

Robert J. Penta Esq.

SUMMARY

Rob currently serves as the President of Venture First, LLC ("Venture First"), a Louisville based financial services and investment firm. Venture First's Services Division provides fractional CFO, accounting, strategic consulting, and valuation services to clients and businesses across the U.S. Venture First's Funds and Transactions Division makes direct investments in private companies through private equity and venture capital structured vehicles, and additionally manages approximately \$330 million of assets under management across its several SEC registered funds through its SEC Registered Investment Advisor subsidiary, VF Advisors LLC ("VF Advisors").

Rob also serves as the Senior Managing Director of VF Advisors, the Chief Legal Officer and co-founding Managing General Partner of three (3) Whiskey Capital Finance Co. Funds, the Managing General Partner of the Future Labs Capital Fund, and the Managing Partner of the Strike Ventures Fund.

Prior to joining Venture First, Rob was a Partner at Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs, LLP ("Wyatt"), which he joined in 2006. While at Wyatt, Rob regularly represented large financial institutions, private equity and venture capital firms, restaurant groups, hospitals, and companies in the defense sector. Rob's experience while at Wyatt was largely focused on financial institutions, certain other regulated industries, and merger & acquisition transactions. In 2015, Rob left Wyatt to join a longtime private equity client of his, Blue Equity, LLC ("Blue Equity") where he served as the Director of International Investment as well as CEO of one of Blue Equity's portfolio companies for four (4) years before joining Venture First.

Rob currently serves on numerous private company and non-profit Boards detailed below and has 16 years of Board experience both serving on Boards of Directors and Boards of Trustees, as well as providing legal and strategic guidance to Boards of organizations that he represented throughout his career.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Alumni of the Year Award – Francis Parker School of Louisville – 2026

Generosity and Leadership Award – Frazier Rehabilitation Institute / U of L Health - 2025

Lawyers of Distinction Award – 2023, 2024 & 2025

- Peer-nominated Lawyers of Distinction Award for excellence in Corporate and Transactional law (in each 2023, 2024, and 2025 – Published in the New York Times and the American Law Journal as the recipient of this award for each of the associated years).

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Award Winner (Multiple awards – 2022)

-Visionary of the Year Award (2022)

-Drew Martin Champion of Hope Award (2022)

-National Recognition Recipient (2022)

- ***Visionary of the Year Award*** – awarded to the candidate that raises the most money from their region or state around the nation during a 10 week campaign for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to assist in the research, drug development, and fight against blood cancer.
- ***Drew Martin Champion of Hope Award*** – a specially endowed award granted once per year to an individual that makes the largest contribution through their combined fund-raising efforts, personal donations, and dedication of their time and other resources to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to help support research and developed towards the battle to cure Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

Office of the Secretary of Defense – U.S. Department of Defense – ESGR Patriotic Employer Recognition – 2016, 2017, and 2018

- Received in each 2016, 2017 and 2018 from the U.S. Department of Defense (Office of the Secretary of Defense) and the ESGR for dedicated individual patriotic support of one or more employee active members of the National Guard and Reserve Forces by an employer nominated for such recognition by one or more employee active members of the National Guard and Reserves.

Condecoración del Mando de Operaciones Especiales – Alicante, España – 2017

- Commendation / Recognition awarded in 2017 by the Special Operations Command of Spain in Alicante, Spain.

Rated By Super Lawyers – 2015-2021

Rob has been recognized by his peers as a *Kentucky Super Lawyers® Rising Star* for the years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

SAMPLE OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Venture First, LLC

- *President & Vice Chairman*
- *General Counsel & Vice Chairman*

Louisville, KY
2025 - Present
2018 - 2025

VF Advisors, LLC

- *Senior Managing Director*

2024 - Present

VF Advisors is the SEC Registered Investment Advisor that was created under Venture First and currently manages all fund assets under management for each of the funds that were founded (in whole or in part) by Venture First.

Whiskey Capital Finance Funds (each of which are formed under VF Advisors, LLC)

- *Managing General Partner & Co-Founder* of each of the following:
 - Whiskey Finance HoldCo LLC / Whiskey Finance FinCo LLC (Whiskey Capital Fund III) 2024 – Present
 - \$150 million credit fund that makes loans to American Whiskey Brands – Currently Deploying
 - Whiskey Capital Finance Co II, LLC / Whiskey Capital Secured Financing Fund II, LP 2023 – Present
 - \$75 million credit fund that makes loans to American Whiskey Brands – Fully Deployed
 - Whiskey Capital Finance Co, LLC / Whiskey Capital Secured Financing Fund I, LP 2019 – Present
 - \$46 million credit fund that makes loans to American Whiskey Brands – Fully Deployed

Future Labs Capital Fund

- *General Partner & Co-Founder*

2021 - Present

The Future Labs Capital Fund (Future Labs Capital Fund I, L.P.) is a fund that was created in 2021 by Rob Penta and two of his close friends with the dedicated focus of using their unique relationship with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to invest in early stage companies coming out of MIT following an exclusive vetting process that they developed. The fund was fully subscribed in a very short period with investors from around the country and closed to new investment. The fund has already experienced several successful exits and continues to return capital to its original investors while monitoring innovation from routine trips to MIT.

Strike Ventures Fund I, LLC

- *Managing Partner & Co-Founder*

Louisville, KY
2020 - Present

Strike Ventures is a small >\$10 million fund that was created to make venture capital investments in smaller venture stage companies. The Fund received \$1 million in tax credits in 2021 from the Commonwealth of Kentucky for making investments in small Kentucky businesses. Rob is a managing partner of the Fund and a voting member of the investment committee.

Blue Equity, LLC

- *Director of International Investment*

Louisville, KY
2015 – 2019

Blue Equity is a private equity firm based out of Louisville, Kentucky. After representing Blue Equity for many years while at Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs, LLP, Rob joined the firm as its Director of International Investment as well as the CEO of one of its portfolio companies in the defense sector.

Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs, LLP

- *Partner*
- *Senior Associate*
- *Associate*

Louisville, KY
2013 - 2015
2009 – 2013
2006 - 2009

SAMPLE OF RECENT BOARD EXPERIENCE:

Frazier Rehabilitation Hospital – Louisville, KY

- *Vice Chairman*, Board of Directors 2025 - Present
- *Member*, Board of Directors 2024 - Present

Francis Parker School of Louisville – Louisville, KY

- *Chair*, Governance Committee 2024 - Present
- *Member*, Executive Committee 2020 - Present
- *Member*, Board of Trustees 2020 - Present

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (a/k/a Blood Cancer United) – Ohio Valley Region

- *Member*, Board of Directors 2022 - 2023

Forecastr Inc. – Louisville, KY

- *Member*, Board of Directors 2020 - Present

Goodmaps Inc. – Louisville, KY

- *Member*, Board of Directors 2021 - Present

Venture First, LLC – Louisville, KY

- *Vice Chairman*, Board of Directors 2018 - Present
- *Member*, Board of Directors 2018 - Present

EDUCATION:

Indiana University

1999 - 2003 Bloomington, IN

- *Bachelor of Arts* (B.A. - Multiple Majors) – Political Science, Criminal Justice, Business/Finance

Wake Forest University School of Law

2003 - 2006 Winston-Salem, NC

- *Juris Doctor* (J.D.)