#### Melissa Cohen

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## **SUMMARY**

Dynamic healthcare system administrator and strategic leader, specializing in future-proofing the healthcare organization. Former health system venture capital investor and CEO of a healthcare startup, equipped with both practical and academic venture capital and entrepreneurship training. Versatile career journey from executive roles in corporate settings to the founder-CEO of a startup with Board-level responsibilities, Agile and flexible leader, proficient in building, managing, and leveraging networks at all organizational levels with an approach characterized by adaptability, data-driven decision-making, and strategic thinking. Comfortable with ambiguity, excels in supporting multifunctional initiatives to drive innovation and lead organizational transformation in a health system.

#### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

# Cayuga Health System (Ithaca, NY)

August 2023 - Present

\$500M non-profit rural hospital system in Upstate NY.

## **Chief Innovation and Transformation Office**

- Senior executive responsible for driving innovation and leading organizational transformation by identifying and implementing new technologies/products and change management involved with establishing operational processes.
- Transitioned into role of Cayuga's first Chief Innovation Officer, pioneering establishment of innovation function.
  Identified need for improved operational processes. Proposed establishing a Transformation Management Office, earning a promotion to Chief Innovation and Transformation Officer.
- Spearheaded pivotal joint-venture transactions, successfully navigating complex relationships and conflicting stakeholder priorities by demonstrating expertise in valuation and deal structuring and providing critical insights that facilitated negotiations and finalization.
- Provided invaluable support to Chief Executive Officer in updating and enhancing system's strategic plan, gaining approval from system's Board of Directors.

# **Endeavor Health (formerly NorthShore-Edward-Elmhurst Health)**

December 2019 - June 2023

\$5B leading integrated healthcare system in Chicagoland.

## Managing Director, NS-EE VC

- Successfully introduced and led establishment of system's venture fund. Developed and launched board-approved investment policy, governance structure, corporate partnership strategy, and investment strategy.
- Managed end-to-end venture process: sourcing, evaluating, executing, and monitoring/supporting portfolio of investments. Completed 14 direct investments in startups and 3 investments in venture funds.
- Leveraged exceptional analytical skills to meticulously evaluate investment opportunities, contributing to the fund's consistent positive returns. In light of success, received additional allocation from parent company's Investment Committee, increasing fund size from \$5M to \$22M.
- Supported post-merger integration, combining program assets to \$40M in assets under management.
- Demonstrated resilience and adaptability during the COVID-19 pandemic by seamlessly transitioning from venture fund obligations to leading the health system's response task force. Worked with financial operations steering committee and conducted research on pandemic responses, contributing to system's successful response efforts.

Tafi.io (Chicago, IL) 2016 - 2019

Healthcare startup developing enterprise software for health systems.

## Co-founder + CEO

- Developed, tested, and implemented integrated go-to-market strategy for novel enterprise healthcare IT product.
- Oversaw fundraising, investor relations, and daily performance of executive, technical, and sales teams.
- Secured ~\$1M in angel investment financing. Successfully recovered investor funds through exit to key customer.

## MATTER Chicago (Chicago, IL)

2016

Award-winning non-profit healthcare innovation and incubation hub in Chicago.

# Venture Capital Fellow, Healthcare Innovation Hub / Incubator

 Served as point-of-contact for all investors (venture capital and corporate VC partnerships) and coached 50+ entrepreneurs on raising venture capital, presentation preparation, and handling investor Q&A.

### Immersion Neuroscience, formerly ZESTxLabs (Claremont, CA)

2015

Claremont College tech spinout building software to measure consumer engagement.

#### Interim COO + BD Executive

- Developed and executed integrated go-to-market plan, securing 5 contracts worth \$220K in 6 months.
- Delivered agreed P&L, market share, and customer satisfaction targets within budget.

# Radix Trading, LLC (Chicago, IL)

2014

Privately funded quantitative research firm.

# **Operations Manager**

- Evaluated strategic options for expansion into 3 new markets and presented results to managing partners.
- Oversaw regular assessments and forecasts of financial performance against budget, financial, and operational goals.

# Eli Lilly and Company, AbbVie Inc. - Abelson Taylor

2013

Award-winning healthcare-focused marketing agency.

# **FDA Compliance Consultant**

- Analyzed clinical trial data to ensure accurate representation of results and minimize FDA violations.
- Ensured quality, FDA compliance, and consistency across content developed with partner agencies.

#### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

#### **CORNELL SC JOHNSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

January 2024 - Present

#### **Visiting Instructor in Management Organizations**

- Member of 4-instructor teaching team for Green Tech Innovation in Practice course.
- Student Startup Evaluator, Entrepreneurship for Scientists and Engineers.
- Guest Lecturer, Cornell BioEntrepreneurship / Life Science Entrepreneurship Program.

#### UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO BOOTH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

2016-2023

#### **Lead Teaching Assistant to Professor Scott Meadow**

- Served as Lead TA for "Commercializing Innovation" and "Entrepreneurial Finance and Private Equity" courses for full-time, part-time, and EMBA programs.
- Developed and coordinated PhD-focused VC course in partnership with Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship.

#### **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

### UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO BOOTH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

**Graded Course: Business Statistics** 

Autumn 2020

Audited Courses: Game Theory, Financial Statement Analysis, Corporate Governance, Entrepreneurial Selling, Strategies and Processes of Negotiation.

### **EDUCATION**

#### LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

2013

**Bachelor of Science, Psychology** (focus on Neuroscience + Molecular Genetics)

### **EXTRACURRICULAR LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES**

- Founder and Sponsor, Women's Empowerment and Leadership Luncheon Series, Cayuga Health System, 2023-Pres
- Member, DEI Committee, Cayuga Health System, Endeavor Health, 2020-Present
- Mentor, Center for Life Sciences Ventures, Cornell University, Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, mHUB Innovation Center for Physical Products, 2018-Present
- Volunteer Coach, Defy Ventures (prison-based entrepreneurship readiness program), 2020-2023
- Volunteer Coach, Venture For America Future Founders, 2016-2020