

## Contact

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## Top Skills

Business Strategy  
Family Business  
Private Equity

# Jennifer Knight

Independent Board Director | PE & Family-owned companies |  
Manufacturing | Governance | Supply Chains | Textiles & Apparel |  
Former U.S. Government official  
New York, New York, United States

## Summary

I have spent much of my career leading lower and middle-market textile manufacturing companies, beginning with my own family's business, and later, on behalf of private equity investors. Despite the requisite challenges and disappointments, it has been an amazing journey in that I've been able to build hands-on experience guiding companies through growth, turnarounds, and ownership transitions in difficult market situations. I have had opportunities to travel around the world extensively to visit customers and suppliers and to set up offshore operations in Central America and China. I have met some wonderful people who are part of my professional network but also have become true friends. Through these experiences, I have developed a deep understanding of complex global supply chains, knowledge that continues to inform my work today.

After my last role as President and COO of American Woolen Company, I wanted to try something new and ideally in public service, so I put my hat in the ring to serve as an appointee in the Biden Administration. In February 2022, I became Deputy Assistant Secretary of Textiles, Consumer Goods and Materials in the International Trade Administration at the Commerce Department. It was an exciting time to join the Administration given the focus on supply chain resiliency post-COVID, the CHIPS Act passage, and efforts around achieving a clean energy transition. Among the 22 U.S. manufacturing industries my four offices covered, critical minerals and metals received outsized attention. In November 2022, I am proud to say we created the first U.S. government-dedicated Office of Critical Minerals & Metals, and my staff actively developed expertise, industry connections, and policy recommendations to ensure we have access to these critical materials.

I left my role in the Biden Administration in June 2024 to take care of some family issues that required my attention. With time to reflect, I

realize that private company board service as well as due diligence work for private equity have been some of the most satisfying and rewarding experiences of my career and I would like to offer assistance to PE, family-owned, and ESOP-owned companies as a board member, advisor or operating partner in my next chapter.

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## Experience

### U.S. Department of Commerce

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Textiles, Consumer Goods, Materials, Critical Minerals and Metals

February 2022 - June 2024 (2 years 5 months)

Washington, District of Columbia, United States

Tapped for role by several industry trade associations and appointed by President Biden.

- Oversee the Office of Textiles & Apparel, the Office of Consumer Goods, the Office of Materials and

the new Office of Critical Minerals and Metals within the International Trade Administration's

Industry & Analysis Unit.

- Lead work to advance the global competitiveness of 22 U.S. manufacturing industries, including

textiles, apparel, footwear, building products, chemicals, plastic, processed food, beverages,

recreational transportation, and critical minerals and metals, through the development and

execution of international trade and investment policies and promotion strategies.

### National Spinning Co., Inc. (USA)

Member Board of Directors

January 2020 - December 2021 (2 years)

Greenville-Washington, North Carolina Area

I served as an Outside Board Director and member of the Compensation Committee of this ESOP-owned company which, at the time, had three divisions, including its legacy yarn spinning business as well as Hampton Art which designs, produces, and merchandises consumer craft products and Carolina Nonwovens which produces and distributes air-laid thermo-bonded pads and rolls for automotive and other end uses.

American Woolen Company  
President & COO, Board Member  
June 2014 - August 2020 (6 years 3 months)  
Stafford Springs, CT

Closely held by a small group of investors, American Woolen is a vertical manufacturer of high end worsted and woolen fabrics. The Company acquired a mill formerly owned by renowned Italian luxury house, Loro Piana SpA, making it the only textile company in the U.S capable of producing these high-end fabrics.

- Led strategy and day-to-day operations of the 600K sq. ft. textile mill and its 80 employees,
- Oversaw restart of complex textile operation and development of several product lines.
- Spearheaded effort to obtain multi-year contracts making dress uniform fabrics for the U.S. military, a \$50M revenue opportunity.
- Secured a \$2M grant from the DOD to add manufacturing capacity for the U.S. industrial base.
- Set up external sales force, product development and marketing functions and introduced company to key customers, including J Crew, Timberland, Brooks Brothers, Rag & Bone, and The North Face.
- Partnered with external design and production team to launch branded line of apparel and accessories.
- Initiated lean manufacturing and improved quality and sustainability practices throughout the Company

Newport Board Group  
Partner at Newport Board Group  
February 2012 - June 2014 (2 years 5 months)  
South Florida and New York City

National professional services firm of CEOs and senior executives that provides C-level and Board of Directors advisory services to emerging growth companies and the private equity funds that invest in them. Recognized as an expert on apparel/textiles & e-commerce; member of Newport Consumer Products Practice Group.

- Advised rapidly growing apparel e-commerce companies on growth and funding strategies, scaling

of organization, and CEO mentorship.

- Developed three-year strategic and operational plan for commercial real estate brokerage firm; advised on development of broker equity incentive compensation plan.
- Assisted private equity firm in due diligence on investments in apparel/textile industry; evaluated management teams; provided recommendations based on industry expertise.

## GetawayStyle

Founder/CEO

July 2009 - January 2012 (2 years 7 months)

Greater New York City Area

Self-funded with a couple of partners, GetawayStyle was an ecommerce start-up offering content & product recommendations of Made in USA, eco-friendly home furnishings for second and retirement homeowners. Target market was retiring Baby Boomers and second homeowners.

- Conceived plan based on extensive research of home furnishings, real estate, and demographic trends.
- Evaluated revenue models including e-commerce, advertising, affiliate marketing, subscription & social shopping.
- Developed expertise in social media and digital marketing, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.
- Identified partnerships with interior designers, architects, builders, and realtors to source original content.

## Premier Narrow Fabrics, Inc

President, Board Member

December 2006 - December 2008 (2 years 1 month)

Greensboro/Winston-Salem, North Carolina Area

PE-owned diversified narrow elastic manufacturer serving the apparel and medical markets with \$40M annual sales, created from merger of Georgia Narrow Fabrics (formerly owned by my family) and Elastic Corporation of America. Led merger and integration of companies and their operations. Retained as President by parent company, Worldtex, Inc. and equity sponsor, GSC Partners, after acquisition.

- Managed executive team overseeing 450-person operation in four locations in U.S. and Central America.
- Consolidated U.S. management team and added talent with international operations experience.
- Oversaw strategic plan to offshore U.S. facilities into one operation in San Pedro Sula, Honduras.
- Reduced overhead and excess capacity resulting in over \$4M of annual operating savings.
- Streamlined products offerings to focus on profitable market segments with revenue growth potential.
- Led effort to find joint venture partner in China to create global supply source for key customers.

Georgia Narrow Fabrics, LLC  
 President & CEO, Board Member  
 October 2002 - December 2006 (4 years 3 months)  
 Greater New York City Area and Jesup, GA

Formerly owned by my family, GNF was a PE-owned narrow fabrics manufacturer servicing leading intimate apparel brands with \$18M annual sales.

Recruited by Key Principal Partners (KPP) and BPI Capital Partners to turn around the company.

- Achieved 27% revenue growth and 25% higher profit margins with new product lines in 24 months.
- Refinanced the business successfully, resulting in retirement of \$5.8M long-term debt.
- Implemented cost reductions, resulting in \$1.3M annual savings without compromising service or quality.
- Led efforts to identify strategic partners to set up operations in LATAM, specifically the CAFTA-DR region.
- Secured \$1.2M in cash incentives from the Government of El Salvador to set up operations there.
- Developed CAFTA-DR manufacturing plan, including detailed financial model and operational timeline, which led to the merger with Elastic Corporation of America.

## Georgia Narrow Fabrics

Executive Vice President & COO, Board Member

August 1993 - October 2001 (8 years 3 months)

Owned by my family, we transformed a 30-year-old commodity textile manufacturer into an award-winning, high-quality supplier for top women's intimate apparel producers in North America and the Caribbean. Managed 170-person operation with \$18M in sales, creating the largest knitted elastic manufacturer in the U.S. Increased sales to key customers, including Hanes Brands, Warnaco, VF Corp, and Maidenform. Made GNF the only elastic supplier selling to every top U.S. intimate apparel producer. Conceived and developed strategic plan focusing on expansion into woven and logo elastic product lines, a potential \$20M opportunity and sold the Company to two private equity firms in 2000.

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## Education

### Columbia Business School

Executive Education - Private Equity and Venture Capital · (January 2022 - January 2023)

### Brown University

B.A, Religious Studies

### Columbia Business School

MBA, Business Administration and Management, General