

## Lee & Associates names new principals

BY PAT MAIO  
STAFF WRITER

Lee & Associates has named two shareholders to the office of its Los Angeles-Long Beach commercial real estate firm, the company announced Friday.



Brandon Carrillo and Trauger Ralston were named as principals in the Lee & Associates Los Angeles-Long Beach office, located at 1411 W. 190th St., Gardena.



Specializing in the sale and leasing of office and industrial properties in the Los Angeles and Long Beach markets, Carrillo joined Lee & Associates' Los Angeles-Long Beach office in 2009. He has nine years of commercial real estate experience, with a focus on tenant representation, acquisition, disposition and repositioning of real estate assets.

Ralston, who specializes in investment and industrial brokerage in the South Bay market, joined Lee & Associates' Los Angeles-Long Beach office in 2010. His résumé, which covers eight years of commercial real estate experience, includes more than 100 transactions totaling roughly \$60 million.

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## Denso appoints senior manager to local unit

BY PAT MAIO  
STAFF WRITER

A Long Beach unit of Japanese-based Denso Corp. named Frank Jenkins to its Heavy Duty Marketing Group as a senior manager, where he will direct sales, marketing, and product and business development.



Jenkins comes to Long Beach's Denso Products and Services Americas Inc. with more than 28 years of experience in the automotive and truck industries. Before joining Denso, he was the vice president of sales and marketing at Electric Vehicles International; president of Electric Motors Corp.; vice president of sales at Motiv Power Systems; and worked in executive commercial sales and marketing positions at General Motors.

Denso Products and Services is an automotive components sales, remanufacturing and distribution company that employs 340 people in Long Beach and 80 in Murrieta.

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PHOTOS: ROD VEAL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Melina Christidis, right, warms up with her clients. The certified nutritionist and fitness trainer is aiming for her brand to be the next big thing in the fitness world.



She's a pistol, there's no doubt about it," said her TV show partner, Dave Welch. "She's not afraid to speak her mind."



Christidis, right, says her ability to motivate clients is what keeps them coming back.

# TRAINER AIMS TO BE NEXT FIT THING IN TV

Melina Christidis has jumped into the world of fitness competitions to better publicize her brand.

BY WILLIAM D'URSO  
STAFF WRITER

Melina Christidis' goal is to be the next big thing in fitness.

And to get there she's jumping into fitness and figure competitions to get contacts and gain recognition.

She whitens her teeth, wakes up at 6 in the morning to do cardio, lifts weights in the afternoon and eats six meals a day.

To further catapult Melina Fitness, her brand, she wants to film her progress as part of a reality TV show.

"I want to be a face bigger than Jillian Michaels (star of NBC's 'The Biggest Loser')," said Christidis, who teaches fitness classes in Signal Hill. "I want to be someone in America that people can trust in the fitness world."

For Christidis, a certified nutritionist and fitness trainer, fitness has been a lifelong ambition, and now she's working toward becoming the next big brand

in TV and print.

That's why she has leaped into the world of fitness and figure competition, a series of fitness shows akin to professional bodybuilding that instead values muscle definition over size. And that's where the idea of a TV show came about, a way to launch her brand.

In came Dave Welch, a Beverly Hills commercial real estate agent for Keller Williams and a guy with connections to the fitness world. Welch helps produce the fitness app for Jax Taylor, a cast member on the reality TV show "Vanderpump Rules."

Welch met Christidis when she consulted for the Taylor app. They then hatched a plan to start a new reality TV show chronicling the paths of fitness and figure competitors to the pro ranks. There's already a promo, and now Christidis and Welch are shopping it to networks.

"People like to watch

### Contact Melina Christidis

**What:** Fitness instructor at Next Level Fitness Academy in Signal Hill  
**Information:** melinafitness.com and mchristidis@gmail.com

people, and they want to see how those people are going to interact with each other," Welch said. "If you get a bigger-than-life personality like Melina, then that's pretty easy to watch."

Christidis, 31, keeps busy as an independent fitness instructor working out of No Limits Sports and Fitness Academy in Signal Hill.

In a recent session with students, amid the clink of weights and the grunts of pro fitness athletes, Christidis' intensity is palpable. It doesn't matter if she's training an experienced athlete or an executive who spends 40 hours a week behind a desk. She'll push them and probably not in a quiet voice.

That's part of what drew Welch to her.

"She's a pistol, there's no doubt about it," he said. "She's not afraid to speak her mind."

In the session, she hov-

ers among her students, speeding back and forth in knitted Uggs boots, short shorts and eyeliner. Sometimes, she even lends a hand.

"Come on, inhale, exhale," she says in a voice the entire gym can hear as she helps one of her students on a chest press machine.

The student complies. "Push the weight. That's it. 7... 8... 9... Last one!"

It's moments like these that Christidis hopes will launch her into the fitness celebrity stratosphere.

"I'm motivating, and that's the No.1 reason you're hired," she said.

She's got a lot to offer, she'll tell you. The Long Beach resident hopes the exposure from the show will help set off her other ideas. One of them is 60 Day Fit, a workout program that she's marketed through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to about 150 people spread between two

groups. The two-month program is done through email and features fitness plans written by Christidis.

The program, which has participants from as far as North Carolina and New York, restarts in March, and Christidis hopes to double the number of participants.

Sure, there are a lot of fitness trainers out there, she said, but there's room for her, too.

"P90X is a great program. I absolutely love it, and I tell people all the time that it's a great program," Christidis said. "But I can do that. Why does that guy have a program and I don't?"

There's also the book she's working on. Christidis developed a fitness and nutrition plan she calls Fit-ox. It's a way for people to reboot their systems and empty themselves of toxins.

And that's not to mention the handful of smaller projects she's working on.

If it all comes together, Christidis' hope to be the next big thing might come true.

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