



# LUMENT

## HERITAGE MONTH Q&A PROFILE

### Women's History Month

#### GET TO KNOW: LACA WONG-HAMMOND

MANAGING DIRECTOR, MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS



**Laca Wong-Hammond** joined Lument predecessor Lancaster Pollard in 2019 to lead its mergers and acquisitions (M&A) advisory practice. She has closed more than \$10 billion in M&A and capital market transactions so far in a career that has included positions at Duff & Phelps, Raymond James, Merrill Lynch, JPMorgan, and iStar REIT.

At Lument, Laca is in charge of business development and management of the firm's sell-side, buy-side, and strategic services to owners and operators of senior care and seniors housing communities as well as in other commercial real estate markets.

#### Q&A

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##### **As an Asian woman, do you feel welcomed at Lument?**

That's a funny question in a way because Lument's parent company is a large Japanese financial services group. I feel very supported at Lument.

But commercial real estate is by and large a white, male profession. One executive I admire used to say that women need to work twice as hard and be three times as smart as their male colleagues to get the business. I think there's more than a grain of truth in that, but I do my best regardless. I think that focusing on obstacles is ultimately debilitating.

On the plus side, I've also found that my uniqueness can be an advantage. Potential clients remember me, often years after we've met.

##### **With the creation of its DE&I Committee and the endorsement of senior leadership, Lument has started on the road to becoming a more diverse organization. Are you optimistic about the outcome?**

Yes, and for a number of reasons. First, Lument is starting from a firm foundation. It does a great job of being a meritocracy and acknowledging and supporting positive contributors. Professionals here are encouraged

to act like entrepreneurs and get rewarded for the results they deliver.

Second, there's an energy and sense of urgency here. Initiatives that would typically take a year or two to implement elsewhere are completed in a fraction of the time at Lument. One reason for this is that the company is very receptive to independent thought and new ideas. I think we are building momentum for our DE&I initiatives and will make great progress over the next few years.

**You felt strongly enough about diversity to join the committee. What has that experience been like?**

I've been pleased to find my suggestions being taken seriously, vetted, and translated into action when possible. Retention of minorities is an important issue for me, and I suggested that we engage high-profile speakers who can talk to minority experiences as a way of making our online gatherings more compelling. This suggestion was acted on in just a few weeks.

I also feel it's important, as part of its DE&I efforts, that Lument contributes to nonprofit organizations that support minority communities. I was raised in New York City, and the Chen Dance Center (CDC) was a lifeline for me when I was growing up. It was established in 1979 by two



Julliard School graduates and has served the Asian-American community ever since. I served on the board of trustees and have remained an avid supporter. I am working with Managing Director Edward Greene, who heads our DE&I Council, to raise awareness of CDC, which lost its building in a fire last year.

**What will diversity mean for Lument?**

I take a broader view of diversity than just faces on a website. For me, diversity includes such things as academic degrees, professional backgrounds, and the range of experiences that make every individual unique. We can measure our success as a diverse organization by how well we harness this diversity to create better outcomes for an increasingly diverse client base. In the process, we will be fueling our own growth and success going forward.

**“Laca brings tremendous experience to the platform which drives the best results for our clients. She is a dedicated team player who is focused on helping everyone around her succeed.”**

**– MICHAEL LARSEN  
SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR  
LUMENT**