



**Mr. James C. Rhee**  
**Chairman/CEO, Ashley Stewart**  
**Founder, FirePine Group**

Mr. Rhee is an impact-focused entrepreneur, investor, operator and educator. As both CEO and investment firm founder, Mr. Rhee has generated market-leading returns by creating bespoke capital and operational solutions through the contemporaneous application of algorithmic, technological and cultural change. He has a uniquely diverse network and knowledge base spanning the private equity, retail/consumer, venture and media/technology communities. At Ashley Stewart, as Chairman and CEO, Mr. Rhee has authored and executed upon an innovative complement of CRM, digital and organizational changes that have transformed a twice bankrupt, unprofitable brick-and-mortar retailer with decades of operating losses into an industry leader founded upon a values-based, social commerce paradigm. FirePine Group, the investment firm he founded in 2009, invests the capital of some of the world's most sophisticated investors and their family offices to successfully fuel and realize transformative and impactful change in multiple enterprises, including Ashley Stewart.

Prior to this, Mr. Rhee was a senior investment professional at two leading, Boston-based investment firms, one specializing in growth and the other focused on distress. Mr. Rhee played a leadership role in some of the most successful investment platforms, including the carve-out of the Meow Mix brand from Ralston Purina, the purchase and then turnaround of Murray's Discount Auto Stores from a bank group, the growth catalyst investment in Mattress Firm and the turnaround of Ultra Diamonds. He has managed billions of dollars of capital. Mr. Rhee also spent time as an Associate in the Mergers and Acquisitions group of Merrill Lynch.

Mr. Rhee is a visiting lecturer at Duke Law School and teaches his proprietary valuation, financial literacy and happiness/values class at leading educational institutions and professional organizations (for profit and not-for-profit) across the globe. He is a regional winner of the E&Y Entrepreneur of the Year Award, the winner of one of five 2016 Power Player Awards granted by the National Retail Federation, and the recipient of the 2017 Black Retail Action Group Business Achievement Award, the 2018 Temple Fox School of Business Information Technology Innovator Award, the 2018 Essex County Urban League Centennial William M. Ashby Award for community building and a 2019 One To World Fulbright Award.

He is a member of the board of the National Retail Federation and a member of JP Morgan's Advancing Black Pathways Council. His story, along with the story of Ashley Stewart, has been chronicled in the world's leading publications and media outlets, including the Good Business Issue of Bloomberg Businessweek, Harvard Business Review, Boston Globe, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, CNN, Thrive Global, USA Today, Inc Magazine, ABC, Cheddar and the Huffington Post.

Mr. Rhee received his AB with honors from Harvard College and his JD with honors from Harvard Law School, where he was an editor of the Harvard Law Review. He lives outside Boston with his wife and three children. He is a former high school teacher.