



■ **ALEXANDRIA FILUSH**
Goldberg Kohn Ltd.

Alexandria Filush is a principal in Goldberg Kohn Ltd.'s Commercial Finance Group. She represents banks and non-bank financial institutions in structuring, negotiating and documenting a broad range of commercial finance transactions, including secured cash-flow and asset-based loan transactions, acquisition and working capital financings, senior secured, first lien/second lien, split-lien and unitranche credit facilities, cross-border and mezzanine financings, recapitalizations, refinancings, loan workouts and restructurings, and other complex commercial finance transactions. Since 2021, Alexandria has been recognized annually by Best Lawyers on its "Ones to Watch" list.

Alexandria received her law degree from the University of Chicago Law School in 2014. While attending law school, Alexandria was involved in the Edwin F. Mandel Legal Aid Clinic's Housing Initiative and served as an officer of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund. She received her B.A., with high distinction, in Education (English major) from the University of Michigan in 2008. Prior to pursuing her legal career, Ms. Filush taught high school English in Berkley, Michigan.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Early in my legal career, I received three pieces of advice that resonated with me and have served me well over the years. First, stop apologizing. A senior associate (now partner) gave me this feedback when I was a junior associate after we closed a deal together. She explained that people (usually women) often reflexively apologize as a way to smooth over tension and promote harmony and cooperation, but that others can read apologies like this as admitting to making a mistake. I hadn't realized that by apologizing when I hadn't done anything wrong, I was undermining the image of competence and professionalism I was trying to convey. Apologizing is appropriate when a person has truly made an error, but this advice taught me not to unnecessarily diminish myself in my professional communications—a lesson that is important for all people (and particularly women) to learn at the outset of their careers.

Second, when I was a junior associate facing a steep learning curve, I recall asking colleagues for their view of what makes a "good" commercial finance associate. One partner told me that a key part of a commercial finance associate's job is "knowing where everything is." This succinct description crystallized for me that it was my responsibility to know the status of all the moving pieces in each transaction and that I could add real value by taking ownership of my matters in this way. Over time, embracing this mindset opened the door to learning opportunities I might have otherwise missed out on and helped me build relationships with clients and colleagues who grew to depend on me as a resource.

Finally, during my first year of law school, as my fellow 1Ls and I anxiously awaited the release of our first quarter grades, the law school Dean of Students reminded us that "the prize for winning the pie-eating contest is more pie." At the time, she intended to convey that those who did well should take a moment to celebrate (and those who did not do as well should likewise give themselves some time to process

the results), but at the end of the day, the work of being a law student was just beginning. Over the years, this advice has come back to me repeatedly and has transformed into a lesson on drawing boundaries. I've realized that no matter how well the last transaction went, there is always more work to be done, and no one is going to draw boundaries for me. With two small children at home, work/life balance remains a challenge, but keeping my priorities front of mind and finding ways to protect family and personal time have helped to make an otherwise demanding job more manageable and sustainable.

What role has mentorship/sponsorship played in your career?

Mentorship has been hugely important in my career. I am extremely grateful for the formal and informal mentors who frequently make themselves available to answer questions and offer advice. My mentors have coached me through things as minor as learning how to write a professional email and as significant as working through difficult credit agreement negotiations and deciding (pre-pandemic) to move to remote work to help balance law firm demands with the demands of parenthood. I would encourage all young professionals to seek out mentorship relationships and ask questions when a new issue crops up or a second opinion would be helpful. In my experience, most people feel flattered when someone values their judgment and experience enough to ask their advice and are happy to help.

GOLDBERG KOHN

Congratulations
to
Commercial
Finance Principal
Alexandria Filush
and all the other
2023 Women in
Secured Finance
Honorees



GOLDBERG KOHN Ltd.
55 East Monroe Street | Suite 3300. | Chicago, IL 60603 - 5792
312.210.4000 | goldbergekohn.com