



Bold Leaders

Serena Williams, on equal pay, and following...

One executive's unlikely path to JPMorgan...

Deepak Chopra, on why financial health is...

Coming out—and leading—in a changing...

LeBron James talks about being a...

This JPMorgan Chase executive says: "Don't..."

Why diversity matters



| [Transc](#)



INSPIRE BOLD LEADERSHIP

Serena Williams, on equal pay, and following your dreams

By **Beth Braverman** • Posted: 07/12/17

Chase and [UNINTERRUPTED](#) have partnered to create "Kneading Dough," a series of intimate and honest conversations with



Bold Leaders 

workforce

empowered to make the best financial decisions.

In this video,
global tennis
legend Serena
Williams, 35, talks
with CEO Maverick

Make the
most of
your
money.



Carter about her financial journey from a teenager who forgot to pick up the checks when she won tournaments to, more recently, an advocate for ending the gender gap that persists in tennis, and other industries.

When Williams began playing in major tournaments, in the early 2000s, she barely considered the monetary prizes. She was so focused on winning that she often left her business manager to collect her checks at the end of the year. "I loved what I did, and I never wanted to do anything else," she recalls, adding: "I never played for money. Athletes who genuinely do that, just tend to be greater and better."

Once she earned some money, it was always up to her what to do with it.



Bold Leaders 

spend and what you don't spend, it's gonna be your decision.' Since I was a teenager, I've made every financial decision in my life and I've had to learn how to make good ones and how to make bad ones, which I think helps you make better ones."

In addition to Grand Slam titles and Olympic medals, Williams has enjoyed considerable success off the court—and in business. For the past two years, Forbes magazine has named Williams the highest-paid female athlete in the world. She has built lucrative relationships with several major companies—including Chase—and has a fashion line for the Home Shopping Network. Williams and her sister, Venus, are also part owners of the Miami Dolphins.

Nevertheless, Williams says the majority of her investments take place out of the public eye.

Evaluating investment prospects

Williams never gambles. But she sometimes refers to investing in business as "high-stakes poker."



Bold Leaders 

Like other seasoned executives, there are several key things Williams considers when evaluating a company: the organization's financial record and [business plan](#), as well as the quality of the core product—and whether it fits with her core values. "I never do anything if I don't really believe in the product, or I don't believe that I would personally use the product," she says.

Williams has remained true to herself, and her roots—proving that it's possible for people to be [fearlessly authentic](#) in business, and succeed.

"You sacrifice so much—just as much as the guy next to me that's training every

The importance of equal pay
And yet, Williams is very clear that despite her well-earned success, many barriers remain. For example, professional tennis players who are women often earn less than their male counterparts—a disparity that certainly exists in



Bold Leaders ▾

to be paid more. And it's like, 'Well, I'm working just as hard as this guy—actually sometimes harder—and why do I have to get paid less?'"

Serena Williams

day, but he gets to be paid more. And it's like, 'Well, I'm working just as hard as this guy—actually sometimes harder—and why do I have to get paid less?'"

The Grand Slam tournament—which includes the Australian Open, the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open—pays male and female winners equally. But other high-profile tournaments do not. For Williams, who considers herself one of the best athletes in the world—regardless of her gender—that's unacceptable. And it's something she's working to change.

"The US Open has always been equal—which is always been something that I've been really proud of," she says. Other tournaments, she



Bold Leaders 

so much further along," Williams says.

The movement for equal pay, regardless of gender, is now global, and a major [financial milestone for women](#).

Finding opportunity in motherhood

In April 2017, Williams announced that she's pregnant with her first child, with her fiancé, Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian. Because of her pregnancy, Williams will miss the US Open for the first time in years. Williams sees motherhood as an opportunity to connect with women on a different level—and to potentially share her businesses, and message, with new audiences.

"It's new opportunities for investments that I never would have paid attention to, so it's really interesting," she says. "But most of all, I just want to give the baby lots of love. Honestly, if my kid can grow up exactly how I did, I couldn't be happier. You know, with the values that my parents gave me. I think it really starts with just building a great human



Bold Leaders 

course, to teach your kids about money as soon as possible.

It's also never too early to start thinking about how you're going to shape your family's [financial legacy](#).

CHASE  Learn more ways to make the most of your money.



[LeBron James on his most valuable money lessons](#)



[NBA star Draymond Green, on the value of managing money](#)



[How LeBron James is expanding into business](#)



Bold Leaders 



Their "forever home." Our help.
See how one couple found the right house with a mortgage to match.

[Watch Derek & Irene's journey »](#)



INSPIRE BOLD LEADERSHIP

**One
executive's
unlikely
path to
JPMorgan
Chase**



Bold Leaders 

06/28/17 • Updated: 06/29/17

This following article is part of Chase Talks, a series that introduces JPMorgan Chase executives and the impact they are making in various areas of business and society.

Bob Graziano was a burgeoning biologist who caught the business bug, then excelled through several roles—at a major accounting firm, a global freight company, the 1984 Olympics and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Today, Graziano, 59, continues to pursue ambitious goals, including the expansion of the private banking business of JPMorgan, driving its client strategy and working on some of its most important relationships. And as the chair of the Los Angeles Sports & Entertainment Commission (LASEC), he led L.A.'s successful bid for the 2022 Super Bowl, and is helping to attract the 2024 Summer Olympics.

Learning the basics of business

Graziano's own L.A. story winds through several unpredictable twists. After switching majors



Bold Leaders 

several rental properties.

"It really was kind of a turning point for me," he says. "It was my first exposure to the actual business world. He really taught me a lot about the common sense within business, in addition to the technical aspects of accounting. I think about that constantly with our employees: everybody needs somebody to take them under their wing —a mentor."

After graduation, Graziano started at the accounting firm Arthur Young (now EY) with a seemingly conventional career path. Work for a young accountant could be a grind. One client was based in an underground suburban mall; punishing hours kept Graziano and his teammates from seeing daylight.

Graziano's strong performance and positive attitude earned a placement with a client with a bit more cachet: the Los Angeles Dodgers. He helped the team develop an automated ticketing system, then played a similar role with the Los Angeles Olympics Organizing



Bold Leaders 

organization, I decided it would have been too difficult for me to go back into the auditing role or the consulting role," he says.

He took a job running the accounting and finance operations for WTC Air Freight. When his old friends at the Dodgers called with a job offer, he turned them down. Or tried to. Then-Dodgers owner Peter O'Malley convinced him otherwise, and, as the team's CFO, his financial and operational background proved critical during a tumultuous decade that included a players strike and the cancellation of the 1994 World Series.

When O'Malley sold the team, Graziano was ready to move on, too. Instead, the new owners—Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.—named him the team president.

"All of a sudden, I'm trying to transition this small, really efficient operation into a large entertainment conglomerate," he says. "It was an interesting challenge in my career."

In 2004, Graziano and the Dodgers finally parted ways. A



Bold Leaders 

time in baseball.

"I like the ability to build businesses, but I viewed working in the private bank at JPMorgan as being a smaller operation within a company that has incredible capabilities along various lines

Building a career at JPMorgan Chase

Eventually, Graziano was approached with an opportunity with JPMorgan Chase. He recalls having initial doubts. "I was reticent about joining JPMorgan, in part because I didn't want to be one of those people that went from one financial institution to another," he says. "I like the ability to build businesses, but I viewed working in the private bank at JPMorgan as being a smaller operation within a company that has incredible capabilities along various lines of business. It's been the best of both worlds for me."

One of his biggest challenges was



Bold Leaders 

"The best of both worlds for me."

**Bob
Graziano**

disruption by hiring some of our talent." At the same time, increased regulation added new complexities to the business. Graziano, per usual, was not one to overreact to the day's headlines.

"All organizations go through challenging times," he says. "If you believe in the brand and the people behind the brand, taking a long-term view will always serve both the clients and the employees well."

Along with keeping a steady hand amidst temporary tumult, Graziano's management philosophy centers around empathy and relationship-building. He spends a good amount of his days checking in with clients and prospects, and staying on top of the news that affects them, as well as looking for new ways for JPMorgan Chase to not just build its business but help build its communities. "Relationships are really, really important," he says. "It's important to work hard and not put yourself first



Bold Leaders 

into."

Making an impact in the community

While he's years removed from running a sports franchise, Graziano says his appreciation for sports and its impact on communities is greater than ever. With his work on the LASEC, he remains a key figure in sports and entertainment. With the Super Bowl 2022 and 2023 U.S. Open secured, the next prize looming is one of the biggest possible: the 2024 Olympics. The winning city—either L.A. or Paris—will be announced in September.

"We have an unbelievably talented group of people working on the bid," he says. "Clearly, they cannot control everything that's going on in this country... I'm confident we've done all the right things and should get it. I think there's a recognition that L.A. knows how to put on a Games."

The city netted approximately \$90 million in profit from the '84 Olympics, which Graziano and the LA84 Foundation continue to use as a means of



Bold Leaders 

pursuits, driven by a lifelong interest in ensuring access to quality education, and by an abiding love of their blooming, ever-evolving city.

"I love L.A.," he says. "It's obviously a beautiful place to have grown up and to live, and there's such diversity of cultures and ethnicities. In my opinion, that diversity builds a strong community. The city has been great for me, and I want to do as much as I can to give back to it. I don't think we've begun to reach our potential."

Related Content:



[How one company is aiming to make sports safer](#)



[Women small business owners see opportunity](#)



Bold Leaders 



Meet two women who built a powerful lifestyle brand

Adam McKibbin is a Chase News contributor. His work has been featured in Adweek, the Chicago Tribune, LA Weekly and The Nation.