FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forward Compute Appoints Sam Gaer as Strategic Advisor

Veteran markets pioneer and former NYMEX and FINRA CIO to advise on market structure, underwriting methodology and infrastructure design for compute-linked financial instruments

NEW YORK — July 14, 2026 — Forward Compute, the financial-products company building pricing and risk-transfer instruments for compute infrastructure, today announced the appointment of Sam Gaer as a Strategic Advisor. Gaer brings more than 25 years of leadership across institutional trading, exchange technology, and systematic asset management, and will advise the company as it builds the market infrastructure for compute as a tradable asset class.

Gaer is one of a small number of people to have built financial markets — and the technology beneath them — for asset classes that did not previously trade. His career spans the trading floor, the exchange, the regulator, and the fund, giving him an uncommon view of how new instruments are designed, priced, cleared, and brought to institutional scale.

Background and experience

Gaer currently serves as Chief Investment Officer of the Directional Strategy at Monarq Asset Management, where he leads discretionary and systematic trading across digital assets. He was previously Co-Portfolio Manager at BlockTower Capital, overseeing the firm's flagship directional and systematic strategies.

In recent years, Gaer has become a recognized voice on the evolution of digital asset markets, publishing widely read research and speaking at leading industry conferences on the structural changes reshaping financial markets. His work focuses on identifying paradigm shifts before they become consensus, with a particular emphasis on how emerging technologies transform market structure and create entirely new financial products and asset classes.

Earlier in his career, Gaer served as Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer of the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX), where he rebuilt the exchange's core technology infrastructure — work that produced several patented innovations in distributed market architecture — and helped drive NYMEX's approximately $9 billion sale to CME Group. He subsequently served as Chief Information Officer of FINRA, where he authored the regulator's long-term technology roadmap.

Gaer is also the founder of Katana Financial, a quantitative hedge fund that ranked among the top VIX traders globally and became one of the first market makers for CME's crypto products, and of TradinGear, an options-analysis software company. He began his career on the NYMEX trading floor and holds a B.S. in Economics from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, with a concentration in Corporate Finance.

Why it matters for Forward Compute

Compute has become one of the largest and most volatile cost exposures in the global economy, yet the instruments to price, benchmark, and hedge it remain nascent. Forward Compute is building that risk layer

— the reference pricing, underwriting methodology, and structured instruments that let compute buyers, providers, and investors manage risk the way they would in any mature commodity or credit market.

Gaer's experience maps directly onto that mandate. As Chief Investment Officer of the Directional Strategy at Monarq Asset Management, he operates at the forefront of digital asset markets, where new products, market structures, and institutional adoption continue to evolve at a rapid pace. Combined with his earlier experience building exchange infrastructure at NYMEX, pioneering new electronic trading businesses at Katana Financial, and leading technology strategy at FINRA, his career spans the full lifecycle of bringing new markets from concept to institutional scale—from pricing methodology and derivatives design to market infrastructure, regulatory trust, and liquidity formation.

Advisory focus

As a Strategic Advisor, Gaer will work with the Forward Compute team at a design level on the market structure and underwriting methodology underpinning its instruments, the structuring of its hedging and risk-transfer products, and the exchange, data, and institutional relationships needed to bring them to market.

> *"Sam has already done the thing we are doing now — building markets, and the technology beneath them, for exposures that had never traded before. His perspective from NYMEX, FINRA, and the funds he has run is exactly what we need as we design the pricing and risk-transfer layer for compute. We are thrilled to have him."*

— Quentin Saleur, Founder & CEO, Forward Compute

> *"Compute is fast becoming one of the defining cost exposures of this decade, and it still lacks the instruments to price and hedge it properly. Forward Compute is building that market from first principles, and I'm looking forward to helping shape its structure."*

— Sam Gaer, Strategic Advisor, Forward Compute