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From Academy Award® Winner Alfonso Cuarón,
Director of "Gravity" & "Children of Men"



ROMA

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WRITTEN AND
DIRECTED BY ALFONSO CUARÓN

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OCTOBER 23, 2018



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Table Talk

Sharon Altman's clients at Clifton Larson Allen include Jordan Peele, center, on set with the cast of "Get Out."



STEVE BILLS

Partner
Bills & Stoll

Bills handles a mix of high-profile actors, producers, directors, writers, entrepreneurs and high-net-worth families with longtime partner Peter Stoll, helping them with everything from investments and auto leasing to, in one instance, hiring a debt collector. "It's the people who appreciate what you do for them that really makes it fun," says Bills, who was the CFO of Disney Imagineering before getting into business management.

Trump tax cut: Expect your taxes to go up. "They're going to get a slightly lower individual tax rate in most cases, but they're going to lose the big state tax deduction."



EVAN R. BELL

Managing Partner
Bell & Co.

LIZA DE LEON

Administrative Partner
Bell & Co.

Bell feels the days of smallish firms are gone because a business manager needs scale to support a full-time tax researcher, which requires a shop size of 10-15 professionals. That tax specialist is singularly focused on "tax compliance, research and information, and implementation of tax law for the clients," Bell notes. Besides managing the firm, Bell works with Steven Soderbergh, writer-director Robert Eggers, and Gavin O'Connor. De Leon supervises the firm's account executives, who handle day-to-day expenses, income and projections for clients. They founded the firm in 1985.

Trump tax cut: For a media executive such as a newscaster who earns \$5 million a year, normal professional expenses for lawyers, agents and others is 30%, which amounts to \$1.5 million. "Last year this was deductible," Bell laments. "This year it's not."



DAVID BOLNO

Partner
NKSFB

After Hollywood was "disrupted in a positive way by streaming platforms, some would say, and I would probably agree, the next big disrupter will be 5G" wireless broadband, Bolno says. Besides supercharging speeds for mobile devices, Bolno says granular data available from 5G networks will provide Hollywood with keen insights on consumers. He works with internationally known entertainers, musicians, artists and athletes, and also advises record companies, recording studios and high net-worth individuals. Clients include Drake, Pharrell Williams and Will.i.am. NKSFB was purchased by Focus Financial in April. **Trump tax cut:** Bolno is intrigued by tax breaks for investing in designated opportunity zones in real estate, which is an element of the federal tax overhaul.

SAFEGUARDING RICH AND FAMOUS

Hollywood turns here to manage affairs, retain wealth and, recently, minimize the sting of President Trump's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

By **ROBERT MARICH** and **TODD LONGWELL**



SHARON ALTMAN

Principal
Clifton Larson Allen

In January, Altman's firm of more than three decades, NSBN, merged with Clifton Larson Allen (CLA), the nation's eighth-largest accounting firm, giving her arm's reach access to a wealth of added expertise. "CLA has whole team specializing in international tax," says Altman, whose roster includes longtime clients Brent Spiner ("Star Trek: The Next Generation") and Jordan Peele

("Get Out"), along with his wife, Chelsea Peretti ("Brooklyn Nine-Nine"), and newer arrivals such as YouTuber Gigi Gorgeous.

Trump tax cut: Don't act in haste. "Many angry clients have said, 'I don't get to deduct my property taxes anymore; I'm moving out of California.'"



LOUIS BARAJAS

Founder and CEO
Wealth Management LAB

Barajas' shop is the only

Latino-owned firm that helps Latin-American talents maximize their money in the U.S. "There's a lot of education when it comes to something as simple as banking and entity structure," says the 28-year vet. He services clients who include actors Omar Chaparro, Adrian Uribe and Luis Gerardo Mendez, and music stars Nicky Jam, Yandel and Kali Uchis, from offices in L.A. and Miami.

Trump tax cut: Beginning in 2019 alimony will no longer need to be reported as part of the recipient's gross income, "so if a client is divorcing and will be paying alimony payments, we are getting them to complete the divorce before the end of this year."



**ANTHONY
BONSIGNORE**

Partner
Altman, Greenfield & Selvaggi

Clients starting careers arrive as small earners, but as more money flows in, Bonsignore says, the challenge remains the same, though on a grander scale. "You want clients to stick to their original goals no matter how much they are making," he says. His clients are primarily actors, writers and directors, including Noah Baumbach, Sterling K. Brown, Greta Gerwig, David Harbour, Dakota Johnson, John McEnroe and Chris Terrio. **Trump tax cut:** Because homeowners get reduced write-offs from local real estate taxes due to federal tax reform, Bonsignore believes a ripple effect will be "a softening in the real estate market."



**JULIE BOOS
JAMIE CHEEK
DUANE CLARK
CARMEN ROMANO
TREY DUNAWAY**

Flood Bumstead McCready & McCarthy

Earlier this year, this quintet was moved into leadership roles at the venerable Nashville-based firm, which has a strong presence on the country music scene and also handles a wide variety

of artists from the worlds of rock, pop and EDM. Chairman Boos, president Cheek and vice chairman Clark now pilot the company from Music City, alongside CFO Dunaway, while VP Romano, who leads FBMM's learning and teaching academy, runs the New York office. This marks a passing of the baton from fellow co-owners Chuck Flood, Frank Bumstead and Mary Ann McCready, who founded the company in 1986 with now-retired John McCarthy. "We want to make sure this a place where any client working with us can feel secure and that they'll always have this be a place through their life and beyond," says Cheek, who, like Boos, has been with FBMM for more than two decades.

Trump tax cut: Look at the big picture and think long-term. "We don't want them to rush into a strategy with just one or two pieces of the tax law that they're hearing about because there could be offsetting things in the law that help them," Dunaway says.



MATTHEW BURKE

Managing Partner
Singer Burke

Burke's client base is built around TV writers, producers and showrunners of TV series past ("Cheers," "Married ... With Children," "ER") and present ("Shameless," "The Walking Dead," "The Handmaid's Tale," "The Neighborhood"), as well as composers such as Michael Giacchino ("Incredibles 2"). But he's also handling an increasing number of non-traditional, multi-platform media companies including Skybound Entertainment.

Trump tax cut: "There's a lot of opportunity with corporate clients to segregate out, if possible, the business lines that might qualify for the QBI [qualified business income] deduction," such as merchandise, publishing and electronic games.

Music to Their Ears
Matthew Burke's clients include composer Michael Giacchino, shown here with "Incredibles 2" director Brad Bird, left.



DAVID CORONEL

Partner
Tanner Mainstain Glynn & Johnson

Coronel finds face-to-face planning sessions endure but clients expect day-to-day transactions to now be a snap with their personal digital devices. "They are very tech savvy, and they want quick turnaround and interaction," he says. His clientele encompasses writers, producers, directors, music artists, talent agents, production companies and startup digital media companies. Coronel also specializes in tax issues.

Trump tax cut: Regarding federal tax reform, Coronel says it's increasingly critical whether to select a regular corporation, S-corporation or LLC as the structure in order to nail down benefits, of which the most significant is the pass-through deduction.



ANDREW CROW

Partner
WG&S

For talent clients hitting a financial jackpot for the first time, Crow says it's important to "ask the right questions" to determine what to do next. Queries should cover risk tolerance, time-horizon for tapping funds and anticipated spending. Crow handles actors, writers, directors, producers, executives, high-net-worth individual and family offices. Clients are songwriters Tor Hermansen and Mikkel Eriksen, Judith Light, Storm Reid and Cailee Spaeny.

Trump tax cut: Younger clients who are on their way to being big earners will probably create personal services corporations sooner to qualify for business deductions lost for individuals in the federal tax code overhaul, Crow says.



**BRANDY DAVIS
ADAM YORKSHIRE
JOHN BLAKEMAN
ANNA LEVIN**

Partners
MGO

Since 2015, MGO's business management practice has more than tripled to seven partners. Yorkshire specializes in artists, producers and managers working in rock, rap and EDM, and athletes from the four major leagues (NBA, NFL, MLB, NHL), while the others focus on film and TV talents, with Davis handling TV writer-producers such as Peter Lenkov ("Hawaii Five-0") and Shonda Rhimes,



BUSINESS MANAGERS ELITE



RICK SHEPHARD JOHN MCILWEE MARK TINGLOF

Partners
Shephard McIlwee Tinglof

Digital influencers have spawned their own ecosystem of managers, lawyers and other supporting professionals, says McIlwee. "Nobody knows where [the digital revolution] is going to end up but the possibilities are unlimited," adds McIlwee, whose client @happilygrey is a force on Instagram and has deals with

consumer brands. Shephard manages the company, and also handles Courteney Cox, Jon Favreau, Kurt Russell, Ben Stiller and Lucas Till. McIlwee's clients include an assortment of actors, directors and entertainment industry executives; among them are actors Caleb Landry Jones, Jane Lynch, Francois Arnaud, and director Matt Reeves. Tinglof's clients consist of producers, directors, writers and actors; they include director Michael Engler, producer-directors Richard Heus and Alan Poul, and Jeff Kleeman, who runs Ellen DeGeneres' company. Tinglof also handles family offices for high-net-worth non-entertainment clients and their foundations.

Trump tax cut: McIlwee finds "the frustration level high" for clients in New York and California, the two states most impacted by the diminished state tax and property tax deductibility.



RICHARD SINGER

President
Singer Burke

STEPHANIE CONNOR ARKOF

**Wealth Management Partner SB
Capital Management**
Singer Burke

Singer spent eight years as an investment manager and market analyst for a number of Tokyo-based companies before joining his now-retired father's firm in 2002. Arkof came aboard a year later, after a brief post-collegiate stint in production accounting at Paramount. Together, they run the firm's SEC-registered investment arm, which creates private equity funds as a

value-added service to its clientele of writers, directors, producers, composers, execs, agents, attorneys and video-game industry pros.

Trump tax cut: "If you make less than a certain dollar amount, then you can still have service income flow through and get the 20% automatic deduction for it," says Arkof.

as entrepreneurs and high-net-worth families, the latter of whom "we're finding need the same kind of services that people in the entertainment industry need," he says.

Trump tax cut: Set up a loan-out company, if you don't have one. "You effectively get to keep the deductions they took away [for employees]."



PETER STOLL

Partner
Bills & Stoll

Since hanging their own shingle in 2016 following the death of longtime partner Bob Philpott, Stoll and firm co-founder Steve Bills have been steadily expanding their client base of high-profile actors, producers, directors and writers, as well



CHARLES SUSSMAN

President
Sussman & Associates

Sussman left his job running the L.A. office of Prager and Fenton and moved to Nashville to hang out his own shingle in 1994, hoping to lead a quieter, less-stressful life. While his personal pace may have slowed, his business didn't,

Venable is pleased to join *Variety* in celebrating this year's Business Managers Elite Award recipient

Mary Ann McCready

We extend our warmest congratulations for this well-deserved honor.

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Alan Epstein, Esq. | 2049 Century Park East, Suite 2300, Los Angeles, CA | Attorney advertising

as evidenced by a client list that includes Bon Jovi, Miley Cyrus, Bette Midler and other musicians and songwriters, as well as several producers, actors and actresses.

Trump tax cut: "It's something we have to evaluate on a client-by-client basis. We look at all aspects, whether it's corporate structure or what's going to work best under the new law."



BILL TANNER

President and Founder
Tanner Mainstain Glynn & Johnson

Tanner sees the ripple effects from booming production of scripted primetime television series washing across Hollywood. While there's more work to spread around, which keeps business managers and their clients busy, a downside is that the new income is front-loaded with "fewer big hits on the backend in TV syndication," he says. Tanner handles entertainment-industry figures, including writers, actors, directors, producers and composers. His clients include Michael Keaton and Aaron Sorkin.

Trump tax cut: "For my clients looking at homes, I stress that their property taxes are no longer deductible over \$10,000, and that impacts their personal cash flows."



LOU TAYLOR

Founder and CEO
Tri Star Sports & Entertainment Group

Taylor sees a generational divide in the way the flow of information is handled, with a growing demand to quickly deliver "real-time information into the hands of a younger generation." She notes, however, that older clients are often still satisfied with more traditional paper reports and review materials. Taylor's clients include Britney Spears, Mary J. Blige, Meghan Trainor, Florida Georgia Line, Bryan Cogman,

and pro football executive Les Snead.

Trump tax cut: Taylor finds that the federal tax-code revamp has uneven impact: eliminating the 50% deduction on certain meals and entertainment hits taxpayers broadly, though the wealthy benefit from the doubling of the exemption on passing on their estates.



ERIC C. WASSERMAN

Managing Partner
WG&S

Wasserman received *Variety's* Business Managers Elite Award in 2016 and finds philanthropy work gratifying, citing the All Within My Hands foundation of client Metallica. "Metallica had a vision to support food banks in their local concert markets and the San Francisco Bay area," Wasserman says. The effort also helped with crises in Puerto Rico, Mexico City, Houston and Sonoma County. His other clients include Richard Gere, Chris Hardwick, New Kids on the Block and Conan O'Brien's company, as well as families and various businesses of entertainment-industry figures.

Trump tax cut: "The increase in the federal estate tax exemption to \$11.2 million has set in motion planning for our clients to utilize the increased exemption."



MELODY YOUNG

Principal
Prager Metis

Young joined the Prager Metis family earlier this year when her company Geibelson, Young & Co. was merged with the venerable accounting and consulting firm, founded as Prager and Fenton in 1920. Her clients include a variety of actors, writers, directors, music artists and producers, executives and other high-net-worth individuals, along

with talent agencies and other small businesses. "I really like entrepreneurial opportunities, and I'll frequently act like a CFO for our small-business clients," says Young.

Trump tax cut: Despite the sugar-coating, there are definitely negative effects. "The tax bracket may have dropped by 2.6%, but we're anticipating a higher tax hit for you, not a smaller one."



JASON ZAYON

Partner
Armanino

Zayon says clients are intrigued by crypto-currencies as investments, though "it's the wild, wild west from a tax perspective. But our clients expect us to have answers." The digital asset space is so new there aren't precedents for guidance, so Zayon taps tech

experts within his firm for advice. His clients include Hollywood executives, writers, producers and directors, and also high-net-worth individuals and business owners outside of entertainment.

Trump tax cut: For high-income individuals living in high-tax states such as New York and California but earning money elsewhere, Zayon says relocating to states with no income tax gets significant savings, after reduced state and local deductions in the federal tax code.



AARON ZIMMER & ELAINA KOGAN

Tax Partners
Singer Burke

As heads of Singer Burke's tax department, Zimmer and Kogan call on more than 67 years of combined professional

experience (48 for him and 19 for her) to service a mix of writers, directors, producers, actors, managers and media companies, as well as doctors, lawyers and real estate pros and other high-net-worth individuals for whom they file more than 300 tax returns each year. Zimmer says: "Experience helps, but I'm not so egotistical to think that someone who has only a couple years of experience, with proper knowledge, can't also do things well."

Trump tax cut: You shouldn't look for a bigger return. "I see the taxes going down for the middle income, but for the really high-net-worth people, I'm not seeing much of a tax drop," Kogan says. "With the loss of the property tax and state income tax [deductions], it's hurting a lot of our California clients," adds Zimmer.

Teen Tunes

Lou Taylor's clients include Meghan Trainor, shown here at the Teen Choice Awards in Los Angeles last August.

