panel Intelligence™, LLC. Aguilar discusses his professional background and the unique challenges he faces in his role as General Counsel. [More...](#)

CHICAGO CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

Walter Halatek
Executives Unlimited, Inc.

Recruiting – Executive Search

Member Since: April 2004

Walter W. Halatek is Managing Director of Executives Unlimited Inc., Chicago. EUI specializes in both interim and conventional senior executive search utilizing proven concepts that assist its clients in managing growth, change and transition successfully. Halatek, an Executive Committee member of the Chicago chapter, recently sat down with *clique* to discuss his firm's hands-on approach to performing executive searches. [More...](#)



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Sloane Rhulen – CB Richard Ellis

Real Estate – Consulting - Commercial Brokerage

Selected by Crain's New York Business as one of its top "40-Under-40" in 2002, Sloane Rhulen has emerged as a true star in commercial real estate and is one of the industry's leading leasing professionals. As a First Vice President with CB Richard Ellis, Rhulen credits her success to her commitment to her clients and the fact that she works for the global leader in real estate services. [More...](#)



Jeffrey Epstein – RightPoint Consulting

Technology – Software Development

RightPoint Consulting is a Chicago-based management and technology consulting firm, but Director Jeffrey Epstein wants to make it clear that they're not just another technology firm. They use technology to solve business problems and have the depth and technical expertise within their organization to take a business solution and fully implement it. Epstein discusses his company's unique approach and shares some recent success stories. [More...](#)



Susan Alexander – True Partners Consulting LLC

Consulting – Corporate

Like many tax and business advisory firms these days, business at Chicago-based True Partners Consulting LLC is booming. Susan Alexander, a Managing Director in TCP's Chicago office, specializes in the area of international tax planning which includes working with companies on the U.S. aspects of international transactions. Alexander shares more on her area of expertise and discusses the affect the new FIN 48 rules will have on businesses. [More...](#)

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Partner Program

Chairperson's Corner

"My ideal lead is a small, fast-growing company, with a market cap below \$2 billion, that is looking for institutional services or access to capital markets. Institutional services include research, advice, trading or investment."

Christopher Aguilar serves as General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of MCF Corporation. He oversees the legal and regulatory activity of the company's three wholly owned subsidiaries, which include its investment bank and broker/dealer Merriman Curhan Ford & Co., MCF Asset Management, LLC and Panel Intelligence™, LLC. Aguilar, an Executive Committee member of the San Francisco chapter, recently sat down with *cliq̄ue* to discuss his professional background and the unique challenges he faces in his role as General Counsel.

cliq̄ue: Christopher, can you share with our readers some information on your professional background leading up to your current position with MCF Corporation?

Christopher Aguilar: I began during law school working for public agencies: the City Attorney of San Francisco and the Alameda County District Attorney's office. When I graduated from school, I took a job at a medium-sized private law firm where I was handling civil litigation and defending private and public corporations, individuals, and public entities. I did that work for five years, and then changed to a smaller law firm of about 25 attorneys, where I worked for five years and became one of six partners. Here I was doing the same kind of work: defending public and private corporations, individuals, and public entities, with a little more emphasis on public entities, that being cities, counties, school districts, police forces, things of that nature.

From there, I made a significant transition and took a job as in-house counsel for the predecessor corporation that I work for now, which is called MCF Corporation. And in that role, I significantly changed my practice because I was representing a public corporation from an in-house position. I was required to be proficient in the securities law, particularly the Securities and Exchange Acts of 1933 and 1934.

cliq̄ue: Can you describe how your current role as in-house counsel for MCF Corporation differs from work you have done previously?

Christopher: When I was in the law firms, the work that I did could be described in terms of cases I was working on. There would be a matter in dispute for my client and the opponent, and my job was to represent the interests of that client to resolution of the dispute. Now, my job is to act as a part of the executive management committee to assist in the profitable growth of our public corporation so that we provide value to our shareholders.

In order to do that job, I advise on a number of areas of the law: contract advisory; human resources; intellectual property; securities; broker-dealer regulation; corporate governance; evaluation of new products and business lines; transactional issues; litigation and arbitration matters; and entity formation.

The things that I was doing in private practice were really more centered in the litigation and arbitration element, but as a general counsel, I truly look at the entire landscape of business development. For instance, at MCF six years ago, there were literally nine people in a room with no revenue, compared to where we are today at 200 people in five offices. In '06, we did about \$52 million in revenue, and we've had a compound growth rate of about 51%. So you can see that we ourselves are a small, fast-growing company, much like the corporate clients that we serve these days.

cliq̄ue: Can you discuss MCF Corporation's business model and offerings?

Christopher: Today we have about 200 employees in five offices located in San Francisco, New York, Boston, Newport Beach, and Portland. We are a publicly traded company who researches, advises, trades, and invests in fast-growing companies

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEMBER,
SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER

Christopher Aguilar
MCF Corporation

Professional Category:
Financial Services –
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Member Since:
March 2006



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through three operating subsidiaries, which include the broker-dealer, Merriman Curhan Ford & Co., our asset management company, MCF Asset Management, that manages three proprietary hedge funds, and our third subsidiary, Panel Intelligence, which provides primary research services in Healthcare and Clean Tech.

clique: What are some of the major challenges that you face as general counsel for MCF Corporation?

Christopher: Well, as a manager of a public company, I have similar challenges any manager would face, and that is to support and execute a business plan to grow profitably. The unique challenge for me as general counsel is to learn to adapt as we grow and to establish more policy and procedure so that we can have consistent industry development amongst all of our employees. This typically results in a need for me to manage large amounts of inputs and requests in an efficient manner such that each issue that's presented is properly addressed and followed through.

clique: What are some of the challenges you foresee as the company continues to grow?

Christopher: As we grow, corporate governance is an important developing area of our firm. This goes back to the Sarbanes-Oxley obligations, but there's also a public sentiment out there that needs to be supported, especially in our business because we work in the United States capital markets. We need to maintain the integrity of the capital markets, and we need to be sure that all investors are protected. Corporate governance helps in this area because it creates those controls. For example, the shareholders own our company. The board of directors has the fiduciary responsibility to oversee the management of our company. And management has the obligation to oversee all of our employees. So that ecosystem needs to be handled efficiently and accurately at all times.

clique: In terms of the San Francisco chapter of Business Forums International, what is it about this chapter that makes the group special?

Christopher: I find that each of our members is interested in making the network function work for each other. I would say one of the unique elements of our location here in San Francisco is the close proximity to the Silicon Valley, which still has the entrepreneurial spirit. It's where innovation is born. And you have this era now where the innovators have gone out and been successful, and therefore are able to spread their capital around and look at more new ideas to invest in.

clique: What, in particular, do you bring to the table for your fellow members?

Christopher: I believe that I bring market perspective, being involved in the U.S. capital markets. I believe that our firm, being a full-service investment bank, can address any issue that would come up with a public or private company who is seeking to access public markets, whether it is via investment banking, research, trading, or asset management.

If you want to contact Christopher Aguilar about MCF Corporation or the San Francisco chapter, call (415) 248-5634 or e-mail him at ags@mcfco.com.

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