



Feb 10, 2021 LASCT Career Webinar

Women’s Coatings and Chemicals Career Panel

Come join us at the Los Angeles Society For Coatings Technology (LASCT) leadership panel webinar with 5 outstanding female leaders of our industry. The objective of this panel is to give insight for women in the coatings and chemical industry towards career advancement. The wisdom and the leadership vision from the panelists will be beneficial to ALL of us (men & women) and for all career levels.

Our Panelists



Dr. Aleta Richards

Senior Vice
President, Sales &
Market
Development,
Coatings, Adhesives
& Specialties North
America

Covestro

Eva O’Keefe

Vice President of
Sales

Azelis Case West

Rudi Heshmatzad

Sr. Business
Development
Manager

BEHR Paint
Company

Karmen Nash

Senior Program
Manager

Quaker Houghton

Kym Johnson

Senior Vice
President Global
Human Resources

Quaker Houghton

- **Moderator:** Rachel Capsavage, Technical Account Manager, IMCD US, LLC
- **Start Time:** 5:30pm, Pacific Time
- **RSVP:** Please RSVP by 10am PT, Tuesday, Feb 9. A link to the Zoom Meeting will be sent to you. Email LASCT at: LASCT@earthlink.net or call (714) 998-1891



Dr. Aleta W. Richards, Senior Vice President, Sales & Market Development, Coatings, Adhesives & Specialties North America, Covestro LLC

Aleta Richards is head of the Coatings, Adhesives & Specialties (CAS) sales and market development business unit for Covestro LLC. Having started her career at Covestro (then part of Bayer) in 1990, Aleta is well acquainted with the organization and has 30 years' experience in marketing, sales, product management, human resources and general management. She has held various leadership positions with time spent in HR and in the Polycarbonates, Polyurethanes and Inorganic Basic Chemicals businesses. A Pittsburgh native, Aleta received both her bachelor's degree and M.B.A. in marketing and international business from the University of Pittsburgh. She has also received a Doctorate in Business Administration from Georgia State University, with concentrated study connecting design thinking and organizational change. Aleta continues to support the Pittsburgh community, with a focus on educational opportunity, as the Vice President of Operations for the PBAN Board of Directors, a group dedicated to ensuring diversity within the PITT Katz Business School MBA Program, and as a Board member of the Pittsburgh Promise, a non-profit providing opportunities for Pittsburgh Public School students to obtain degrees from regional colleges and universities. Her focus on education also extends outside of Pittsburgh as she has recently joined the Board of Distinguished Visitors for Westminster College.



Eva M. O'Keefe, Vice President of Sales, Azelis Case West

Eva M. O'Keefe graduated from the University of Florida with a dual degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering. She later attended the Graziadio School of Business at Pepperdine University where she got her MBA. She also went to UCLA Extension to study Microbiology. Eva was also accepted into various engineering and businesses honor societies such as Alpha Pi Mu, Tau Beta Pi, and Beta Gama Sigma. Eva has been in the chemical industry since 1993 working for manufacturing companies such as GE Betz, ANGUS Chemical, and Arch Chemicals selling biocides. In her tenure at Arch, she conducted numerous plant hygiene audits, and was a presenter for CALPOLY Pomona and the WCS. Later in her career, Eva moved to chemical distribution where she was Vice President of Strategic Accounts for IMCD. In her current role, she is Vice President of Sales for Azelis Case West and product manager for anti-microbials and minerals. Eva lives in San Clemente with her husband Sean and her daughter Sofia. Her son is away studying at Vanderbilt University as a Freshman. Eva is the current Second Past President of the LASCT. In her free time, she enjoys doing her peloton bike, yoga, traveling and dining with her family.



Rudi Heshmatazad, Sr. Business Development Manager, BEHR Paint Company

Rudi Heshmatazad is a Sr. Business Development Manager with responsibility for Adjacent Growth Initiatives, Merger & Acquisition, and New Product Development and Commercialization Strategy for BEHR Paint Company. She previously served as Marketing Product Manager, Portfolio Manager, as well Sr. Research & Development Chemist in the coatings industry since 2007. In 2005 Rudi left her home country—Iran—in pursuit of life, liberty, equality, and opportunity. She earned her Master's degree in Conservation and Restoration of Archaeological Monuments and Relics Heritage and her Bachelor's degree in Chemistry before taking the leap and moving to America. In 2010 she earned MBA with distinction from DeVry University, Keller Graduate School of Management in Irvine, California. Rudi is deeply compassionate and regarded as a thought leader across the coatings industry. Rudi leverages a unique approach by applying technical principles to achieve enterprise goals with an emphasis on predictability, affordability, and sustainability. She brings unique insights on how to break the mold with new innovations across marketable products, services and solutions. Her methods deliver previously unknown profitable revenue streams for business partners and shareholders. She is passionate about challenging the status quo, raising the bar for herself and others. Rudi embraces the philosophy to feel comfortable with being uncomfortable – taking chance on life with all the many uncertainties that come with it. She is an agile learner and has immense thirst for exploring new ideas and ventures beyond existing norms. In her free time, she finds ways to ground herself by doing yoga, hike, spending time in nature. She enjoys travelling the world and experience different cultures. She enjoys baking and sharing slice of her freshly baked Pie or tart with friends over a freshly brewed coffee or tea.



Karmen Nash, Senior Program Manager, Quaker Houghton

Karmen began her career with the Quaker Houghton (formerly Quaker Chemical) in 1997 as a Technical Service Specialist in the automotive industry-focused Chemical Management Services (CMS) division of the company. CMS by its nature is an extremely customer intimate business with associates stationed full-time and fully integrated at customer sites in order to focus on inventory management of chemical products, process fluid maintenance/management, and wide-ranging total cost of ownership (TCO) savings programs. Since joining the company twenty-three years ago, Karmen has held numerous roles of increasing responsibility: Technical Service Specialist, Site Engineer, Site Manager, Program Manager, and now Senior Program Manager. As Senior Program Manager, she manages a team of forty (40) associates covering nineteen (19) individual CMS programs for customers within the automotive industry. Though a dynamic position that includes system/process management, people management (motivating and developing), and contract negotiation, problem-solving is Karmen's favorite part of the job. Karmen and her team pride themselves on taking ownership of customer issues and working together to do the right thing day in and day out. Karmen's passion for helping others succeed, and women in particular, is evident in numerous ways. Her passion comes in large part from her family – she has 19 nieces, daughters, and granddaughters. In an effort to encourage and inspire the women in her family, she writes a quarterly "love letter" celebrating their uniqueness. In association with General Motors and the National Wildlife Federation, Karmen participates in STEM programs at local grade schools. She has organized and lead workshops for the Quaker Houghton women's affinity group, Women's Inclusion Network (WiN), formerly Women of Quaker (WoQ). Karmen is an active member of several industry groups, including: Women in Manufacturing (WiM), the Association of Women in the Metal Industries (AWMI), Great Designs in Steel, the National Deep Draw Research Group (NADDRG), the Automotive Women's Alliance Foundation (AWAF), and the Association of Iron and Steel Technologies (AIST). In 2019, Karmen was recognized by Women of Quaker for her excellence and many contributions with the "Achievements in Her Field" award.



Kym Johnson, Senior Vice President Global Human Resources, Quaker Houghton, CHRO

As an experienced global leader, Kym has been responsible for designing and implementing lasting human capital strategies to drive business growth. Earning a Bachelor degree in chemistry from the University of Delaware, Kym entered the workforce with FMC Corporation as a chemist. While she enjoyed the sciences, she was passionate about helping people do their best in their work and made a career change to Human Resources and earning a Master in HR from Rutgers University. Engaging with leaders to find the best strategies to engage their teams and get the most from the employment experience is a passion for Kym. Kym's nearly 30 year experience in the chemical industry has spanned 3 companies and multiple continents. While at FMC, she progressed through a series of roles with increasing responsibility including first time assignments such as starting a strategic communications function, a global talent management function and a platform for HR excellence in Asia, which included a five-year residence in Shanghai, China. Her roles and continued development led her to the head of HR role at FMC where she put in place a centralized HR function and was the HR M&A lead for the sale of a legacy business as well as a complicated spin-off of a strategic business. In 2015 Kym joined Houghton International as Chief Human Resources Officer with a focus on growing this global company and putting in place contemporary processes and employment dynamics. Much of the last 5 years has been focused on the successful combination of Houghton International with Quaker Chemical which occurred in August of 2019 resulting in a new company Quaker Houghton based in Conshohocken, PA where Kym is the CHRO.