

Please Sign In and use this article's on page print button to print this article.

BANKING & FINANCIAL SERVICES

Los Angeles-based Levine Leichtman Capital Partners establishes Miami office



Lauren Leichtman, co-founder and co-chairperson of Executive and Investment Committees at Levine Leichtman Capital Partners
COURTESY OF LEVINE LEICHTMAN CAPITAL PARTNERS

IN THIS ARTICLE

Arthur Levine
Person

Lauren Leichtman
Person



By Ashley Garrett
Digital Producer, South Florida Business Journal
Dec 18, 2021, 10:19am EST

A private equity firm with \$9 billion in assets under management has joined the flood of financial companies expanding to the Magic City.

Los Angeles-based Levine Leichtman Capital Partners established its first South Florida location at 112 N.E. 41 St. in Miami's Design District. The middle market private equity firm's expansion is led by co-founders [Arthur Levine](#) and [Lauren Leichtman](#), who have relocated to Miami to oversee the new office.

Founded in 1984, LLCP has managed more than \$12.7 billion of institutional capital across 15 investment funds. Since its inception, the firm has partnered with management teams on over 90 portfolio investments covering consumer products, franchising, education, engineered products, health care, media and entertainment, professional services, and transportation.

Its past and current portfolio companies include a number of high-profile businesses, such as Las Vegas-based Nothing Bundt Cakes, Atlanta-based Tropical Smoothie Cafe, and Augusta, Georgia-based Best Lawyers.

Leichtman told the *Business Journal* that after years of scaling LLCP's footprint across the U.S. and Europe, the firm is ready to tap more readily into South Florida's fast-growing marketplace. LLCP already has offices established in Charlotte, North Carolina; Chicago; New York; London; Stockholm; and The Hague, the Netherlands.

"The business climate in Florida is extremely welcoming and there are a large number of founder-owned businesses. The best way for us to communicate our strategy is to have a physical presence to meet the founders of these companies," Leichtman said. "Since moving here, we've had the opportunity to speak with Mayor Suarez and he is so welcoming to businesses here. We have strong leadership in the firm now that allows Arthur and I to come open this office and expand into this region."

LLCP's Miami expansion coincides with "a very good two years" for the company despite the pandemic, Leichtman says. In September, the firm closed on its third Lower Middle Market Fund with total capital commitments of

\$1.38 billion. The fund will invest primarily in lower middle market companies based in the U.S. with less than \$50 million of revenues.

While LLC's Miami office marks its first physical presence in South Florida, the firm has held stake in the region for multiple years. LLC inked its eighth sale of a portfolio company in less than a year when it sold Sunrise-based Caring Brands International, the world's largest franchisor of home health services, for an undisclosed sum in October.

Additionally, LLC acquired Miami-based eating disorder treatment provider Monte Nido & Affiliates Holdings LLC in 2015.

While LLC is a control investor in its portfolio companies, the firm implements a structured private equity strategy that leaves a business's founder or management team in place for the duration of the partnership. The strategy also allows entrepreneurs and executives to participate in both subordinated debt and equity investments so they can continue operating their business after it's been acquired.

"[Structured private equity] just aligns us much more closely and incentivizes management to pick us as opposed to a [leveraged buyout] firm that's going to say, 'You can have 5% of your company and we need the rest,'" Leichtman said. "The founders and management teams we partner with have anywhere from a low of 20% to a high of 45% [of their company]."

LLC has about 100 employees between the U.S. and Europe. The firm currently has an analyst and a few junior employees based in its Miami office, with plans to dip into the local talent pool to fill further positions.

"It's good to hire locally," Leichtman said. "You're here and you want to show your support for the community."

[Sign up here](#) for the Business Journal's free morning and afternoon daily newsletters to receive the latest business