

LAURI UNION

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Leadership Profile

Seasoned, highly innovative educator and business leader who has led and substantially grown organizations in the industrial and educational spaces ranging in size from start-up to \$200mm in revenue. Leverages expertise including leadership, collaborative organizational transformation, family business and family therapy to create and deliver high quality and cutting edge learning programs for degree program students and lifelong learners. Provides thought leadership through research, case studies and practitioner articles. Doctoral candidate at Johns Hopkins School of Education.

Professional Experience

Fmr Executive Director Bertraelli Institute for Family Entrepreneurship
Current: Adjunct Faculty

04/2018 to Current
Babson College, Wellesley, MA

- Founding Executive Director of Babson's innovative Bertarelli Institute for Family Entrepreneurship - the first in the world to focus on the nexus of family functioning and entrepreneurship as a method to help business families create economic value and social impact while strengthening their legacy and family relationships.
- Developed strategic vision for Babson's global leadership role in this evolving academic and practitioner space which includes the Global Family Entrepreneurship Network at Babson - an initiative to amplify the capacity of and inspire entrepreneurial families, who create more than 70% of global GDP, to create social and economic value.
- Created the Family Entrepreneurial Leadership certificate program, designed to develop the core skills needed for individuals to innovate and lead in a family business context. Over 300 people have participated to date.
- Created a full suite a student programs engaging over 20% of Babson students
- Acted as a thought leader, conducting research with over 50 family entrepreneurs; co-authoring 11 case studies, three of which are published (one each in an academic journal, HBS case library, and a book); and speaking at numerous events
- Built a constituency of > 5500 families
- Attracted \$20mm in donor commitments
- Developed a highly effective team with an innovative and positive culture

President, Committee Chair, Board Member
Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston

09/2009 to 07/2017

- From July 2015 - June 2017 led Board and community through a time of existential crisis, returning school to a strongly positive outlook.
- With input from over 250 constituents including faculty and staff, parents, donors, Board and community leaders as well as leading subject matter experts outlined inspiring new strategic vision.
- Articulated new leadership model to achieve the emerging vision. After broad-based community process, hired and then mentored superb non-traditional leader.
- Built relationships with major donors and community leaders, including closing critical 6 figure gifts in support of the largest annual campaign ever and the successful closing of an \$11mm endowment campaign
- Prior work includes leading Board committees such as Strategic Planning, Finance, and Marketing.

President, CEO and Board Member
Union Corrugating Company

07/1992 to 12/2016

- Named President and CEO of \$9mm revenue family steel building products manufacturing business on the verge of bankruptcy immediately after graduation from business school at age 27.
- Transformed company over 14 years from low end commodity player to become a value added industry leader in product quality and customer service with over \$110mm revenue / \$10mm+ EBITDA.
- Implemented innovative, disruptive industry leading service strategy across 8 manufacturing facilities covering Eastern half of US, spurring rapid growth.
- Developed unique strong value propositions by applying outstanding data analytics and service with key industry retailers such as Lowes and Home Depot, becoming a Lowes category manager.
- Established corporate culture of collaboration, open communication, respect and striving for top performance to engage employees in long term value creation.

- Identified entry level employees with potential and personally developed them to take on leadership roles.
- Executed successful private equity transaction and remained on the Board post sale.

Chief Restructuring Officer

09/2013 to 10/2014

G2 Capital Advisors

- Hired to turnaround \$200mm revenue family business in bank workout
- In one year, achieved ambitious profit improvement goals, increasing EBITDA by \$5mm, despite numerous unexpected challenges.
- Despite bank directive to close 2 of 3 divisions and fire 3/4 of the staff, turned around all 3 divisions with only two senior leaders departing. Saved all other jobs.
- Worked with company President, a family member, to develop her skills to retake leadership control.
- Reset the corporate culture as collaborative, trust based and results oriented by modeling respect and open communication, personally training employees to achieve their potential, engaging employees in team based organizational improvement efforts, and being a role model for the desired culture.
- Took hands-on approach to significantly improving efficiency in critical operations functions such as procurement, logistics and marketing. Employed subjective and objective data efficiently to identify, diagnose and create solutions for problems.

Entrepreneur in Residence

09/2011 to 06/2013

Harvard Business School

- Advised students on business ideas, career and life plans.
- Co-taught with faculty in select courses
- Was a featured guest numerous times in presenting the case study on my leadership

Senior Associate

09/1989 to 07/1990

Abbey Holdings

Boston, MA

Associate Consultant

08/1987 to 06/1989

Bain and Company

Education

Doctor of Education

07/2025

Johns Hopkins University, School of Education

Baltimore, MD

Family Systems Theory

05/2022

The Bowen Center For The Study of The Family

Washington, DC

Certificates in Family Business Advising (CFBA) And Family Wealth Advising (CFA)

10/2021

Family Firm Institute

Marriage And Family Therapy Certificate

05/2020

Therapy Training Boston

Waltham, MA

Entrepreneurship Educator Training

05/2019

Price-Babson Symposium

Wellesley, MA

MBA

06/1992

Harvard Business School

Boston, MA

First Year Honors

Bachelor of Arts: Economics

06/1987

Princeton University

Princeton, NJ

Magna Cum Laude

Additional Information

- Selected as a top 100 Global Family Business Influencer and top 15 Academic by Family Capital
- Published author - Diunsa case study in Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy, Waterston: Live Case Study in Teaching Entrepreneurship, Vol 2.; Next Generation Leadership at Rotoplas in Harvard Business School case library
- Board Member, Planned Parenthood League of MA beginning 2017
- Harvard Business School New Venture Competition Judge 2016 - 2020

- Maoz Fellows Innovation Coach, 2015 - 2017
- Acharai Leadership Program Fellow 2011-2013
- Former Elected Member of Brookline Town Meeting, 2 terms
- William C. Friday Human Relations Fellow
- Subject of two HBS case studies
- Member of Young President's Organization since 1997