



**James F. Davidson**, CIRA, CTP, CM&AA, CM&AP, CPA, CFF, CFE, CGMA, FCPA, CD, CBA

### **President & Founder**

Jim Davidson is president and founder of Avant Advisory Group, a preeminent, 25+ year management consulting and operationally focused financial advisory firm that specializes in *distressed - operational turnarounds & financial restructurings*; mergers & acquisitions (M&A); forensic, fraud, & corporate investigations; dispute resolution-consulting and testifying expert witness; CRO, CFO, C-Suite, & corporate governance advisory.

Jim and Avant Advisory Group primarily serve middle-market companies with revenues ranging from \$25 million to multi-billion-dollar sales, private equity firms, family offices and their portfolio companies, banks, alternative lenders, other capital providers, attorneys, and law firms.

Jim has earned the following:

### **Professional Certifications**

- *Certified Insolvency & Restructuring Advisor (CIRA)*
- *Certified Turnaround Professional (CTP)*
- Certified Merger & Acquisitions Advisor (CM&AA)
- Certified Merger & Acquisitions Professional (CM&AP)
- *Certified Public Accountant (CPA)*
- Certified Financial Forensics (CFF)
- Forensic Certified Public Accountant (FCPA)
- Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA)
- Certified Director (CD)
- *Certified Board Advisor (CBA)*
- *Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)*

He specializes in following areas:

### ***Distressed & Special Situations***

- *Insolvency, including bankruptcy*

- *Operational turnarounds*
- *Financial restructurings*
- *Performance & profitability improvement*
- *Financial Advisor*
- *Chief Restructuring Officer*

### **Mergers & Acquisitions**

- M&A transaction advisory
- Sell-side readiness/preparation
- Financial diligence / Quality of Earnings assessments (buy-side & sell-side)
- Operational due diligence
- Valuations
- *Distressed company acquisitions*
- *Performance, profitability & valuation improvement*
- Post-merger integration

### **Forensic, Fraud, & Corporate Investigations**

- Financial forensics
- Fraud & corporate investigations
- Dispute resolution – Consulting & testifying expert witness

### **CEO, CRO, CFO, C-Suite Interim Management**

- CFO services
- Strategic planning
- Corporate governance
- *Performance, profitability & valuation improvement*
- Board advisory

Jim's years of experience span multiple industries that include the following:

### **Industry Expertise**

- Trucking & transportation
- Consumer products & services
- Retail & wholesale distribution
- Food processing & packaging
- Agribusiness
- Restaurants
- Franchising
- Route-based businesses
- Contracting
- Engineering & construction

- Industrial products manufacturing & assembly
- Healthcare
- Business & professional services
- Real estate
- Waste management & disposal
- Aerospace & defense
- Energy – oil & gas, oil shale, ethanol, mining
- Chemicals and fertilizers
- Subprime lending
- Auto dealerships, service & repair shops
- Government & not-for-profit
- Education – colleges & universities
- Telecom, media, & technology

Jim and Avant have been recognized or quoted in the following:

### **Publications**

- **2024** LA Times, *"Banking and Finance: Trends, Updates and Visionaries"*
- **2024** The Enterprise World, *"The Most Dynamic Business Executives to Watch In 2024"*
- **2023** Financial Services Review, *"Top Corporate Advisory Services Provider" Corporate Advisory Edition*
- **2023** LA Times, *"Banking and Finance: Trends, Updates and Visionaries"*
- **2022** Los Angeles Times, *"Bankruptcy & Restructuring Roundtable"*
- **2022** Los Angeles Business Journal, *"Leaders of Influence" Private Equity Investors and Advisors"*
- **2022** Los Angeles Times, *"Orange County Banking and Finance: Trends, Updates and Visionaries"*
- **2021** Los Angeles Business Journal, *"Leaders of Influence: Private Equity Investors & Advisors"*
- **2021** Los Angeles Times, *"Banking and Finance: Trends, Updates and Visionaries"*

- **2020** Los Angeles Business Journal, *"Leaders of Influence: Private Equity Investors & Advisors"*
- **2020** California Business Journal, *"Pivoting During COVID-19 Avant Advisory Group Helps Companies Access Financing through the Paycheck Protection Program & the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program."*
- **2019** Corporate Live Wire, *"Mergers & Acquisitions Roundtable"*
- **2017** Corporate Live Wire, *"Bankruptcy & Restructuring Roundtable"*
- **2017** Linked-in Blog, *"Three Ways to Avoid 'Messy' Merger & Acquisition Transactions"*
- **2017** The Virtual Round Table, - *"Mergers & Acquisitions"*
- **2011** CFO Magazine, - *"Where There's Smoke, There's Fraud"*

Jim and Avant Advisory have been engaged by both counsel and buyers/investors to investigate and opine on numerous forensic and fraud examinations, including post-acquisition, conflicts of interest, breach of fiduciary duty issues, and other disputes. He and Avant provide M&A transaction advisory support and have performed hundreds of buy-side and sell-side diligence engagements that include financial / quality of earnings and operations for companies ranging from distressed to multi-billion-dollar firms.

Jim has served in senior executive positions at both public and private companies ranging from entrepreneurial to multi-billion-dollar firms. After 10 years of accounting, auditing, M&A transaction advisory, turnaround and restructuring consulting for Big Four CPA firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, Jim transitioned to private industry. He has served as a member of several boards of directors and in various financial and executive positions, including president and CEO, COO, CRO, CFO, secretary-treasurer, chief accounting officer, and corporate controller.

Jim integrates experience from private industry, public accounting, auditing, and consulting. His combined experience and professional qualifications fulfill financial expert requirements defined by Sarbanes-Oxley, NYSE, and NASDAQ. He also served on the Financial Executives International committee for Mid-Sized Public Companies. He has been a designated expert witness in both federal and state court cases.

He has served on the Business Bankruptcy Task Force of the American Bankruptcy Institute and was a member of the Board of Directors of the Orange County Forensic Expert Witness Association. Currently, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Chapter of Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, where he also served

as president for four years. He cofounded both the Southern California Chapter of the Private Directors Association and the Orange County Transaction Network.

Jim is a former university-certified facilitator and instructor and has taught both graduate and undergraduate courses in business and management. These courses have primarily related to financial and managerial accounting, financial reporting, auditing, finance, economics, fraud investigations and financial forensics, business ethics, corporate management and governance, strategic planning, and critical thinking.

He has presented to multiple professional and business organizations on topics related to mergers and acquisitions, financial structuring and the capital stack, financial due diligence, fraudulent financial reporting, forensic accounting, *investing in distressed companies and special situations, operational turnarounds, and financial restructuring* that include:

### **Presentations**

- *"Utilization of Specialists in Turnarounds and Workouts"*
- *"Recovering Value from Underperforming Companies in the Current Economy"*
- *"Distressed Asset Acquisitions"*
- *"Restructuring –Lessons Learned from the Experts"*
- *"Structuring and Financing Special Situation and Tough Deals – Carve-outs, Distressed, Operational and Financial."*
- *"Managing a Turnaround"*
- *"Lessons Learned from Strategic Planning and Execution Failures"*
- *"Turnaround Professionals' Perspective"*
- *"Small Business Bankruptcy Under the CARES Act and SBRA"*
- *"When the Next Bubble Bursts: How to Invest in the Next Economic Downturn"*
- *"Advantages of 363 Sale vs. 1129 Plan and Other Alternatives"*
- *"Turnarounds post-Covid-19"*
- *"Lessons from the Trenches, Views from Industry Experts"*

- *"Got Profits? Now You See Them, Now You Don't as Profits Vanish in both Crisis Situations and Fraudulent Activity"*
- "Pitfalls, Risks, and Deal Breakers Surfaced (or Should Have Been) by a Quality of Earnings"
- "Cautionary Tales, Red Flags, Broken Deals & More Lessons From M&A Experts"
- "Quality of Earnings, Forensic, and Other Issues: Forewarned is Forearmed"
- "M&A Due Diligence – Financial Quality of Earnings & Operations"
- "Lessons from the Trenches – How to Avoid Bad Deals and Minimize the Harm When They Happen"
- "Post-Closing Working Capital Disputes & How to Avoid Them"
- "Trends & Techniques in Fraud, Forensics & Corporate Investigations"
- "Critical Issues in Corporate Fraud Investigations"
- "Corporate Transgressions and Financial Reporting Gimmickry"
- *"Mortgage Fraud – Rise, Fall, & Emergence from Bankruptcy of a Public Company & Subprime Lender during the Financial Crisis"*
- "Liability of Attorneys, Accountants and Other Professionals in Ponzi Schemes"
- "The Impact of Asset Valuations on Credit Decisions"
- "The M&A Capital Stack Post-Recovery – the Why, Who, and Why"
- "Best Practices in M&A Due Diligence Pre- and Post- COVID-19"
- "New Trends in Capital and Financing Options for Independent Sponsors"
- "M&A Outlook 2019 – Driving Due Diligence Efficiency & Effectiveness"
- "Private Equity and Family Offices Middle Market Buyouts"

Jim has served as a member of the following:

### **Professional Associations & Board Memberships**

- *Association of Insolvency and Restructuring Advisors*
- *American Bankruptcy Institute*
- *California Bankruptcy Forum*

- *International Insolvency Institute*
- *Turnaround Management Association*
- *California Receivers Forum*
- National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts
- M&A Source
- Orange County Transactional Network
- Alliance of Merger & Acquisition Advisors
- Center for Strategic Business Integrity
- Association for Corporate Growth
- Opus (M&A) Connect
- National Association of Corporate Directors
- Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- California Society of Certified Public Accountants
- Institute of Management Consultants
- Association of Certified Fraud Specialists
- Forensic CPA Society
- Forensic Expert Witness Association
- Private Directors Association
- American Institute of Certified Board Advisors
- Financial Executives International Mid-Sized Public Division Committee Member
- Financial Executives International Los Angeles and Orange County Chapters
- Boards of Directors of Reborn Home Solutions/Reborn Cabinets, Inc; Galaxy Venture Capital; SmartLife Insurance Holdings; and Christ Real Estate Investments.

He currently serves as member of both corporate and non-profit organization boards of directors. He was a co-founder and board member of the Southern California chapter of the Private Directors Association and member of the board of directors of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (Los Angeles). He served four years on the board, finance, and audit committees of the international not-for-profit organization, For the Children/Royal Family Kids.

He was a founding member of the board of directors of the Orange County Transaction Network and served on the Orange County and Los Angeles chapters of Opus Connect. He also served as finance, audit committee, and board member and advisor for several other large public, private, entrepreneurial, middle-market, for-profit and not-for-profit, organizations of various sizes, including with multibillion revenues.

Jim holds a master's degree in business with emphasis in finance & economics and bachelors' degrees in political science and psychology from the University of California, Irvine.