

In Her Own Words: Jessica Hoppe's career has turned out ship-shape



Jessica Hoppe, President and CEO, The World, Residences at Sea Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

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Creating a sense of community is challenging when everyone's on firm ground but when your constituents, or in this case, residents, are literally at sea, it's a different world. Yet [Jessica Hoppe](#)'s real-world training and legal career prepared her to take the helm at The World, Residences at Sea.

I never expected my career would lead me here, at the helm of a private residential ship traveling the world. My path has been anything but linear, beginning far from the ocean and shaped first by academics, then by a legal career that taught me the rigor, discipline and preparation required to lead.

I earned dual bachelor's degrees from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctor, cum laude, from Tulane University Law School, later strengthening my leadership through Harvard Business School's Program for Leadership Development. These foundations gave me a global perspective, a commitment to learning, and a grounding in human behavior

I began in private practice at Balch & Bingham LLP and Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, where rigorous legal analysis and the discipline of preparation became second nature. My move in-house marked a turning point. At Genting Americas, I served as General Counsel, Secretary and Senior Vice President of Governmental Affairs, overseeing legal strategy, governance, litigation, and corporate boards. I later became General Counsel and Senior Vice President for Crystal Cruises, responsible for all legal matters across the company and its affiliates.



Image: The World, Residences at Sea

Exterior of The World, Residences at Sea

THE WORLD, RESIDENCES AT SEA

Every chapter demanded something different from me, and I gave it. When I joined The World, Residences at Sea in 2022, I recognized something I hadn't fully articulated before: every role I had held was building toward an organization of this scale and complexity. Two years later, stepping into the CEO position felt less like an arrival and more like a responsibility I was grateful to carry.

The World is unlike any other organization. It is not just a company; it is a living, traveling community. Residents share not only a ship, but a lifestyle, a rhythm, and a sense of home that moves across oceans. Leading this community calls for both precision and empathy, and it has reinforced a leadership style rooted in preparation, curiosity, and genuine investment in people.

I have learned that consistency builds trust, and trust builds strong teams. As a woman in the C-suite, I have felt the pressure to strike the right balance of confident, assertive, and approachable. The most powerful shift in my career came when I stopped trying to fit a mold and embraced the leader I naturally am: steady, thoughtful, decisive, and deeply committed to the people around me.

What I value most is the privilege of shaping a community while honoring its sense of home. Our Residents travel the world, but they want to feel grounded wherever we drop anchor. My goal is a culture where excellence and humanity coexist, where people feel seen, valued, and inspired.

My journey has not been straightforward. But it has been filled with purpose. Leadership is not about having a perfect plan. It is about showing up with intention, learning continuously, and carrying both the mission and the people forward with care. For me, that is not a burden. It is the whole point.