

**Education:** JD, UCLA School of Law; MBA, Loyola Marymount University; BA, Claremont McKenna College

**Company Name:** Dechert LLP

**Industry:** Law was my first paid job

**Company CEO:** David Forti and Mark Thierfelder (Co-Chairs)

**Company Headquarters Location:** Philadelphia, PA; New York, NY

**Number of Employees:** Approximately 2,000

**Your Location:** Los Angeles, CA

**Words you live by:** “The only way to get a thing done is to start to do it, then keep on doing it, and finally you’ll finish it.” – Langston Hughes

**Who is your personal hero?** US Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall

**What book are you reading?** *Dark Genius of Wall Street: The Misunderstood Life of Jay Gould, King of the Robber Barons* by Edward Renehan

**What was your first job?** Admission Counselor at Claremont McKenna College

**Favorite charity:** Save the Children

**Interests/Hobbies:** Cross-training, fine dining, and dramatic movies

**Family:** Son Chris (BS, West Point) and daughter Nicole (BA, Boston University)



## Working for a brighter future for the next generation of black lawyers

For more than 30 years, I have been practicing as a securities attorney in the investment management and financial services industries. I assist with Dechert’s ambitious West Coast expansion strategy, which is focused on the fund industry and fintech sectors, as well as white collar

and commercial litigation. My visibility in the fund industry began at the Securities and Exchange Commission, where I was counsel to a commissioner and spent many years in the Division of Investment Management. Truly exciting work.

Helping the next generation of attorney’s progress in their careers is my professional passion, especially assisting those groups who historically have been “on the outside looking in.” As chair of the Black Professionals Alliance, one of Dechert’s nine affinity groups, we strive for the advancement and professional development of Black lawyers. We help recruit, retain and advance Black talent via mentoring and development workshops, and we play a leading role in the firm’s Black History Month celebrations. My enthusiasm also includes assisting first generation and female attorneys. My door is always open. We talk about everything from the importance of “client service,” to managing the demands of senior attorneys, to balancing a meaningful career with life’s demands, to paying off student loans.

Teaching the next generation of securities lawyers is also a passion of mine. I currently serve as a lecturer at the USC Gould School of Law where I teach securities regulation. A student recently told me after class how happy she was that I explained the S&P 500 Index to the class because she was too nervous to ask. She said she was “first gen” and always feels a little insecure. Again, my door is always open. Beyond the securities laws, the students are comfortable discussing any subject with me. We often discuss the “soft skills” necessary to succeed in a “big law” environment.

My professional passion also includes pro bono work for the Legal Resources Centre of South Africa (LRC). The LRC is a Johannesburg-based public interest law firm that promotes social justice and defends human rights. Presently, Dechert is providing comparative legal research and advocacy for farm workers, rights and efforts to address gender-based violence.

Counseling clients, leading the firm’s Black affinity group, mentoring other underrepresented groups, teaching law students, and working pro bono makes every day fulfilling.