

# MILWAUKEE BUSINESS JOURNAL



## MENTOR

### Laura Thurow

## BAIRD

Director of wealth solutions  
and operations

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### Laura Thurow: Mentor — New perspective from an analytical mind

Twenty years after starting her professional career at Milwaukee’s Baird, Laura Thurow has earned her spot on Baird’s executive team. And at 41, she is the youngest member of the team and only the third female.

From her relaxed demeanor, it’s almost hard to believe that Thurow oversees about 300 people and several platforms that support Baird’s financial advisers in all aspects of their wealth management practices.

Before she had even graduated college, Thurow started as an intern in Baird’s research department. She has succeeded and thrived in a competitive industry while also taking the time to mentor others and give back. Her humility as a leader makes her effective, as does her belief in leveraging the power of the team.

Thurow calls herself a “master re-framer,” choosing to see the opportunity versus the obstacle in every situation. A serious medical scare with Thurow’s then-infant daughter gave her the lifelong gift of perspective.

“It really solidified what matters and helped distinguish what is intense and scary, and what’s not,” she admits.

Both formally and informally, Thurow has mentored dozens of other associates at Baird, and also enjoyed the support of several mentors.

“Laura is such an inspirational person in her work, personal and family life,” said Joanna Arras, a principal in Baird Capital and a mentee. “She never makes anything seem like a sacrifice. When she spends time with you, you always believe that you are her first priority and the focus of all of her energy.”

Thurow praises her current manager’s leadership style, giving her the liberty to be honest about her ideal career trajectory. Mike Schroeder, President of Baird Private Wealth Management said: “Laura stands out to me because she is open minded and a trusted leader who values integrity, client service and teamwork. She has worked tirelessly to drive evolution at Baird to put us in the best position to help navigate Baird’s largest acquisition in our firm’s 100-year history.”

As someone who is so analytical, Thurow has been surprised how much she loves personal development. She learned from Timothy Byrne of Baird, who was her boss for more than a decade.

“He was very deliberate and intentional in his people development by empowering people and giving them opportunities, visibility and sponsorship when they weren’t at the table,” said Thurow.

When she’s not working, Thurow likes to spend time at her northern Wisconsin cabin and volunteer with her husband and two daughters, ages 10 and 12, helping meet the basic needs in the community at places like The Gathering. Thurow also shares her talents as a board member of Junior Achievement of Wisconsin, TEMPO and the CFA society.

As far as this recognition as a role model that has taken her by surprise, she is learning to own it and lean into it.

— JENNA KASHOU