



**Letrisha Mahabeer**  
Head of Sponsor Advisory and Corporate Broking



**L**etrisha Mahabeer is a Vice President and Head of Sponsor Advisory and Corporate Broking at Merrill Lynch South Africa Proprietary Limited t/a BofA Securities (“BofA”). She has over 12 years of experience in corporate South Africa, the past 7 of which have been spent in Corporate Finance. Coming from humble beginnings, Letrisha has succeeded in not only navigating the notoriously male-dominated Corporate Finance industry but also boasts an extensive track record of transaction experience covering a wide range of South African corporates across a broad scope of product areas.

Given Letrisha’s immense knowledge of all things regulatory in Corporate Finance, it is almost hard to believe that this was not always her chosen career path. Her journey towards establishing herself as an integral part of the BofA investment banking team began in a small town on the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. She grew up in a typical South African Indian household, with her mum being a teacher and her dad a semi-retired mechanic, matriculating in 2003 from Umzinto Secondary School. Not knowing yet exactly what her preferred career choice was, Letrisha chose to study a B.Com LLB as moving into the corporate world intrigued her although dealing with numbers terrified her. After having graduated from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2008, Letrisha, knowing she was meant for life in the city, left her family home and began practicing law by commencing her articles at Hogan Lovells (previously known as Routledge Modise) in Johannesburg. Her first rotation was

spent in the Personal Injury Litigation Department and was so far beyond her comfort zone that she would diligently arrive at work at 05:55 each morning in order to tackle the day. Despite the challenges, Letrisha completed her articles with not only a thicker skin but a love for litigation. She was offered an Associate position in the department and went on to be promoted to Senior Associate.

After 5 years practicing law, Letrisha began to crave new challenges and further learning, which led to her being introduced to the world of Corporate Finance by joining Java Capital as a Corporate Finance Executive in 2014. Given the opportunity to branch out into this new industry with no Corporate Finance or relevant commercial legal experience, she took advantage of the number of transactions and property listings being executed at the time and leveraged her diligence and discipline in order to gain the necessary knowledge and skills for this new fast paced environment through on-the-job learning. Her legal background supported her in understanding the regulatory and legal aspects of the job and she quickly established herself as a trusted and knowledgeable advisor in the Corporate Finance regulatory space in South Africa. Letrisha spent a successful six and a half

years at Java Capital before making the exciting decision to join the BofA team as Vice President and Head of Sponsor Advisory and Corporate Broking for South Africa in 2020.

Since joining BofA, Letrisha has played a critical role advising clients across 3 landmark and complex transactions – the R4.2bn Karoo000/Cartrack Scheme, Reinvestment Offer and Listing; Old Mutual’s \$730m Unbundling of c.12% of its stake in Nedbank; and Standard Bank’s \$734m Firm Intention Offer to buy-out the minorities in Liberty Holdings. The Karoo000/Cartrack transaction carries special significance

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for Letrisha given this was her first transaction at BofA, during which she was fully exposed to the benefits of working for a global bank. The overall complexity of the deal given the cross jurisdictional timetable and regulatory requirements may have been daunting, but the experience and expertise that she was able to leverage was second to none as the BofA US and

Singapore teams immediately welcomed her as part of their own and the deal was successfully completed.

Despite the past few months being extremely challenging with having to adjust to a new job and team in a virtual environment, running with 3 complex transactions and day-to-day

# PROFILE



ongoing obligation responsibilities for BofA's sponsor clients as well as raising her 2 year old daughter, Letrishia has thoroughly enjoyed being given the opportunity to extend her role beyond the traditional sponsor function and evolve into a holistic financial advisor by taking on the investment banking aspects of each deal. She feels that although it was difficult to leave Java Capital, the place at which she discovered her passion for Corporate Finance, she never imagined having the opportunity to work at one of the biggest banks in the world, and being a senior member of the BofA

South African Investment Banking team that has been recognised externally by DealMakers as the #1 Sponsor and #1 Investment Advisor by Deal Value in 2020 as well as Best Investment Bank in South Africa in the Euromoney Regional Awards for Excellence in 2021.

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anything she puts her mind to, regardless of how challenging or intimidating the journey may be. Her most important piece of advice to succeed – “Be yourself. What makes you different is what will make you successful”. Letrishia is certainly a woman to watch in the South African Corporate

Finance space and is leading the way as an inspiring example for those following in her footsteps.

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## Navigating the way forward

Values don't change.  
And neither does our commitment.  
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