



John Gorzak, Moderator
Old Second National Bank

John is a tireless client advocate driven to remove barriers to growth and accelerate cash flow for his clients. An experienced problem solver, John has delivered credit solutions enabling privately held businesses and their owners to access tax advantaged IRB financing to acquire and improve manufacturing plant/real estate, import equipment, grow via acquisition, improve cash flow by financing accounts receivable and inventory and restructure ownership (owner buy-outs). Decisive and insightful, John has built a loyal network of clients and network resources that share his passion for helping private businesses prosper. John has advised clients including manufacturers of bearings, food and food related manufacturers including artificial flavors, industrial food ingredients, plastic parts and service providers including IT consultants and trucking/logistics providers.



Ryan T. McGovern
Star Mountain Capital

Managing Director &
Investment Committee
Member

Mr. McGovern has over two decades of investment and advisory experience with much of that time spent launching and managing mezzanine debt funds and working with mezzanine fund investors around the world. At Star Mountain, Mr. McGovern is involved in all aspects of the firm's investment and portfolio management activities in addition to business development and investor relations efforts. Mr. McGovern joined Star Mountain from the specialist private debt advisory firm Avebury Capital Partners where he established and ran its North American operations helping to build, advise and raise capital for mezzanine and other private credit investment funds.



Wade A. Runge, CPA, CVA
Porte Brown Accountants &
Advisors

Wade is a Director at Porte Brown, LLC, a full-service accounting and advisory firm. He is based out of Porte Brown's Elgin office, and he is a member of both the Valuation and Transition Planning practice group and the Accounting practice group. Wade's extensive training, along with his 30+ years of experience in accounting and advising small business owners, and his ability to translate technical jargon into everyday English makes him a valuable and trusted consultant for clients seeking his help on everything from taxes, to business valuations, to long-term business planning. He says, "I want to see our clients succeed by understanding and applying what we do for them."



Fred Stephenson
North Coast Capital Advisors,
Ltd.

Intermediary, Banker,
Entrepreneur and
Merchant/Trader, Fred
Stephenson understands how
to drive value and successfully
transition business ownership.

Fred's ability to find a company's most appropriate match of buyer(s) stems from understanding entrepreneurship and the forces that drive quality financial and operational decisions. His diverse experience in trade, finance, transportation and business development has given Fred deep insight into the inner workings of a wide range of industries. A practitioner of management by objective and disciplined cash-flow lending principles, Fred understands what makes an organization viable over the long-run, the pitfalls to be avoided, and the true worth of a business. SBA backed financing and business leverage is Fred's expertise; he has served a broad spectrum of clients across myriad industries. Fred will guide a business owner in embracing the inevitable changes that come with a sale.