

District 11 – North Region Candidates

- Sheelagh Howett – Chief Risk Officer & Chief Compliance Officer, Cantella & Co., Inc.
- Matthew J. Sugden – Vice President, Compliance, Commonwealth Financial Network

Candidate Profile Form—Regional Committee Election

Candidate Name: Sheelagh Howett

Title: Chief Risk Officer/Chief Compliance Officer

Firm: Cantella & Co. Inc.

Candidate Biography and Personal Statement

Experience

Cantella is an independently-owned, Malden-based dually registered broker/dealer and SEC- registered RIA with multiple clearing relationships. Our mission is to provide the best services, resources and support to independent financial advisors, RIAs, and broker/dealers.

After graduating with BA in Banking and Finance from University College in Dublin, I began my career at Cantella in 2003 as an intern via a visa exchange program. I gained in-depth experience and knowledge providing daily support to every department within the firm, encompassing Compliance, Operations, Trading, Business Development, and Licensing & Transitions. In 2006, I joined Cantella full-time as Assistant Licensing & Transitions Director.

In 2008, I became Director of Corporate Development, where my communication skills and ability to implement creative, effective long-range solutions led to the streamlining and expansion of that department. During this time, I became more involved with regulatory and compliance issues, which led to my focusing on this area of our business.

Current Responsibilities

In 2012, I was appointed Chief Risk Officer and elected to the Board of Directors. In June, 2018 I took on the additional role as Chief Compliance Officer. I possess in-depth knowledge of the complex regulatory environment and utilize this expertise to develop risk-management procedures that identify, assess, and respond to the inevitable risks facing the financial services industry. I continuously strive to improve the efficiency and integration of existing processes into daily routines so they become ingrained in the firm's business. I strongly believe that risk management and compliance is an enterprise-wide responsibility, and I have created such a culture at Cantella, where all employees and financial advisors understand that risk mitigation and compliance is everyone's job.

On a broader industry scale, I am an active member of the National Society of Compliance Professionals (NSCP), the Boston Chapter of the Financial Planning Association (FPA), the National Association of Plan Advisors (NAPA), and the New England Broker Dealer/Investment Adviser Association (NEBDIAA).

Advocacy Agenda

I have a vested interest in working to protect our firms and to fight for fair regulation. In my 17 years in the business, I have witnessed firsthand how regulatory overload threatens to destroy our industry, now more so than ever, with little positive impact to investor protection.

I feel a responsibility to run again for the District Committee to protect our firms against excessive and ineffective bureaucracy imposed upon our industry by past and present regulatory changes. I hold FINRA Series 7 and 24 licenses.

With your vote, I will continue to advocate for firms of our size. It is critically important to work with FINRA to achieve the most positive outcomes for all of us. I know that we only have one seat, and it is important that we use our influence effectively to protect our business model. I believe my compliance experience and comprehensive knowledge of FINRA rules and regulations more than qualify me to represent firms in the district.

Optional Links:

Link to personal website, resume or CV:

Link to YouTube video:

Candidate Profile Form—Regional Committee Election

Candidate Name: Matthew J. Sugden

Title: Vice President - Compliance

Firm: Commonwealth

Candidate Biography and Personal Statement

Biography: Matt has been with Commonwealth Financial Network since April of 2004 and has held a number of roles within the firms Compliance department. As Vice President of Compliance, he is responsible for the firms branch oversight, Communications with the Public, Licensing and Compliance operations teams. He assists the CCO in establishing, administering, and enforcing Commonwealth's broker-dealer and investment adviser supervisory and compliance policies and procedures. He serves as an ambassador for the compliance team, leading efforts towards strengthening internal relationships with other departments and external relationships with advisors and regulators.

Matt has more than 16 years of compliance experience and a strong background in broker-dealer and investment adviser compliance best practices. He earned his BA in Legal Studies from Quinnipiac University and holds FINRA Series 7, 24, 53, and 66 registrations and the CRCP designation.

Personal Statement: I am running for a seat on the District 11 Committee because I believe my experience as a compliance professional and deep understanding of industry trends and advisor sentiment will allow me to be a strong and measured advocate in ensuring the development of rules and regulations are based on sound principals and common sense. I will be a proponent in helping FINRA fulfill its mission of investor protection but will do so while seeking to ensure rules are practical, not overly burdensome or cost prohibitive, and are effective in meeting their intended objectives.

I believe strongly in the rules and regulations to guide our industry and if elected, I will work hard to provide my insight to help FINRA focus its attention on those materially significant regulatory and market risks. At the same time, I will be a staunch advocate for a thoughtful, balanced, approach to industry regulation that provides meaningful benefit to investors without placing ineffective, unnecessary or undue burdens on the firms that FINRA regulates.

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