



Sara L. Hays

SHays@SLHAdvisors.com

(312) 933-8835 (Mobile)

- Strategic Business Leader, Advisor & Change Agent
- Experienced Board Chair & Independent Director
- Former C-Suite Executive (GC and COO)
- Commercial Real Estate, Corporate Governance & Legal Expert

With over 30 years of experience in a variety of leadership, board and advisory roles at public, private and family-owned organizations (G2 through G5), Sara Hays is an accomplished business leader and strategic business partner to C-suite and senior executives, board members and families in the commercial real estate, finance, hospitality, manufacturing and seniors housing industries.

Sara began her career practicing commercial real estate law at Coffield Ungaretti & Harris (now Nixon Peabody) advising developers, health care organizations, lenders, borrowers, landlords and tenants on real property and business acquisitions and dispositions, land use, leasing, secured lending and workouts. In 1994, Sara joined Hyatt Hotels, a global hospitality company, initially as Development Counsel, structuring and negotiating management, venture, development, franchise and finance agreements to expand the Hyatt brand nationally, and ultimately serving as Senior Vice President and General Counsel and a member of Hyatt's Managing Committee responsible for managing the legal risks associated with Hyatt's world-wide operations, transactions and owned assets. Between 2005 and 2011, Sara served as Managing Director, Operations and General Counsel, corporate secretary and a member of the Executive and Investment Committees of Wrightwood Capital LLC (now part of Ares Management LLC), a commercial real estate finance and investment company with loan and investment originations of over \$5.4 billion. Joining Wrightwood Capital as it was being recapitalized, she managed the company's non-financial operations and participated in formulating and implementing corporate strategy and structuring and executing the Company's investments and capital initiatives to raise both debt and equity on and off-balance sheet. Through SLH Advisors, Sara currently offers project management and consulting services to companies, boards and families on corporate governance matters, operating and capital strategies and complex or transformational transactions, often involving leadership transitions, succession planning and real property interests.

Sara currently serves as the Non-Executive Chair of ECI US Holdings, a family-owned multi-family operator/developer with properties throughout the Southeast, and as an independent director and chair of the Nominating & Governance Committee for Draper & Kramer, a vertically integrated property and financial services company where she chaired the search committee which identified its current CEO. Sara served for over 14 years as an independent director of Apogee Enterprises, Inc. (NASDAQ: APOG), a global manufacturer of value-added glass products, services and technologies used in the architectural and large-scale optical industries worldwide, serving on all board committees and chairing the Nominating and Governance Committee and a successful CEO search during her tenure before retiring in January, 2020. She is the Past Chair of the Law Board at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law and a Past President of the Chicago Finance Exchange where she helped establish an initiative to educate and connect its member female financial leaders with boardroom opportunities.

Sara holds an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management, a JD from Northwestern Pritzker School of Law and a BA in History from Carleton College where she previously served as a Trustee and Alumni Council President. She is a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors, Women Corporate Directors, American College of Corporate Directors, Private Directors Association, Chicago Finance Exchange, Lambda Alpha (Ely Chapter) and the Kellogg Executive Women's Network.