

Ascent Private Capital Management
Karen McNeill Pitch
July 29, 2013

Dear Paul:

Karen McNeill made her scholarly mark digging into the foundations of some of California's most iconic buildings, designed by its most prominent female architect. Her study of the life and work of Julia Morgan, designer of Hearst Castle in San Simeon and other notable buildings in the San Francisco Bay Area has furthered preservation efforts and an understanding of architectural history.

Now she researches the roots of influential families as the new Head of Family History at Ascent Private Capital Management of U.S. Bank, with similar goals of preserving wealth and providing a shared sense of family origins. Uncovering and discussing family history creates a cross-generational bond that researchers believe mitigates the so-called "third generation effect" that often sees wealth dissipate as inheritors lose a sense of connection to the ways in which a family fortune was made.

The country's top wealth management firms are putting these findings to work, fostering keen awareness of family history for their clients, and from that, helping establish of a "family narrative" that makes it possible to convey a sense of values and purpose across the generations.

For McNeill, a longtime Bay Area resident who holds Ph.D., M.A., and B.A. degrees in history from the University of California, Berkeley, her new role at Ascent continues the evolution of her personal history scholarship. She has more than 15 years of experience in working on personal history projects with individuals, as well as with private and public sector organizations, and served most recently as senior historian/architectural historian at Carey Co. in San Francisco. Prior to joining Ascent, she taught history at the University of California, Berkeley, the University of the Pacific, Ohlone College, and the Academy of Art University. She is a Director on the Landmark Heritage Foundation Board.

Her study of Morgan, who designed or worked on the Hearst Castle and UC Berkeley's Greek Theatre, the bell tower and library at Mills College, the Berkeley City Club and San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel, spotlights the under-recognized role of a pioneer who changed the face of a state. Her biography, "Julia Morgan: Building the California Women's Movement"; is awaiting publication by the University of California Press.

At Ascent, McNeill focuses mostly families with a net worth of \$50 million or more. "When the grandchildren of someone who has achieved great wealth lose connection to the family's story, they get the benefits of wealth, but they don't have an understanding of where it comes from, and that's important for its stewardship," says Scott Winget, who oversees McNeill's work as Ascent's Senior Managing Director of Wealth Impact Planning. "History provides context and the opportunity to transmit values across time."

From California's most influential female architect to some of its most historically significant structures, McNeill has built her career on connecting the past to the present. In her new role at Ascent, she will be doing much the same, though this time with some of the country's wealthiest families.

I would be happy to arrange a conversation with Karen McNeill to discuss her research methods, the importance of family history, and how she expects to approach her new role as Ascent's Head of Family History.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Will Swarts
Senior Account Executive
MacMillan Communications