

By Judi Jordan

INVESTED

MELLON CAPITAL
CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT
AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER GABBY PARCELLA

CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT, AND CEO of Mellon Capital and 2017 Orgullo de ALPFA, Gabriela “Gabby” Franco Parcella, reveals her strategy for accelerating the American Dream from within.

It’s a timely corporate success story.

After two decades of extraordinary diligence, Parcella, daughter of Mexican immigrants, leads Mellon Capital, an investment management firm headquartered in San Francisco. Open and accessible, Parcella focuses on building assets with transparency and diversity, improving corporate America, and inspiring millions of Latinas to dream big by example.

Building blocks.

Born in El Paso, Gabby studied accounting at the University of Texas at Austin and took home an MPA. It was then on to Stanford, where she earned a JD. Gabby felt drawn to tax law and joined San Francisco law firm Orrick as a tax attorney. In 1997, she interviewed at Mellon Capital.

Right away, there were signs that Mellon Capital was a place for a smart, team-playing woman to progress; of the six people she interviewed with, three were women.

Gabby liked what she saw. At that time, senior women were notably sparse at law firms, particularly in tax. Gabby quickly assessed the environment at Mellon Capital and saw herself fitting in.

Mellon Capital embraced diverse talent. Gabby secretly harbored what she then perceived as a lofty goal: “I assumed that being General Counsel was the most I could wish for. When

I started in the legal department of the company nearly 20 years ago, I never thought I’d be CEO.”

So, how did this happen? “I have always volunteered to do more than what is expected of me, which has been a crucial ingredient to gaining skills that I wouldn’t have been able to develop in other circumstances.”

In 2007, Gabby’s expectations of becoming General Counsel got a major bump. She moved from junior lawyer to General Counsel, and then decided to move out of legal and joined the business side of the organization. Promoted to COO in 2007, she held the post for four years and observed how a top CEO navigates rough waters. “A perfect example is when I was the COO reporting to then-CEO Charlie Jacklin – I would volunteer to write the first draft of his business review presentations, which he would then modify. When I watched him giving these presentations, I could see what he included, what he changed, and how he fielded questions. I learned so much during this process. With opportunities like that, I had a chance to gain experience that has proved invaluable in my current role.”

Parcella’s personal initiative, quick reflexes, and strategic instincts were key elements to her success, as was her mentor, CEO Charlie Jacklin, a former Stanford Graduate School of Business professor.

“Having Charlie as a mentor certainly helped me expand my horizons.” Mentoring impacted her career enormously; it left an indelible leadership impression. Her performance under pressure was no doubt a factor in her ascent. Together with Jacklin, the two execs steered the firm successfully through the challenging global financial crisis. When Jacklin retired in 2012, he recommended Gabby as his successor.

2012 was a big year for Gabby. After CEO, she was also named Chairman.

Her agenda honed in on Mellon Capital’s global outreach to new clients in Latin America and fortifying the company’s key players in the U.K., Hong Kong, and India. It still holds. “At Mellon Capital we always have our eye on better. I’m focused on expanding our firm’s global presence, helping our clients navigate a turbulent and unpredictable investment environment, and growing our overall business and capabilities.” Still, navigating an ever-evolving



Gabriela Franco Parcella
CEO of Mellon Capital



Empowering Latino Leaders



ABOUT

Mellon Capital has provided investors with distinct insights into complex capital markets since 1983. Based in San Francisco, our unique approach to fundamentals-based systematic investing drives our capabilities, which include multi-asset, active, smart beta, and indexing strategies.

financial landscape requires innovative thinking. “One challenge that I think is top of mind for every CEO is the impact geopolitical uncertainty will have on markets around the world. Navigating an increasingly turbulent global investment landscape and regulatory environment is a constant challenge and a critical priority for us.”

As of June 2017, Mellon Capital has \$352.5 billion in total assets under management with 335 clients and 1,761 accounts. Thanks to Gabby’s broad background and vision, she can speak to all areas of tactical focus. “As Chairman, President, and CEO of Mellon Capital, I provide strategic leadership to all areas of the firm.” Known for pioneering index funds and multi-asset strategies, the firm is dedicated to uncovering deeper insights into complex capital markets, a greater understanding of its clients’ challenges, and developing strategies to help them reach their long-term goals.

A game-changing, battle-tested CEO. Her humility and willingness to help, observe, and learn, fit the low key, team-focused company culture. “I started my career in financial services more than 20 years ago and have worked across the legal, operations, risk, and regulatory sides of the business. I didn’t take a traditional path, moving from the financial services regulatory side to CEO. As my career progressed, there was a continual and steady expansion of my responsibilities. From the beginning, I was committed to learning every aspect of the company. That depth of understanding positioned me to make a positive impact on Mellon Capital and opened up avenues for my advancement.”

That advancement extends to her community; Gabby is proud of her heritage. “My whole family is still in Mexico

with the exception of my parents and siblings. I’m trying to help with the Latin American community—especially women.” Being separated from her extended family has possibly intensified her bonds at home. “My family is incredibly important to me, and my most important role is being a wife and mother to two wonderful sons.”

The obvious and considerable perks accorded the Chairman, President, and CEO of an esteemed investment firm like Mellon Capital could separate Gabby from junior staffers, but she’s determined to use her influence to affect real change. “I’m proud to be a Latina who has gained seniority in the industry, but we need more diversity. If we want to change the dynamic, it’s up to us to broaden the invite list. When you invite more diversity into the room, you’re no longer the only minority in the room, and you’re also giving someone else the opportunity to observe, learn and gain confidence.”

Fortunately for the next generations of financial whiz-kids, Gabby is no typical C-Suite achiever. She’s committed to an agenda for diversity advancement, and the authority to see it through. “At Mellon Capital, diversity is part of our DNA, and I’d like that DNA to continue to flourish long after I’m gone. It’s not something we have to think about as a corporate initiative because it’s something we live.”

ALPFA has been a constant presence in her career.

“I’m a life member of ALPFA and it’s an honor to be part of such an accomplished group of Latino business leaders. ALPFA has connected me to so many inspiring people in the industry. I’m humbled to join the inaugural class of Orgullo de ALPFA and look forward to welcoming future leaders.” ●