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Executive Profile

Executive Profile: Bell Rock Capital's Jackie Reeves on leading through a pandemic

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Editor's Note: Executive Profiles offer insights into the management styles, hobbies and inspirations of the South Florida's C-suite. This Q&A is featured in our weekly print edition.

Jackie Reeves

Birthplace: Plainview, New York

Residence: Boca Raton

Current position: Managing director, Bell Rock Capital

Previous positions: Managing director, group head of research, Ryan Beck & Co.; director of research – equity research U.S., Putnam Lovell NBF; VP, equity research, Salomon Smith Barney; VP, Janney Montgomery Scott

Education: B.S., finance and economics, Cedarcrest College



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In her free time, Bell Rock Capital's Jackie Reeves serves as co-chair of the annual campaign for the YMCA of South Palm Beach County. She's pictured in front of a display for the fundraising campaign at the Peter Blum Family YMCA in Boca Raton.

Jackie Reeves was traveling for work 26 weeks a year, from her home in New York to Chicago, California, even Europe. Then, one winter day, waiting for a flight at O'Hare International Airport, it dawned on her: If she had to log all these miles and time away, at least she could return to a place where she could spend weekends outside in the sunshine.

So Reeves and her family followed her siblings and moved to South Florida.

That was 20 years ago. In some ways, Reeves pioneered what has dawned on thousands: If wealth managers like her and countless other professionals can work from anywhere, they might as well enjoy the place they call home, she said.

Today, Reeves is part of her community. She speaks to graduate students at the Florida Atlantic University College of Business, and is involved with the FAU Tech Runway, which nurtures young tech startups. Her work with a host of community organizations brings "a portfolio manager approach to look at our community and make sure we're doing all we can to move us forward."

You arrived in South Florida before many money managers and investors began to flock here. Did people think you were crazy? Initially, people were saying, "What are you thinking?" People were just starting to realize you could work from anywhere. South Florida has three viable airports that could take me anywhere in the U.S. or Europe in a heartbeat. I could even do day trips to Chicago. It was so terribly convenient. Then Kelly [Smallridge, CEO of the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County] ran her ad (to lure money managers to the county), and more and more people made the shift. Some had a second or third home, so it just made sense to many of them to bring the rest of the troops down.

As someone not raised here, what do you miss? I grew up in New York and I used mass transit quite a bit. I'm excited to see Brightline come to Boca and other spots they've identified along the coast. I do not care to drive on I-95 too much. I look forward to the day when that becomes a viable option.

What's been your greatest adaptation in the pandemic? In the absence of leadership, fear takes over. One of our greatest strengths as leaders is to have a voice and share insights and positive DNA to help people see past this event. This will not be in perpetuity. Don't be afraid to share what happens next because you might seem insensitive to what's happening now. Communicate, be present.

When all restrictions are lifted, what will you do? I love going to concerts, or going out with my friends to Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach or to a resort, and just not being concerned. I had some travel plans that were put on hold, like a trip to Italy with my girlfriends.

What advice might you give your 21-year-old self? In my first job, I was career focused. Even today, it's still a 12-hour day. To my younger self, I might say: "Try and relax a little more. It's going to be OK."

What do you like to do outside of the office? I love going to Miami, to Art Basel, to the Boca Museum, to shows at the Kravis Center, the Wick Theater, the Living Room Theater at FAU. I saw Madeleine Albright and Doris Kearns Goodwin at a university lecture series. I love the cultural aspect we have here.

What's something people might not know about you? I love to go really fast. I love roller coasters, skydiving, anything with enormous amounts of acceleration. It's about being a kid again.

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