The UHNW Institute

2026 Summit Report

Women Leading the Next Chapter of Wealth

Highlights from the 2026 UHNW Institute Women's Leadership Summit

OVERVIEW

Continuing the Conversation in Palm Beach

One year after launching its inaugural Women's Leadership Summit, the UHNW Institute returned to Palm Beach on June 10–11 to continue the conversation about women and the future of family wealth.

Opening the Summit, Christie Houlihan, Executive Director and Senior Family Office Advisor at J.P. Morgan Private Bank, and Linda Mack, Founder and President of Mack International, reflected on how much had changed in just one year. While the inaugural Summit focused on preparing for the largest intergenerational wealth transfer in history, this year's gathering recognized that the transition is already underway. The conversation has shifted from anticipating change to empowering women to shape what comes next.

Guided by the theme of women authoring the next chapter of wealth, the Summit brought together family office executives, advisors, wealth owners, beneficiaries and next-generation leaders to examine how women are increasingly influencing not only financial decisions, but also family leadership, governance, philanthropy, investing and legacy.

Throughout the day, participants explored what leadership looks like when viewed through a distinctly female lens. Discussions moved well beyond investment management to address the human dimensions of wealth: identity, purpose, stewardship, relationships, succession and the responsibilities that accompany financial privilege.

Houlihan and Mack also emphasized one of the defining characteristics of the Women's Leadership Summit: its intentionally intimate, confidential environment. Governed by Chatham House Rules, the event encourages candid conversations, shared experiences and meaningful relationship-building among peers. Returning attendees reflected on the lasting professional relationships formed during last year's Summit, while first-time participants were encouraged to actively build new connections throughout the day.

The result was an incredible day that combined practical guidance with deeply personal perspectives, offering advisors and family leaders alike a richer understanding of the evolving role women are playing in shaping the future of family wealth.

BENEFICIARY STORIES

Understanding the Human Experience of Wealth

The Summit's first session shifted the conversation away from wealth as a financial construct and toward the people who ultimately inherit it. Moderated by Amy Hart Clyne, Chief Knowledge and Learning Officer at Pitcairn, the Beneficiary Stories ‘Seaside’ chat featured Kristen Heaney and Jamie Polanco, two women whose personal journeys as beneficiaries helped illustrate the emotional, relational and practical realities that often accompany significant wealth transfers.

The discussion also introduced the UHNW Institute's Beneficiary Stories Initiative, a thought leadership effort designed to elevate the voices of beneficiaries and inheritors—individuals whose experiences have historically been underrepresented in conversations about family wealth. Rather than focusing solely on trusts, estate structures or governance frameworks, the initiative seeks to better understand what it means to receive wealth, steward it responsibly and build a meaningful life around it.

Through candid personal stories, Heaney and Polanco described wealth not simply as a financial asset, but as a profound life event. Both spoke of inheriting significant resources under very different circumstances, yet shared common themes of responsibility, uncertainty, gratitude and purpose. One of the session's recurring messages was the importance of acknowledging that inheritance can feel like both a gift and a burden. Rather than minimizing that complexity, the panel encouraged advisors and families to normalize these emotions, recognizing that doing so helps beneficiaries move beyond uncertainty and begin embracing their role as thoughtful stewards.

Identity was a major theme of the conversation. Both speakers reflected on the challenge of reconciling inherited wealth with their own personal values and aspirations. Participants explored how beneficiaries often wrestle with family expectations, questions of purpose and the responsibility that accompanies inherited resources. The discussion reinforced that successful wealth transitions require preparing people, not simply transferring assets, and that families should not assume beneficiaries naturally know how to manage wealth or navigate the responsibilities that accompany it. Intentional education, mentorship and open conversations are essential.

The panel also offered valuable insights into the evolving role of advisors. Rather than seeking someone to "take over," the beneficiaries described their most trusted advisors as integrated partners, professionals who helped them understand the questions they needed to ask, provided education without judgment and walked alongside them as their confidence grew. The distinction was significant: the most effective advisors build capability rather than dependency, empowering beneficiaries to become informed decision-makers over time.

Preparing the next generation was another key discussion topic. Panelists encouraged families to begin wealth education long before assets are transferred, introducing children gradually to conversations about family purpose, governance, philanthropy and stewardship. Rather than asking whether to discuss wealth with children, families should focus on when those conversations should begin, what information is appropriate at each stage of development and how to create ongoing learning experiences rather than a single disclosure event.

The conversation also highlighted the often-overlooked role of "married-ins"—spouses who join enterprising families through marriage. Rather than treating these individuals as peripheral participants, the panel encouraged families to intentionally include them in education, governance discussions and conversations about family values. As today's spouses often become tomorrow's parents, their understanding of the family's wealth, culture and purpose can have a profound influence on how future generations develop as stewards. Inclusion, the panel suggested, strengthens both family relationships and long-term continuity.

Ultimately, the session challenged attendees to rethink traditional approaches to succession planning. Successful wealth transfer requires more than technical expertise, it demands intentional investment in the people who will ultimately carry a family's legacy forward. By centering the voices of beneficiaries themselves, the discussion underscored that stewardship is developed through education, relationships, shared purpose and the support to grow into one's role over time.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Wealth can be experienced simultaneously as a profound gift and a significant responsibility.
- Beneficiaries should be intentionally prepared through education, mentorship and gradual exposure to family governance—not expected to learn by circumstance.
- The most effective advisors act as collaborative partners who build confidence and capability rather than dependency.
- Families should begin conversations about wealth early, tailoring discussions to a child's stage of development and continuing them over time.
- Including spouses and "married-ins" in education and governance strengthens family continuity and prepares future generations more effectively.
- Successful wealth transfer depends as much on preparing people as it does on preparing assets.

THE FUTURE IS FEMALE

Authoring the Next Chapter of Wealth Leadership

Building on the morning's discussion of the beneficiary experience, the Summit's second session turned its attention to the women leading the future of family wealth. Moderated by Angelique LeDoux, Managing Editor of Content for the UHNW Institute, the panel brought together leaders representing multiple generations and career stages, including Linda Mack, Founder and President of Mack International; Jill Shipley, Head of Governance and Education at AlTi Global; Candace Dellacona, Trusts and Estates Attorney and host of *The Sandwich*

Generation Survival Guide podcast; and Ashley Martin, Partner at Matter Family Office. Together, they explored how women are reshaping leadership across family offices, governance, philanthropy, investing and advisory firms while navigating the realities of increasingly complex personal and professional lives.

Throughout the discussion, the group reflected on the defining moments that gave them the confidence to trust their own judgment and lead authentically. While their career paths differed significantly, each described discovering that leadership is less about having every answer and more about bringing a unique skill set and perspective to the table. Whether through deep listening, relationship-building, thoughtful questioning or recognizing the human dynamics behind financial decisions, the panel underscored that many of the qualities traditionally viewed as "soft skills" have become essential leadership capabilities within today's family wealth environment.

The conversation also highlighted how the profession itself has evolved. Wealth management has expanded well beyond technical expertise, and family structures have become more complex, with wealth increasingly spanning multiple generations. Today’s advisors are being asked to help families navigate purpose, governance, communication, succession and relationships, not simply preserve and grow assets. The panel suggested that this shift has created greater opportunities for collaborative leadership styles that emphasize empathy, education and long-term partnership alongside technical excellence.

The group also discussed the reality of balancing multiple leadership roles simultaneously. Panelists identified themselves as members of the "sandwich generation," managing careers while supporting aging parents, raising children and serving clients or leading organizations. Rather than viewing work-life balance as an attainable destination, they encouraged attendees to think instead about integrating these responsibilities in ways that reflect personal values and priorities. Leadership, they suggested, is shaped not by perfectly balancing competing demands, but by navigating them intentionally and recognizing that different seasons of life require different approaches.

The panel encouraged attendees to intentionally build networks of both female and male champions, mentor emerging professionals and actively advocate for other women by creating opportunities for them to contribute, amplifying diverse voices and expanding their visibility within organizations. These deliberate acts not only strengthen individual careers but also the profession as a whole. Looking ahead, attendees were challenged to embrace leadership as an ongoing journey of growth and reinvention, defining success not by title alone, but by purpose, impact and service.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Women are playing increasingly influential roles across every dimension of family wealth.
- Authentic leadership is grounded in empathy, relationships and lifelong learning.
- Today's advisors must address governance, purpose and family dynamics alongside financial and estate planning.
- Mentorship, sponsorship and advocacy are essential to developing future leaders.
- Success is increasingly defined by purpose, impact and service.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Applying the Female Lens to Family Wealth

The morning's final session shifted the conversation from individual leadership to the practical application of a female perspective across family wealth advising. Featuring Stacy Allred, Kim Kamin and Betsy Erickson, the discussion explored how women are influencing the future of wealth through three interconnected domains: learning and development, estate planning and legal, and social impact. Using the UHNW Institute's Ten Domains of Family Wealth™ framework, the panel emphasized that effective advising requires a multidisciplinary approach in which estate planning, governance, philanthropy, family learning, investment management and advisory relationships work together to support stronger decision-making, healthier family relationships and more intentional stewardship.

Central to the framework is the concept of Family Advisory Relationships (FARs), which serves as the connective tissue across these domains. Rather than operating within professional silos, trusted advisors help families coordinate expertise, align perspectives and navigate increasingly complex decisions in support of their long-term goals.

Moving Beyond Wealth Transfer to Wealth Empowerment

The discussion challenged attendees to reconsider one of the central assumptions surrounding the Great Wealth Transfer: that inheriting wealth automatically means controlling it. Participants explored how many women become beneficiaries without ever receiving meaningful authority over the assets intended to benefit them. Through examples involving trust structures, trustee appointments and powers of appointment, the conversation illustrated how governing documents can unintentionally limit a beneficiary's ability to make decisions or shape future outcomes. Rather than focusing solely on tax efficiency, advisors were encouraged to consider whether estate plans genuinely empower the individuals they are intended to serve.

Philanthropy as a Driver of Family Engagement

The conversation also reframed philanthropy as more than charitable giving. Increasingly, families are using philanthropy to express shared values, strengthen relationships and prepare future generations for leadership. Rather than viewing financial, social and human capital separately, participants explored how these forms of capital work together to create lasting family impact.

The group examined the psychological barriers that often prevent families from translating philanthropic intentions into meaningful action. Rather than lacking generosity or resources, many donors struggle with limited decision-making authority, analysis paralysis, time constraints, fear of scrutiny or uncertainty about their role within the family enterprise. Recognizing these behavioral dynamics enables advisors to better support families during periods of transition and increasing responsibility.

Creating Families That Continue to Learn

Learning and development emerged as another essential component of long-term family success. Participants emphasized that preserving wealth across generations requires more than maintaining financial knowledge; it requires continuously developing new skills, perspectives and ways of working together as families evolve.

The discussion encouraged advisors to help families establish a shared sense of purpose while creating ongoing opportunities for education, reflection and experiential learning. Rather than viewing learning as a one-time transfer of information, participants described it as a lifelong process that evolves alongside each stage of a family's journey. In an increasingly complex world, the ability to learn together may prove just as valuable as the assets themselves.

Throughout the discussion, one message remained consistent: applying a female lens is not about replacing traditional approaches to wealth management but expanding them. By integrating technical expertise with empathy, collaboration, education and long-term stewardship, advisors can help families build governance structures that are not only legally and financially sound, but also resilient, purposeful and prepared for future generations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Family wealth challenges require integrated, multidisciplinary advice.
- Estate plans should empower beneficiaries, not simply transfer assets.
- Philanthropy and lifelong learning strengthen families across generations.
- Applying a female lens expands wealth management through collaboration, stewardship and human-centered leadership.

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP

Applying the Female Lens to Family Wealth

The afternoon shifted from presentations to participation with an interactive workshop built around the UHNW Institute's Ten Domains of Family Wealth™ framework. Working in facilitated small groups, attendees explored real-world challenges across Estate Planning & Legal Issues, Social Impact & Philanthropy and Learning & Development & the Rising Generation, sharing experiences and generating practical ideas informed by their diverse perspectives.

A major focus of the workshop was the power of collaborative learning. Participants practiced active listening, explored challenges through multidisciplinary dialogue and shared key insights during table report-outs. Consistent with the Summit's collaborative spirit, the session reinforced that some of the profession's most valuable insights emerge when advisors, beneficiaries and family leaders learn from one another.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Complex family wealth challenges require collaborative, multidisciplinary thinking.
- Active listening creates stronger conversations and better outcomes.
- The Ten Domains framework provides a shared lens for addressing family wealth.
- Diverse perspectives are one of the profession's greatest strengths.

A NEW CAPITAL MINDSET

How Women Are Redefining Investment Decision-Making

The afternoon’s second session explored how the ongoing wealth transfer is reshaping not only who controls capital, but how investment decisions are made. Moderated by Cheryl Rose of Constellation Wealth Advisors, the discussion featured Chelsea Ganey, Chief Investment Officer at Summit Wealth Group; Dayna Kleinman of Sagard; and Michelle Ritter of J.P. Morgan Private Bank. Together, the panel examined how women and rising generations are bringing new priorities to portfolio construction, private markets and long-term wealth stewardship.

The conversation opened with research highlighting a shift in investor preferences. While previous generations often prioritized financial returns above all else, younger investors (and women in particular) are increasingly evaluating investments through a broader lens that includes purpose, values, sustainability and long-term impact. Rather than remaining niche considerations, these priorities are becoming integral to how many families define investment success.

The panel also explored the evolution of portfolio construction. As private markets expand and alternative investments become more accessible, advisors are rethinking diversification and long-term capital allocation. Instead of viewing public and private markets as competing strategies, the discussion emphasized their complementary roles in building resilient portfolios aligned with a family's objectives.

Education was also a prominent theme in the discussion. As investment opportunities become more complex, advisors play an increasingly important role in helping families understand tradeoffs related to liquidity, investment structures and long-term commitment. Panelists emphasized that transparency, thoughtful questions and ongoing education build the confidence needed to make informed decisions.

The discussion also reinforced that investment strategies should begin with family goals rather than standardized allocation models. Families are increasingly seeking to align portfolios with values, philanthropy, legacy and long-term purpose alongside financial returns. As women and next-generation family members assume greater leadership roles, investment advisors are evolving from portfolio managers to strategic partners who help families integrate investment decisions with the broader goals of the family enterprise.

The panel concluded by emphasizing the importance of engaging the next generation early in investment, philanthropic and governance discussions. Building knowledge and confidence before wealth changes hands helps prepare future decision-makers while ensuring portfolios continue to reflect evolving family priorities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Investment success increasingly reflects family purpose alongside financial performance.
- Public and private markets play complementary roles in long-term portfolio construction.
- Advisors create greater value by integrating investment strategy with family goals, governance and legacy.
- Preparing the next generation early builds confidence and supports lasting stewardship.

GUIDED REFLECTION

Defining Your Next Chapter

The 2026 Women's Leadership Summit concluded with a guided reflection led by Rebecca Meyer, Partner at Relative Solutions, designed to help participants pause, synthesize the day's conversations and consider how they would apply what they had learned after returning home. Following a day of discussions centered on leadership, stewardship, governance and the evolving role of women in family wealth, attendees were invited to shift from listening to personal reflection.

Using the metaphor of crossing a threshold into a new chapter, participants considered where they were in their own personal and professional journeys, what they were leaving behind and what opportunities lay ahead. Rather than focusing exclusively on career aspirations, the exercise encouraged attendees to reflect more broadly on the many roles they hold; as professionals, family members, caregivers, community leaders and individuals navigating their own transitions.

Attendees were then asked to translate reflection into action by identifying a theme for their next chapter, outlining practical steps they planned to take over the coming months and considering the beliefs or narratives that might prevent them from moving forward. Small-group discussions provided an opportunity to share these intentions, exchange encouragement and recognize the common challenges many women experience while balancing leadership responsibilities across multiple dimensions of life.

The session concluded with a simple but meaningful exercise: each participant wrote a postcard to herself capturing a personal commitment or intention inspired by the Summit. The postcards will be mailed back to participants in the months ahead, serving as a reminder of the goals, insights and momentum generated during the event.

The closing reflection provided a fitting conclusion to a day focused not only on the future of wealth management, but also on the women helping to shape it. Throughout the Summit, attendees explored how leadership, stewardship, learning and community influence the future of family wealth. The final exercise reinforced that meaningful change begins not only with new ideas, but with intentional action.

CONCLUSION

Looking Ahead

Throughout the Women's Leadership Summit, one message emerged consistently: The future of family wealth will be shaped not only by financial capital, but also by human capital.

From the opening Beneficiary Stories discussion to the closing reflection, participants explored how successful wealth transitions depend on preparing people as intentionally as portfolios. The conversations repeatedly emphasized the importance of education, stewardship, governance, purposeful leadership, collaboration and continuous learning—qualities that strengthen families across generations regardless of market conditions or economic cycles.

The Summit also demonstrated that applying a female lens is not about replacing traditional wealth management practices. Rather, it expands the profession's perspective by recognizing that investment management, estate planning, governance, philanthropy, learning and family relationships are deeply interconnected. Families are best served when advisors work collaboratively across disciplines while remaining attentive to the human experiences that ultimately determine whether wealth becomes a lasting source of opportunity and purpose.

Perhaps most importantly, the Summit reinforced that the future of family wealth is already taking shape. Women are increasingly influencing investment decisions, leading family enterprises, guiding philanthropic initiatives, preparing rising generations and redefining what successful stewardship looks like. Their perspectives are helping move the conversation beyond preserving wealth to cultivating resilient families capable of sustaining both financial and human capital over generations.

As attendees departed Palm Beach, they carried with them more than new ideas. They left with stronger professional relationships, fresh perspectives and a renewed commitment to applying the day's insights within their own families, organizations and advisory practices. In that sense, the Women's Leadership Summit accomplished more than fostering discussion; it strengthened a growing community dedicated to shaping the next chapter of family wealth leadership.

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