

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Beatrice Mitchell Speaks at ACG's 4th Annual Women's Leadership Summit

BY [MARY KATHLEEN FLYNN](#)

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Kay Koplovitz, the first woman to head a television network, headlines ACG New York's Women of Leadership Summit at Convene Midtown East on Jan. 19.

Koplovitz founded USA Networks (now a division of NBCUniversal Inc.) and served as CEO from 1977 until 1998, when it sold for \$4.5 billion. Since 2000, Koplovitz has served as the chair of Springboard Enterprises, an accelerator that aims to bring "women founders leading transformational businesses to full parity in raising capital and building scalable, sustainable companies," according to her bio. More than \$7.4 billion in capital has been raised by 642 Springboard portfolio companies with more than 160 exits, including 13 initial public offerings. In 2016, Koplovitz co-founded Springboard Growth Capital to invest in Springboard Alumnae companies.

ACG New York's Women of Leadership committee was founded by Accordion Partners' director of business development Michelle Van Hellemont in 2008. The fourth annual summit features M&A panels and an evening networking cocktail reception. [Speakers include Julia Karol, the COO of private equity firm the Watermill Group, and Beatrice Mitchell, managing director of investment bank Sperry Mitchell, both of whom were named among the \[Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A by Mergers & Acquisitions.\]\(#\)](#)

For several years, ACG Global has developed programs for female members, who account for 14 percent of the group's membership. InterGrowth 2017 will feature a Women's Networking Lunch & Panel on April 24. Among innovative efforts by local chapters is Philadelphia's women's golf outing, which offers attendees a choice [between taking a golf clinic run by PGA professionals](#), or playing nine holes. The event is sponsored by OFS Capital Management LLC and was the brainchild of Marsha Zebley, who leads business development for the middle-market lending business.

Companies in the middle market have also launched initiatives to recruit and nurture women. Chicago investment bank William Blair established the Women's Advisory Council, an internal program that aims to provide leadership development opportunities to female employees. "We have found that it's critical to have a diverse deal team, including women, in order to provide competitive solutions and creative ideas to our clients," says William Blair managing director Beth Satterfield. Philadelphia-based law firm Duane Morris has developed a program called Women's Impact for Success, aimed at helping female lawyers become leaders. "As you increase the size of your practice within a law firm, then you're able to gain some recognition, and leadership opportunities will become available," says Duane Morris partner Nanette Heide, also speaking at the summit.