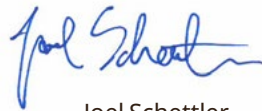




While we were unable to gather in person this year to celebrate the achievement of this year's Top Women in Finance honorees, we look forward to getting together again next November.



Joel Schettler  
Editor



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**W**HILE MUCH WORK STILL REMAINS to be done, data shows that compared to most other industries banking has made strides to elevate women across the field. According to recent analysis by Stanford University, Fortune 100 banks on the whole have recruited more women into top operational roles than other companies on the list.

In this issue of F&C, we take a look at what the data might mean here at the local level. In our cover story, we interview four leading women executives in banking, who also happen to be past Top Women in Finance winners, and ask them about what the landscape looks like for women who may be just starting out in the field. They freely shared their stories of how they got their start, of a few helpful mentors along the way. They also offer a bit of advice for success in today's ever-changing environment.

This issue's Q&A feature also examines women in Minnesota banking. Aleesha Webb, also a multiple award winner, shares her thoughts on

the industry's progress in closing the gender gap. For Webb, banking is the family business, but that doesn't mean she didn't pay her dues. She went from teller to the top, where she now serves as president of Village Bank, a financial institution founded in the 1990s by her father, Donald Kveton.

So, is there a secret to success? If there is anything in common between all of those interviewed for our feature stories, and in the profiles of all of this year's winners of Top Women in Finance, it might come down to three basic things: learn all you can; build a large network; and when it comes your turn to be a mentor, share everything you know.

Congratulations to our Top Women in Finance 2020 honorees. Thank you for your leadership and the example you give for others who hope to follow in your path.