

Bio: Rick Ekstein

A creative disrupter, Rick's greatest pleasure is challenging the status quo.

Before establishing Phaze 3 Associates in 2016, Rick was President and CEO of Weston Forest Products, and the Weston Forest Group of Companies, conducting business in over 40 countries on 4 continents. Weston companies have repeatedly won a variety of awards including Canada's Best Managed Companies, Profit 500's Fastest Growing Companies and Waterstone Canada's Most Admired Corporate Cultures.

At Phaze 3, the Asset Management/Investment team is primarily engaged in managing various industrial and commercial real estate properties, investing in residential and commercial green-field and redevelopment projects, as well as private companies in both the Venture Capital and Private Equity spaces.

Along with the Phaze 3 Philanthropy team, Rick and his wife, Lillian, co-founded the Together We Stand Military Families Foundation to honour and thank Canadian military families for their service. In its first two years of operation, Together We Stand has distributed \$2.8 million in gifts to military families with a loved one deployed overseas during the December holiday season and led the Canadian Parliament to declare the 3rd Friday of each September as Canada's official Military Family Appreciation Day.

The Phaze 3 Advocacy Team works on behalf of various organizations to further their causes with governments, and on behalf of individuals who find themselves in need.

Rick is an Equity Partner and Board Member of Elevate Financial, Weston Wood Solutions, Brookside Capital Partners, Element 5 Co., Awz Ventures, Weston Forest Products, and The Logic, an online publication covering the Canadian innovation economy. In January 2021, Weston Forest Products was sold to a private equity company.

He also sits on the International Economic Policy and National Policy Councils of the C.D. Howe Institute, where he is a Board Member. Rick sits on the Boards of the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the Regimental Council of The Queen's York Rangers, and the Association for Lumber Remanufacturers of Ontario, which he also founded.

Rick is a past Board Member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, a former Chair of the North American Wholesale Lumber Association, and founder and former Chairman of the Canadian Lumber Remanufacturers Association.

Active in Conservative politics, Rick is a regular speaker for the Young Conservative Intern Program and has chaired each of the Honorable Peter Kent's campaigns.

Rick is married to his high school sweetheart Lillian, has two daughters, two wonderful granddaughters and a grandson.