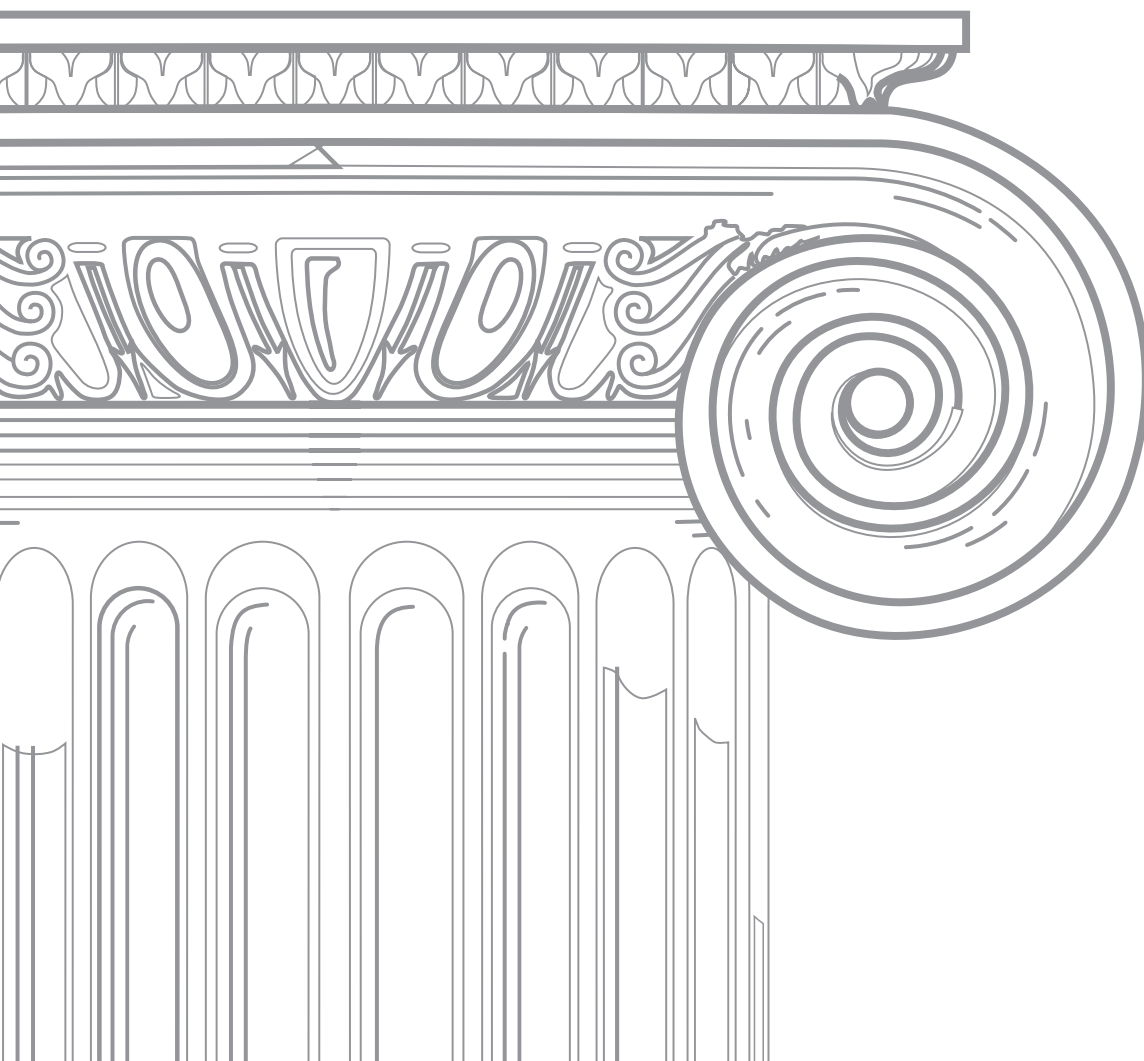


WHAT MAKES A CHAMPION?

Learning from CEOs Who are Accelerating
Gender Balance in the Boardroom



WOMEN'S FORUM
OF NEW YORK

Generously underwritten by Accenture

“The culture of the company is the foundation – when you establish a culture of inclusion and diversity, it becomes real.”

► **Laura Alber**, CEO, **Williams-Sonoma**

“Gender diversity on my board just made common sense – we did it because we were looking for the most dynamic decision-making and better results for our business.”

► **Stanley A. Askren**, Former Chairman and CEO, **HNI Corporation**

“I deeply believe that we need to drive more gender diversity in the C-Suite and Corporate Board levels because diversity in every form drives new thinking, better decision making and really leads to business growth.”

► **Michele Buck**, President and CEO, **The Hershey Company**

“You have to be intentional. You have to be overt. You have to commit and not accept an easy way out.”

► **Greg D. Carmichael**, Chairman, President and CEO, **Fifth Third Bank**

“Don’t wait for others to do it – take personal responsibility. You have to be the change you want to see.”

► **Alan B. Colberg**, President and CEO, **Assurant**

“We can’t take our foot off the gas just because we are pleased with our progress – it’s about doing more of what’s working and going faster.”

► **Brian C. Cornell**, Chairman and CEO, **Target**

“Whether you’re a woman or a U.S. minority, you want to be able to look up and see that people have pierced that glass ceiling, that the trail has been blazed and you can follow.”

► **Michael Corbat**, CEO, **Citi**

“In the Boardroom and throughout the company you must stand up for diversity in a way that is very intentional – and you’re not making any tradeoffs because there’s so much talent out there.”

► **Mary Dillon**, CEO, **Ulta Beauty**

“We insist on diversity and will not settle for less.”

► **Roger Ferguson**, President and CEO, **TIAA**

“The data speaks for itself, but it’s also just inherently logical that the more diversity and views you bring into a company, the better decision making you’ll have.”

► **Adena Friedman**, President and CEO, **Nasdaq**

“When I was at Avon in my late 30s I found out what talent there was and so much of it was women – I made a decision I was going to put on those kind of glasses in the future.”

► **Rick Goings**, Chairman Emeritus, **Tupperware Brands**

“When you get your first female board member it’s important, but when you add the second and third you really add a lot of value.”

► **Ilene Gordon**, Former Chairman, President and CEO, **Ingredion Incorporated**

“There’s a relentless move towards equality of opportunity and gender parity in all levels of organizations. When it comes to boards, it’s up to CEOs and board chairs to make it happen.”

► **Peter T. Grauer**, Chairman, **Bloomberg LP**

“CEOs need to do the work to make change happen. You have to commit.”

► **Tricia Griffith**, CEO, **Progressive**

“We believe that diversity at the board level makes us stronger and gender diversity is a big part of that.”

► **Jeffrey L. Harmening**, Chairman and CEO, **General Mills**

“If you don’t specify to search firms how essential a diverse slate is for your business, you don’t get the right candidate base.”

► **Fran Horowitz**, CEO, **Abercrombie & Fitch**

“Our board has been diverse for decades – it’s important to our employees, it’s important to our senior management and it’s increasingly important to our customers.”

► **Daniel J. Houston**, Chairman, CEO and President, **Principal Financial**

This collection is dedicated
to our Corporate Champions who lead by example and
inspire others to accelerate gender equity in the boardroom.

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In 2011, the Women's Forum of New York, led by then President Janice Reals Ellig, CEO of Ellig Group, launched a new flagship event to promote the advancement of women on corporate boards. Instead of women talking to women about how to get on boards, the Women's Forum reached out to the decision makers who could accelerate change and the Breakfast of Corporate Champions was born.

The Breakfast of Corporate Champions, with the goal of achieving gender parity in the boardroom by 2025, salutes S&P 500 and F1000 companies who exceed the national average of board seats held by women. Importantly, the Breakfast recognizes the critical role of the CEO in making gender equity a business priority and driving intent to action.

Since its inception at the New York Stock Exchange in 2011, the Breakfast has become a biennial event with nationwide recognition. Cumulatively, it has been attended by over 2000 influential business gamechangers - CEOs, board chairs and directors - and featured over 100 Champion CEO speakers whose powerful advocacy has inspired others to follow. The Breakfast of Corporate Champions has engaged strategic partners that share the goal of more women on boards, including the U.S. 30% Club, Business Roundtable, NACD, Committee for Economic Development of The Conference Board, Paradigm For Parity®, Catalyst and C200.

The Breakfast of Corporate Champions remains the largest event of its kind with unique goals: to convene a conversation among leaders on how to achieve gender parity, to honor those CEOs accelerating change and to secure CEO sponsorship of board ready women for the Women's Forum Database.

The fifth biennial Breakfast of Corporate Champions in 2019 represents a decade of insightful conversations with CEOs who know clearly why gender balance in the boardroom is a strategic business imperative and how to make it happen. They have made gender parity a priority. To them, it is personal. We are pleased to commemorate this milestone with a collection of inspirational testimonials from our CEO Champions.

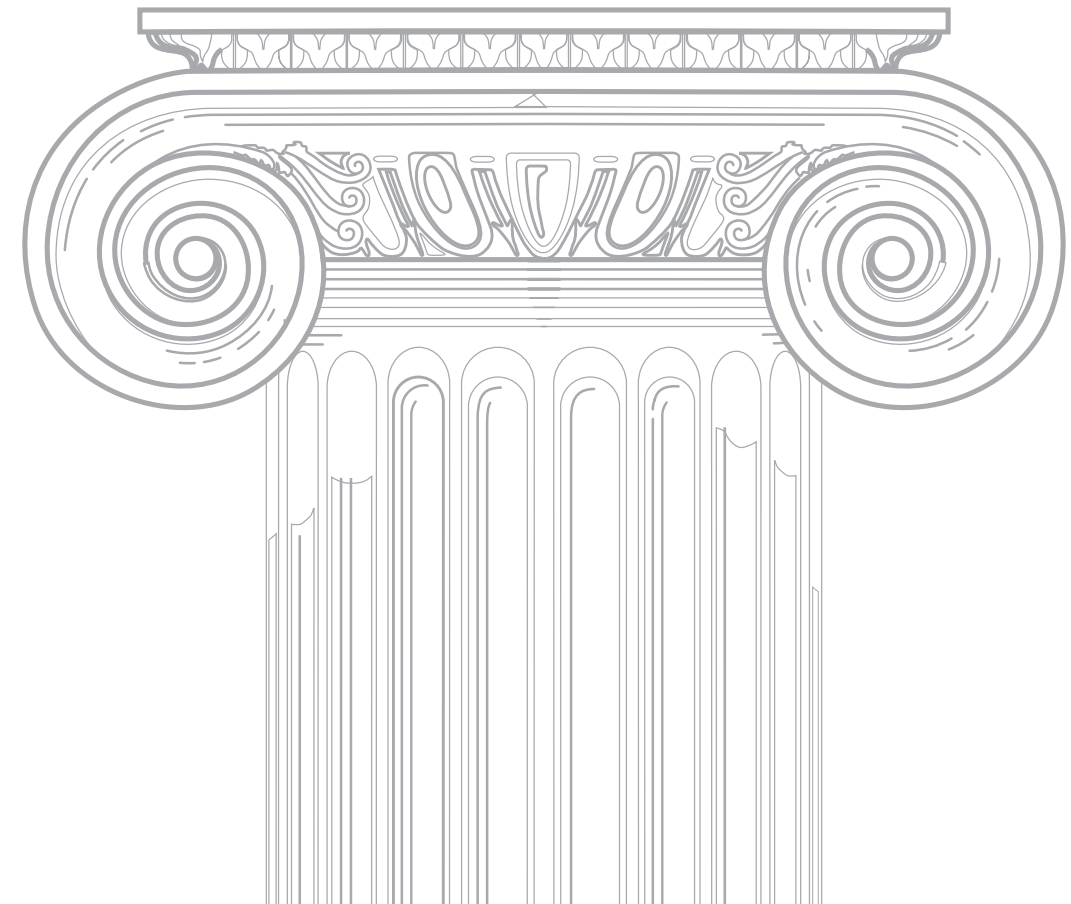
Janice Reals Ellig

Chair, Breakfast of Corporate Champions
President, Women's Forum of New York 2010-12

Carolyn Carter

Co-Chair, Breakfast of Corporate Champions
President, Women's Forum of New York 2016-18

WHAT MAKES A CHAMPION?





Julie Sweet
Global CEO

In the words of Pierre Nanterme, our dear friend, colleague and former chairman and CEO of Accenture who passed away this year, “There is no shortage of quality women. The pipeline is there. This is more than a CEO priority, it is up to each of us to take action.”

This has never been more critical than it is today, as we celebrate the 5th Breakfast of Corporate Champions.

At Accenture, attracting, developing and advancing our women remains a key priority. We have an unwavering commitment to accelerating equality for all and to creating a work environment where every one of our nearly 500,000 people feel like they belong. This infuses everything we do: our work with our clients and partners; our interactions with our people; and our participation in our communities.

Our new CEO, Julie Sweet, is continuing to drive our focus on equality, which includes advancing diverse leaders, while working to build a robust, sustainable pipeline of future leaders at Accenture.



We celebrate the achievements and extraordinary progress that’s been made around gender equality, but we also recognize that we must continue having honest and brave conversations about the work ahead. With this as a business priority, we:

- ▶ Set our goal to grow our percentage of women managing directors to 25 percent by 2020
- ▶ Committed to achieving a gender-balanced workforce by 2025
- ▶ Publish annual thought leadership on workplace equality to advance the conversation
- ▶ And are proud to report that women already represent 43 percent of our global workforce, 47 percent of new hires and, critically, 42 percent of our board of directors

We salute the 34 Champion CEOs spotlighted across the following pages as leaders on gender equality. All of them represent companies that far exceed the national average of women on boards, with many approaching parity.

Accenture is proud to support the Women’s Forum of New York and its mission to advance gender equality in the boardroom. We look forward to progressing the conversation and delivering together on our goals.



Ellyn Shook
Chief Leadership and
Human Resources Officer



Marge Magner
Lead Independent Director,
Accenture Board of Directors

LEARNING FROM CEOS WHO ARE ACCELERATING GENDER BALANCE IN THE BOARDROOM

In the last days of his governorship, Jerry Brown signed landmark legislation that requires all publicly traded corporations headquartered in California to have at least one woman on their board of directors by year-end 2019 and, for boards with five or more directors, at least two or three women by year-end 2021. While several other states are considering similar legislation, as of today no other state has signed such a bill and numerous objections to Brown's legislation have been raised – including its constitutionality.

In the U.S., there is something distinctly bristling about “quotas.” Brown's defense is that despite quotas overseas and numerous studies (by McKinsey, Peterson Institute, Credit Suisse, and others) that show a strong correlation between gender diverse boards and financial performance, few companies are taking action.

Some view California's legislation as a test case to see if it will impact the glacial pace of change in achieving gender parity on corporate boards. Catalyst research from 1995, when women held 10% of S&P 500 board seats, to 2018, when women held just over 23%, shows that the average pace of improvement is less than 1% annually. Particularly disturbing to the pipeline of outstanding female talent in the United States, is that the U.S. ranks seventeenth among nations in terms of board seats held by women, behind Norway, France, Sweden, Italy, Australia, United Kingdom and others.*

Ronald O'Hanley, President and CEO, State Street Corporation and former President and CEO of State Street Global Advisors, the company that brought global attention to the issue of gender diversity when its “Fearless Girl” faced off against the famous Wall Street Bull, is a proponent of more women on boards in order to achieve better outcomes, and better long-term value creation. In fact, State Street Global Advisors created the Gender Diversity Index ETF (ticker symbol SHE) which tracks the performance of companies with the highest levels of gender diversity on boards and senior management teams.

Given the correlation between gender diverse boards and a better bottom line, the reality gap is puzzling. *Why isn't there more traction with a strategy that clearly delivers results?*

[OPPOSITE PAGE] State Street Global Advisors ignited a global conversation about the power of women in leadership with Fearless Girl® and called on 1,200+ companies with no women on their boards to take action. Now, 423 of those companies have added a woman to their board and 22 more have committed to doing so.



Sculpture by Kristen Visbal, commissioned by State Street Global Advisors

Deloitte's 2017 study, *Seeing is Believing*, revealed that the most telling reason is the simplest: while 95% of corporate directors surveyed do, in fact, agree about the need for diversity, only 16% rate it among the top problems they face – not a *priority*. Yet, we do see that some companies and leaders *have* made gender diverse boards a priority and consequently are accelerating action and reaping the rewards.

The Breakfast of Corporate Champions is a biennial salute by the Women's Forum of New York to companies exceeding the national average of board seats held by women. Launched in 2011, the breakfast has essentially been a decade-long conversation with companies and CEOs leading the way to gender parity in the boardroom.

These CEO Champions are powerful advocates for change because they see it as a strategic business imperative. Their testimonies illustrate *why* gender diversity at the highest levels and throughout companies is critical for businesses in every sector and they offer guidance about how to make it happen. They raise the bar and set the course for others to follow.

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Breakfast of Corporate Champions, we captured some of these powerfully motivating stories in the belief that they will inspire and accelerate change. This book features 34 interviews with CEOs of S&P 500 and F1000 companies who are leading the way to gender parity.

Here is an overview of what they told us:

Five Powerful WHYs

- ▶ **Better Decision Making/Better Results:** These CEO game changers did not start with a "gender agenda." Instead, their motivation was a deep conviction that diversity ramps up board effectiveness: diverse boards really do have more robust dialogues, with less group think that lead to better decisions and deliver better financial results, and *gender diversity is an important component*.
- ▶ **Critical to Reflect the Customer:** The focus on gender *intensified* for those companies for whom women were the primary customer and where there was a strong CEO belief that boards should reflect those customers. Yet, even companies in non-female sectors recognized the *female factor*, as women influence over 85% of all purchasing decisions.
- ▶ **Competition for the Best Talent:** Access to skilled talent is recognized as the competitive differentiator, and the biggest untapped source of highly skilled talent is women. CEOs accelerating change recognized that the forces disrupting almost every business require diverse talent, including in its boardroom. Refreshment at all corporate levels invigorates, energizes and innovates.
- ▶ **Message to Employees:** The internal impact of seeing women at the top cannot be underestimated. To both attract and retain the best women, companies need to have visible role models to communicate that there's no limit to what women can achieve. To be an employer of choice and attract the best and most diverse talent, companies know they must reflect those they want to recruit who will in turn reflect and attract customers.
- ▶ **Greater Scrutiny:** The demand for increased transparency and diversity from investors, regulators, analysts and the general public makes gender diversity and all diversity a governance imperative.

Seven Inspirational HOWs

Here's how CEO Champions achieve gender-balanced boards:

- ▶ **Recognize it as a Business Priority:** These CEOs, Board Chairs and Nominating and Governance Committee Chairs view board composition as they view business results. They recognize a lack of gender diversity as a business problem to solve, and they make it a priority. Working with their directors and management teams, these Champion CEOs make this commitment a visible part of company culture.
- ▶ **Make a Long-Term Plan:** Champion CEOs recognize that change doesn't happen overnight. They have a board refreshment plan, recognizing natural transition points and new skills required for their strategic direction. They conduct annual reviews of board members to ensure a fit with business needs, some expand their boards to bring on outstanding women and some set term and/or age limits. They set internal targets for effective diversity and measure success because "what gets measured gets done."
- ▶ **Seek Skill Sets vs Titles:** The single most consistent finding among all Champion CEOs was reaching beyond requiring sitting CEOs for board positions – a policy which limits the number of women in consideration. They know that a board dominated by CEOs may not bring true diversity of thought or decision-making or, more importantly, the specific new skills required in a changing marketplace. It's critical to open the aperture on assessing "qualified" candidates, including not making prior board experience a requirement.
- ▶ **Demand Change:** Champion CEO organizations brief search firms on competencies and skills that their businesses strategically need for the future, demand a diverse slate and change recruiters when they don't get it.
- ▶ **Leverage New Networks:** Champion CEOs recognize that a great way to find qualified women is to tap into the networks of women leaders and involve female directors in developing a pipeline for board and C-suite positions. They also reach out to peers who have successfully achieved gender parity on their boards.
- ▶ **Sponsor Board Ready Women:** They are champions of women who work for them or other women they know who are board ready. They promote women for boards through their networks and get them into databases into which companies and search firms can tap.
- ▶ **Own It:** The development of talent, the shaping of culture and the construct of the board are top priorities of Champion CEOs. They make it happen. They make it personal.

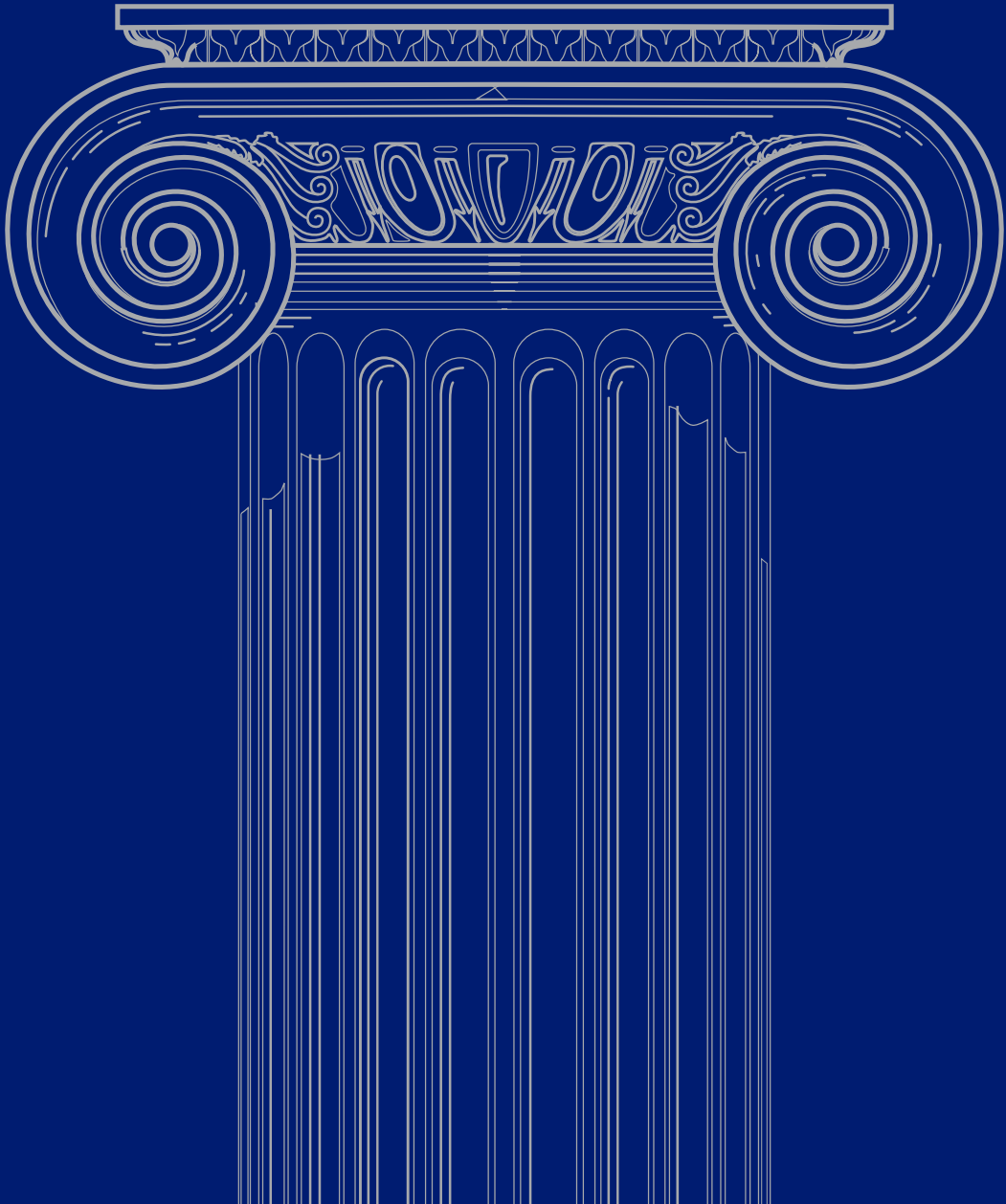
Real Conviction is Highly Personal:

While Champion CEOs have shared beliefs about why gender balance in the boardroom is simply smart business and how to make it happen, what makes their testimonies so powerful and authentic is their deep personal connection to the issue – a connection often driven by their unique experiences.

We have organized their stories into themes that resonated deeply – whether it was opportunity created by a critical transition point in their business, a sense of responsibility to a legacy of commitment to diversity, a laser-like focus on new skill sets, a drive toward a tipping point to reflect their consumers or a personal conviction that’s often driven by women leaders who influenced their own career path.

What rings true in all these CEO testimonials is the power of their personal commitment. We invite you to read them, share them and be inspired by them.

*MSCI December 2018 – Countries where more than one company is counted



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TRANSITION FUELS TRANS- FORMATION

Carpe Diem! The velocity of disruption and reinvention is creating transition points in every sector: mergers, acquisitions, public offerings, relaunches. These critical business junctures create a natural evaluation point: is the board you have the board you need? These CEOs tell how their critical transition points created an opportunity to refresh boards and how that meant more prospects for gender balance.

Hubert Joly
Best Buy

Terry J. Lundgren
Macy's

Teresa Rasmussen
Thrivent Financial





Hubert Joly

Executive Chairman and Former CEO, Best Buy

The Best Buy turnaround – “building the new blue” – has been lauded as a success story which demonstrates that traditional brick and mortar retailers can survive and thrive if they bring in the right transforming skills and keep the focus on talent.

Hubert Joly, one of the top 100 CEOs in America in 2017 as rated by Glassdoor, joined Best Buy in 2012 with a clear mandate, turnaround a failing consumer electronics chain and compete with the existential threat of online giants like Amazon. Five years later, shares are up 220%. An important part of the turn-

around was transforming an entrenched board, which resulted in doubling seats held by women, now at 50% women and 40% diverse.

“We started by looking for the skill sets we needed to transform our business and we found some very talented women,” said Joly. “We needed to focus first on what was broken so we were looking for leaders with transformational experience and skills in digital, services and retail – the skills we needed for the future.”

A determined change agent inside Best Buy helped open the door to more women. Kathy Higgins Victor, the Nominating and Governance Committee Chair who led the search for a new CEO that ultimately placed Joly at the helm, had originally been the only woman on Best Buy’s board. “I felt the difference when a second woman was added to our board,” says Higgins Victor, “and I thought what a difference we could make if we added new perspectives.”

“We were very forthright that we wanted to diversify the Board – so that’s the lens we applied to the entire process,” Higgins Victor added.

Achieving a diverse board meant changing the criteria from position focus to skills focus and loosening the requirement of being a sitting or recently retired CEO.

“The reality is there just aren’t that many women sitting CEOs in the country – let alone people of color,” Higgins Victor continued. “We redefined that requirement because the three skills we had agreed upon as a board that were important to our future were transformational skills, digital skills and service skills – specialized skills that often were not the wheelhouse of the CEO.”

“Once you look beyond sitting CEOs, the talent pool of women is just fabulous. You don’t need to compromise quality – you just need to be careful how you set the criteria so that you are able to find the candidates you are looking for,” says Higgins Victor.

And it doesn’t happen overnight.

“It was an evolution,” says Joly. “We had a tough business situation that we were dealing with, so we had to stage our refreshment of the board. We really focused on the longer-term goal and didn’t get distracted with shiny trinkets that looked like a fast fix.”

Joly and Higgins Victor believe that gender balance in the boardroom has contributed to their turnaround success as a company in many ways. First and foremost, the addition of new skills has contributed to better decision making; secondly, they signal to great women employees that the company wants them at the top.

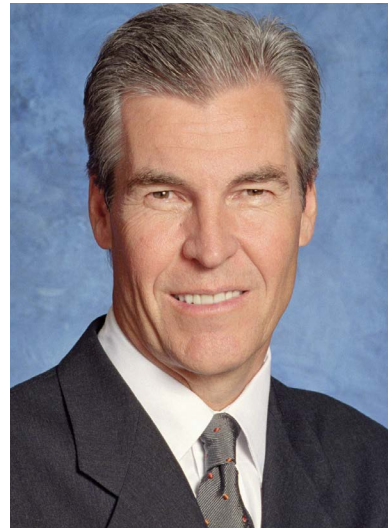
“I’m used to respecting talented women,” says Joly. “I have reported to women many times in my working life at Vivendi and Carlson, and I know what women leaders can do, but our employees need to see it – you cannot be what you cannot see.”

“We started by looking for the skillsets we needed to transform our business and we found some very talented women with those skill sets.”

“Every year, we review our board based on the skills criteria that are important to our business at the time. We assess each board member. In the last five years we have recruited six board members and continue to refresh our board. It takes discipline and strength to actually have a conversation with the individuals that have done a great job serving the company and the board but who may not be a good fit with the future,” says Joly.

“Our team is given a lot of credit for making the disciplined transition,” says Joly. “We are far more effective because we have this great diversity of experiences, backgrounds – it makes such a big difference.”

Hubert Joly, Executive Chairman, stepped down as CEO in May 2019, promoting Corie Barry to his seat where she became the 27th woman to head a S&P 500 company. ■



Terry J. Lundgren
Former Chairman and CEO, Macy's

In 2005, Macy's faced a defining transition – the acquisition of the May Company – the largest acquisition in the company's history. Terry J. Lundgren became CEO of Macy's in 2003 and Chairman in 2004 and looked at the requirement of merging boards as an opportunity to build a board that better reflected the company's customer base. He did this quickly. In 2015 Lundgren and Macy's were honored at the Women's Forum of New York Breakfast of Corporate Champions with the Muriel F. Siebert Award for outstanding leadership in achieving gender balance in the Boardroom – with over 50% of board seats held

by women.

"When I began, we had two female directors out of eleven," says Lundgren. "My belief was that the board should look more like our customers – I wanted Board members who are experiencing our brand, who are shopping in our stores and who could tell from their own experience, either shopping online or shopping in stores, how we might improve or what might be an idea that could make the experience even better."

"There was pushback in the beginning," continued Lundgren, "only in that we knew that taking this direction would mean that we were not going to just have CEOs on our board, because there is not a large enough pool of women CEOs in the Fortune 500 to accomplish this."

"You have to focus on the area of expertise that you are looking for – if it's technology, social media, real estate, whatever. There are very successful women who know these categories inside and out. Look at their track record of success and bring that skill, drive and determination to your Board. An excellent example for Macy's was bringing Annie Young-Scriver, then Global Chief Marketing Officer of Starbucks, onto our Board – we were looking for someone with marketing experience, loyalty program experience, social media savvy and China expertise – which she had. Even though Annie was not a CEO at the time, we had a great pick at a great time – she later became CEO of Godiva."

"Our search firm had lists of men and women and knew that if the candidates had similar backgrounds and experiences, the female candidates were more likely to be shoppers at Macy's and that would give them the edge. But it doesn't happen overnight – it needs to be a very selective and intentional process where you take your time to find the right people."

"To attract the best women and diverse candidates to your company, they have to have role models they can look up to and have conviction that there's no limit to what they can achieve. Women at the top of the food chain enable our female employees to look up and be confident that they are going to have the support they need to succeed."

He also believes gender balance in the boardroom changes the dialogue.

"My belief was that the board should look more like our customers."

"When you have a balanced board, there's more conversation about employees, about communities, about marketing and the product itself. In the early days when we were a male-dominated board, the focus was more on financial results and projections, and didn't adequately address some of these areas that are critically important to shareholder value."

Terry Lundgren stepped down as Chairman and CEO of Macy's in 2017, but remains an active member of the US 30% Club - CEOs who are committed to achieving boards with at least 30% of seats held by women by 2020. In early 2015, Fortune featured Lundgren in "How Macy's quietly created one of America's most diverse boards." ■



Teresa Rasmussen
CEO and Director, Thrivent Financial

Teresa Rasmussen, CEO and Director of Thrivent Financial, was part of a transformation to gender balanced management: 50% of board seats are held by women, 50% of C-suite positions are held by women and Thrivent is one of the few F500 companies that have a female Board Chair and a female President and CEO.

Thrivent was created in 2002 by the merger of two Lutheran fraternal benefit societies. The merger created a need for a new board and an opportunity for appropriate new governance policies and processes to be put in place. Today

the company serves more than two million members and customers with a broad range of financial products and services, offering guidance to help them obtain a life of contentment, confidence and generosity.

“The key to achieving gender parity on the board is to create opportunity through a committed process of board refreshment,” says Rasmussen. “With the new company we put in place age limits and terms limits for our board members. It was the 12-year term limit that really made a difference in allowing us to bring more women to the boardroom.”

“When I joined the company in 2005, we had two women on the board that were extraordinarily accomplished. When we added the third there was power in the number three that we hadn’t seen before. We called it ‘the magic of three’ – the conversations were just much more rich and multidimensional.”

“We have also raised the size of our board so we could stagger retirements and not reach a cliff of termed-out directors to improve our ability to manage the refreshment. And we plan – we look ahead to the people who will be moving off in the next few years and think about the skill sets we’re going to need. We keep a lengthy list of potential candidates. The process we use pretty consistently is a skills matrix that identifies what our company needs to take it to the next step. We may next need investment expertise or we may require tech start-up experience.”

“The key to achieving gender parity on your Board is to create opportunity through a committed process of Board refreshment.”

“Of course, it’s the commitment to diversity on our board that matters most – when you’re really committed to something – you make it happen.” ■

BORN BALANCED

Launching a new company means you can start from where you want to be. These CEOs share why their new beginning meant a gender balanced board.

Rodney O. Martin, Jr.
Voya Financial

Jack F. Remondi
Navient

Margaret M. Keane
Synchrony





Rodney O. Martin, Jr.
Chairman and CEO, Voya Financial

Rodney O. Martin, Jr., Chairman and CEO of Voya Financial, had a very intentional plan to achieve gender parity on Voya's Board, with 50% of independent board seats held by women within five years of the company's IPO in 2013, and he did just that! "Initially, ING owned 100% of the stock and, to no surprise, 100% of the board members were men," says Martin. "As ING sold their interests, Voya had the opportunity to appoint directors, and it was that early in our process that we began our planning and execution to build and develop a board that would be gender balanced as quickly as we could."

A driver for Martin was the mounting evidence that boards with higher percentages of women have better results – as measured by return on sales, return on equity, reputation and decision making."

"We had a fresh sheet of paper. We were starting a brand-new public company – which I've often referred to as a 6,000-person start-up. The biggest statement one can make initially is with your board. What better time to do that than immediately?"

"One area of focus was better problem-solving and the avoidance of group think. If you have too many versions of one kind of experience, you're going to get modest variations on a similar theme when it comes to discussing solutions. We had some very complicated problems to solve in creating a new company, launching it and transforming Voya from a bottom-quartile performer to a top-quartile performer, and we achieved that in five years."

"Was that just because we added women?" asks Martin. "While it would be impossible, and inaccurate, to credit one thing for Voya's successes and achievements, I can say with a high degree of confidence that our board has influenced the company's success to date. Did they help us think through choices and options to make sure we were moving multiple agendas forward? Absolutely, and it's made a huge difference."

For Martin, gender balance in the C-suite was as important as balance in the boardroom. Initially, he had one female member on a 10-person executive team. Today, 50% of Voya's Executive Committee members are women.

"Gender diversity has been a huge priority in terms of having a culture that reflects Voya's values, is aligned with our brand and reflects a place that people are seeking to be a part of," says Martin. "Another big part of this is establishing a culture of inclusive problem solving. You've got to get the right balance so that everyone's voice can be heard."

Like other CEO Champions, to tap into the wealth of talented women out there Martin had to "open the aperture" and not focus only on sitting CEOs or those with prior board experience when considering board candidates.

"The biggest statement one can make initially is with your board. What better time to do that than immediately?"

"Initially, we probably were a little more narrow in our thinking, saying 'It would be nice to be able to select from an array of women that have either been a CEO or on a public company board.' However, if you broaden that aperture, you begin to see another group of extraordinary leaders who have a ton of talent and a whole lot of drive," Martin says.

"It doesn't happen overnight," Martin concludes. "And of course, there are a million important things that CEOs have to think about. But there are a smaller number of opportunities to really put your hands on the steering wheel and say, 'I got this.' The development of talent, the shaping of culture, and the construct of the board are important priorities for every CEO." ■



Jack F. Remondi

CEO, Navient

Navient was launched as an independent publicly traded company in 2014 with the significant and unique distinction of having 50% of board seats held by women for this Nasdaq IPO. CEO Jack Remondi says it proves the quality and wealth of talented women who are ready to serve, but a carefully planned skill-based search is needed to find them.

“We were formed when one public company – Sallie Mae – split into two. At the time our board was also split, so both halves had a need to replenish, and we decided to take advantage of the opportunity to do something unique.”

Remondi was CEO of the combined company and became CEO of Navient at separation. The new Navient was a very different company than the old Sallie Mae, with a different set of needs to successfully operate and grow the business. “When we split, the needs of the business were dramatically different,” says Remondi. “Whereas Sallie Mae was principally a lender, Navient was more of an operations company, servicing student loans and looking to expand or leverage our skills into other asset classes.”

“When we began this process, some of the skills we were looking for were deep experience in information technology, systems and cyber-related risk, new skills that many people with previous board experience didn’t necessarily have. We weren’t saying, ‘let’s go find female candidates.’ We said, ‘let’s identify the skills we need and ensure we are seeing a diverse list of candidates.’ The focus on finding these skills forced us to look outside the usual lists.”

“We obviously asked existing board members for suggestions but we expected to go beyond the existing networks of the board. We were willing to make prior board experience a less important criteria because we wanted people with the right backgrounds and experiences. If you say I need someone with all of the skills I just mentioned and they also have to have prior board experience, you are fishing in a very, very small pond. Even when you find them, they are often not available to make the commitment because they are already sitting on another board, or have professional limits on what their own company will let them do.”

“We adopted a plan that could keep our Board relevant and competitive going forward, creating new opportunities for Board refreshment in set time frames.”

“We also adopted a plan that could keep our board relevant and competitive going forward, creating new opportunities for refreshment in set time frames. In a perfect world you would not need age or tenure targets – it would all be based on relevant skills that could take the company forward, but some boards may need concrete measures like a retirement age or term limit. They should also include an assessment process strong enough to make sure members continue to bring relevant skills and fresh insights. Boards should continually look at ways to improve themselves and refresh.” ■



Margaret M. Keane
CEO, Synchrony

Margaret M. Keane, CEO of Synchrony since its inception in 2014 and one of two women running a top 20 bank in the U.S., had a unique opportunity to build the diverse board she wanted – she built a “board in waiting” before the company IPO launch.

“We had a unique opportunity in the sense that we were splitting off from GE, but we needed Fed approval to move forward, and we didn’t know when we were going to get it,” Keane says.

“From the time we started our IPO process, we began adding what we called ‘observers of the board’ so when Fed approval came, our new board was ready to step in and replace the GE nominated directors. We actually had multiple directors and observers for a period of time so everyone could get up to speed on the company.”

“When we knew we were going to create a new board we wanted to make sure we would have the right mix of diversity overall. It was important to have a board that represents the diverse customers we work for every day and our diverse workforce.”

“That sounds easy but it’s not – we just kept pushing and pushing. We changed search firms; we focused on the skill sets we needed like general financial, risk management and branding and we were deliberately more open to candidates who hadn’t served on a board before and that in particular opened the door for more women.”

“Women just bring different perspectives to a board. They ask different questions and they push the organization to have conversations I’m not so sure would have happened if they had not been on the board. But it can’t just be one or two women – you need enough so those voices will be heard. I think that’s at least three. In 2019, women hold 40% of Synchrony board seats.”

“When we knew we were going to create a new board we wanted to make sure we would have the right mix of diversity overall. It was important to have a board that represents the diverse customers we work for every day and our diverse workforce.”

“You have to make this a big commitment because boards require constant nurturing. CEOs need to work with Board Chairs and Nominating Governance Chairs to set very explicit goals on how board seats will be filled going forward. It’s not going to happen unless you make it a very specific goal.” ■

KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

Inheriting a business where diversity has been an established part of the culture doesn't mean the CEO doesn't have a critical role to play. Constant vigilance is required to maintain corporate values and equity of opportunity. These CEOs share how they maintained and advanced a commitment to gender diversity established by their predecessors.

Jeffrey L. Harmening
General Mills

Michele Buck
The Hershey Company

Daniel J. Houston
Principal Financial

Eileen McDonnell
Penn Mutual





Jeffrey L. Harmening
Chairman and CEO, General Mills

Jeffrey L. Harmening, Chairman and CEO of General Mills since 2017, says, "It all started with Bruce Atwater – that's four CEOs ago. He was the one that committed us as a company to reflecting our customer base in our management. So ethnic and gender diversity have been important to us for over three decades."

"If you ask me what is the beginning of our story, I have to tell you it starts with our corporate belief. We believe that diversity at the board level makes us a stronger company, and gender diversity is a big part of that."

"The benefits of a diverse board are clear and extraordinary. First, there's better bottom-line results as a result of more diverse discussion and better decision-making. Then there's the benefit of talent recruitment and retention. Everybody wants to look up and see people like them at the top of the company – it makes them believe they can get there."

"We've never felt as if we've had to sacrifice talent for diversity. In fact, by casting the net a bit wider, we find we can get some of the best talent. If you're only looking at CEOs and there's only a small percentage of women CEOs in F500 companies, then by definition you're not going to get a lot of women. But, if you make your criteria diverse skills and perspectives, and look for talented executives, you can find a whole range of people who are able to meaningfully contribute."

For the past 20 years or so, General Mills has had between three to five women on its board and a 30% to 40% range of management seats held by women. The company's philosophy didn't change over time – it remained disciplined and dedicated to diversity, and specifically gender diversity.

"We believe that diversity at the board level makes us stronger and gender diversity is a big part of that."

"As the fourth CEO to embrace diversity in all its forms, I don't want people to take it for granted. I don't want our senior leadership to take it for granted. Even if it's now part of our culture, you have to nurture it. It's about building bridges from one generation of leaders to the next. It takes constant vigilance to maintain the focus and not let those values slip away. You don't want to be the CEO that drops the baton," says Harmening. ■



Michele Buck

President and CEO, The Hershey Company

Michele Buck, President and CEO of The Hershey Company, carries forward the commitment to diversity that was set by her predecessor, Hershey's former Board Chairman and CEO, J.P. Bilbrey.

"While Hershey has a long history of supporting gender diversity – our first female board member served in the 1970s – it's J.P. Bilbrey who deserves credit for championing the issue. During his tenure as CEO, female representation on our board increased from 11% in 2011 to 25% in 2017. Since I became CEO, we have continued that commitment to diversity and we now have 50% of our

board seats held by diverse individuals, 42% female. And I am excited about our executive pipeline," says Buck.

"I deeply believe that we need to drive more gender diversity in the C-suite and at corporate board levels. Diversity in every form drives new thinking, innovation, better decisions and really leads to business growth. The data would suggest that more diverse boards and diverse teams drive better results. I think there have been many studies to show that data is right."

"Diversity at the top is a powerful force. It's critical that people can see themselves in the leadership. When I became CEO, I was flooded with emails from women in our plants who had been with the company for decades. They never thought they'd see a female CEO and they all commented on the hope it gave them for their daughters and their future. And the great news is I got the same feedback from the men."

"We took a focused approach in seeking diversity for our board and organization – by mandating the use of diverse slates both internally and with our executive recruiters. At the board level, leveraging diverse slates forces recruiters to get out and find diverse talent and then you see the breadth of experience that's available. It's hard for me to understand leaders not taking action to accelerate gender balance because there's so much female talent out there."

"We know the world is changing at a more rapid pace than ever before. We're certainly seeing the impact of technology, seismic shifts in retail, how consumers consume media, and how they interact with each other. The consumer population is more diverse than ever, and the organization and our leadership need to reflect that. Trends are evolving in the U.S. in terms of the ethnicity of our American consumer and to really be able to reflect that, we need to evolve."

"I deeply believe that we need to drive more gender diversity in the C-suite and corporate board levels because diversity in every form drives new thinking, better decision making and really leads to business growth."

"CEO commitment is critical. The importance of owning and driving gender diversity forward at the top can't be underestimated – that's where we make it a priority and mandate that it needs to happen. Then others who aren't believers will see the results for themselves." ■



Daniel J. Houston

Chairman, CEO and President, Principal Financial

Propelled by his personal beliefs, Daniel J. Houston, Chairman, CEO and President of Principal Financial, continues his company's longstanding commitment to diversity.

"Principal has a legacy of trying to do the right thing. It goes back to World War II when we were Bankers Life and women stepped in to fill the roles of many men who had gone to war," Houston says. "The last thing we wanted to do was derail those women who had done an enormous job of stepping into leadership roles. So for me, that was our starting point to ensure that we had a diverse workforce

not only in our entry-level personnel, but also in our most senior management ranks."

"Our board has been diverse for decades because our commitment to diversity has continued for more than half a century. It's important to our employees, it's important to our senior management and it's increasingly important to our customers. I can't tell you the number of times when we are in a finalist presentation to a client and we look across the table - we need to make sure we look like the people we're selling to - 99% of the time we do and I pity the companies that don't."

"Making it happen is a team effort. The Nominating/Governance Chair, the lead director and I sit together and first we identify the skills we will need and what is missing - digital, HR, future finance chair, compensation - and then we want to make sure we look like our customer base. When you're looking for female candidates, making sure you have identified and scoped the role you want them to play is key."

"If you're only willing to accept a sitting female CEO of a Fortune 500 Company - I have news for you, the pool is very limited. No, you have to say things like - 'I want a high performing female chief operating officer, chief financial officer, chief digital officer or head of strategy.' All can be a great fit with what your board and company really needs. There is no shortage of smart, intellectually curious professional women who can make real contributions."

"Our board has been diverse for decades - it's important to our employees, it's important to our senior management and it's increasingly important to our customers."

"It's a company conviction and a personal one. As a CEO I have a strong conviction that we're going to have a leadership team and a workforce and a board that looks like the general public. On the personal side, I come from a family of eight - I have four sisters, one daughter and one granddaughter. I come to this with a very strong sense of obligation and responsibility to ensure women have an equal opportunity to contribute at the highest levels." ■



Eileen McDonnell

Chairman and CEO, Penn Mutual

Eileen McDonnell, Chairman and CEO of Penn Mutual since July 2013, credits her predecessor Bob Chappell with establishing the groundwork for the highly diverse board and workforce, which are now strongly contributing to the company's success.

"Bob was very forward thinking for 1997," McDonnell says. "He was a male leader who was gender neutral and color blind. He looked for the best talent and supported and advanced women along the way. He saw how they helped him succeed and move forward, and they moved forward with him."

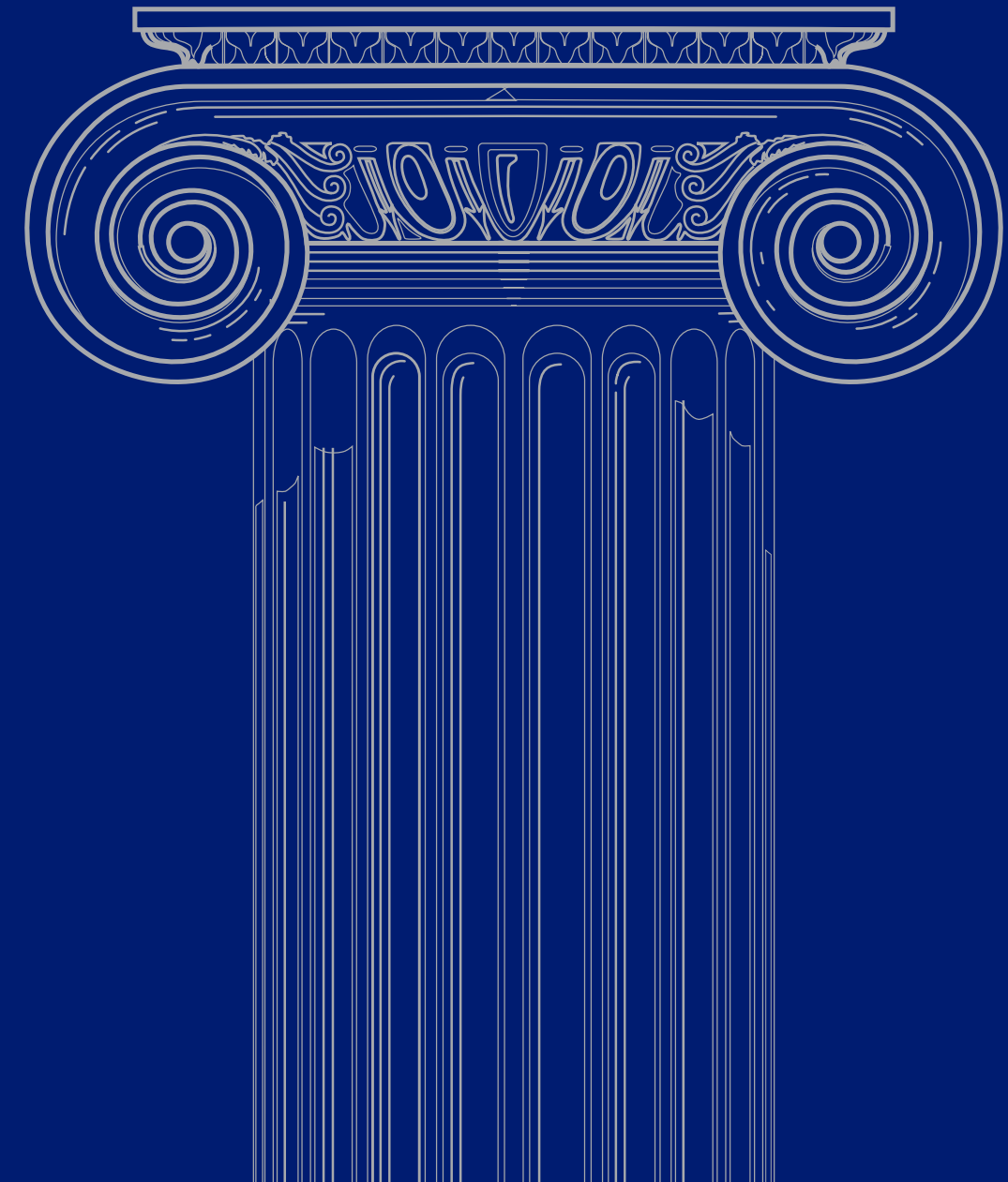
"The Penn Mutual board is 42% women. We are very comfortable at that level but at the same time we are going through a board refreshment process. We always review and refresh - and we may very well end up with 60 to 70% of our board female."

"We're at the point where it's not about gender for gender's sake - which I think is when you really get a quality candidate. I'm not a quota person - in my experience that turns people off. We ask for a diverse slate to reflect what our needs are going forward, and then my lead director will lean over and say, 'I think we're going to wind up with more women!' "

"It makes no logical sense to me that more companies are not moving toward a gender-balanced board."

"Even though a lot of this continues to happen naturally for us, I constantly raise awareness around diversity of all kinds. Over 40% of my C-suite are females. That wasn't in place before, but now we have built real momentum."

"It makes no logical sense to me that more companies are not moving toward a gender-balanced board. If the numbers show that winning teams are teams with shared leadership, what's preventing you, CEO and Chairman, from building that winning team?" ■



SKILLS DRIVE OPPORTUNITY

Few CEOs start with a “gender agenda.” What keeps them up at night is whether the company has the skill sets at every level to maximize competitive advantage and shareholder return. These CEOs share how starting with a critical assessment of what they need versus what they have can lead to carefully orchestrated board refreshment and the inclusion of highly qualified women.

Jonas Prising
ManpowerGroup

Mary Dillon
Ulta Beauty

Michael Corbat
Citi

Beth Mooney
KeyCorp

Laura Alber
Williams-Sonoma





Jonas Prising

Chairman and CEO, ManpowerGroup

As Chairman and CEO of ManpowerGroup since 2014, Jonas Prising knows what it takes to create a high performing workforce at every level. That's why he has increased board seats held by women from 20% to over 40% since becoming CEO.

"Of course, diversity is a good business decision. The business case is clear: companies with more diverse workforces and representation across the board perform better," Prising says.

"But it's also important to look at it from a strategic perspective on what's happening in the labor market. Access to skilled talent is already the competitive differentiator for companies, organizations and countries alike – and will become increasingly critical in the future. We also know that the biggest untapped pool of skilled talent is women. And we need to act on that. We bring this perspective to our clients in over 80 countries and, of course, we think about it in terms of managing our own business at every level – in our boardroom, the C-suite and across all our management layers."

"We want to become a talent magnet for individuals of all capabilities and setting targets to achieve close to equal gender diversity at all levels of our company is a key strategy to attract the best talent."

"When I hear or read that it's harder to find women directors for boards, I disagree. You need to be specific in wanting a gender diverse slate from recruiters. And the fact is, we don't allow a slate to go forward unless we have gender representation of equally qualified candidates. You might have to take a bit more time because women are still underrepresented in P&L roles in companies. And you have to work a bit differently – you need to think beyond the sitting CEO. Instead, you can have a division president on your board who can make tremendous contributions."

"Our own thought leadership on inclusion has identified that you need to start at the top. To make this happen at a strategic level you need buy in from the CEO and the senior leadership team. I believe this is truly one of the most important strategic initiatives we have – as important as any part of our business strategy. It gives us great access to talent that otherwise would be somewhere else. This is absolutely what we need to do as a business, so we win in the long term."

"We know the biggest untapped pool of skilled talent is women and we need to act on that."

"The best advice that I can give is: be determined to make gender diversity a reality in the company and on the board. When we are recognized at ManpowerGroup for having five women on the board, that sends a message to the whole company." ■



Mary Dillon
CEO, Ulta Beauty

Mary Dillon, CEO of beauty retailer Ulta Beauty since 2013, has overseen one of the most spectacular retail expansion stories ever. One of 30 leaders named to Barron's World's Best CEOs list in 2019, Mary and her team have more than doubled the company's revenues and proven that "traditional" brick and mortar retailers are here to stay, as long as they lead with guest insights, experiences and innovation.

When Dillon became CEO, about 20% of Ulta Beauty's board seats were held by women. She has tripled that representation to nearly 60%.

"We're the leading beauty retailer in the United States. Our associates are 92% women and our customers are mostly women as well. So, it made great sense that we should increase female representation on our board. We started by looking for specific skill sets, and found incredible women who had exactly what we were looking for."

"We already had several longstanding board members with tremendous experience in retail and other areas to help guide us. However, over time as director vacancies arose, we also saw opportunity to further improve diversity in both background and perspectives as the retail landscape was dramatically evolving. We made this opportunity a priority in searching for new directors. One of the first areas of focus was on increasing our depth of expertise and experience in governance. Through a mutual connection with a key mentor of mine, I was able to recruit an outstanding new director with extensive background in governance, who happened to be a woman of color. She has helped us create a systematic approach to evolving some of our governance practices and lay the foundation for natural board evolution."

"I also was interested in increasing our digital capability and strategic expertise, and we were able to recruit outstanding women with those backgrounds and skills. We didn't ask these women because they were women - we sought them out because they brought outstanding skills to our board and to our company."

"I've been in the beauty business for six years, and I've been in a few other sectors before this. I learned early in my career the benefit of a diverse workforce because our country has been becoming more wonderfully diverse every day. If you don't have participation from all sectors of society - from all races, genders, abilities, sexual orientation and identities - you don't have what you fully need from a talent perspective to deliver for all of your stakeholders."

"It seems obvious to me that in the boardroom and throughout the company, you must stand up for diversity in a way that is very intentional. And you're not making any tradeoffs, because there's so much talent out there."

"The advice I would give is really two simple things: One is to be overt in your intentions to make this a priority. I think more CEOs could talk to female executives across industries and ask them for their networking ideas. And two, expand the aperture of the titles that you are looking for."

"We started by looking for specific skill sets, and found incredible women who had exactly what we were looking for."

"In 2007, I was the chief marketing officer at McDonald's and I was approached by Target to join its board. The CEO said to me, 'Every board is looking for CEOs, and for diversity, but there are so few CEOs who fit that description. I'm opening up our view to folks perhaps more junior in their career, but who are talented and might be CEOs someday.'"

"So, don't just look for 'sitting' CEOs and CFOs, look for the skills that will help meet your needs and think beyond someone's title to where they might be heading to, because then the talent pool is much richer. Also, not every person has to come in with board experience. They can be taught that through executive education and coaching from other directors, while immediately bringing great current thinking to the boardroom." ■



Michael Corbat

CEO, Citi

When Michael Corbat, a 36-year veteran of Citigroup, took the reins as CEO in 2012, there were three women on the twelve-member board. Today, six of fifteen seats are held by women. Corbat says the push for new skill sets created the opportunity for a more diverse board.

“When I became CEO, my observation was that we needed to change a couple of things on the board, summed up by moving from a group of talented generalists with similar skill sets to a cadre of specialists with critical business skills for the future. We made the decision that we were going to experiment

a bit and find really deep expertise in key areas like technology, cyber risk, culture and the global economy. The search for subject expertise opened the door to more diversity, including some very talented women.”

“It’s tough to find board candidates that are banking generalists and who are also a woman or a minority because those people don’t exist in any kind of significant numbers in the ranks today. But when you seek the rest of the expertise the bank needs, you have the ability to go out and push some of the boundaries.”

“We do a lot of planning for continual improvement on our board. We don’t have term limits, but we do have a mandatory retirement age. We monitor what expertise is coming off the board, what skill areas need to be supplemented, how market forces are demanding new skills and then what kind of opportunities are there to push in terms of making sure we end up with the right gender balance, the right diversity all around. We take our time, and we curate our board journey to maximize effectiveness.”

Corbat also evolved his leadership team to 33% female and three U.S. minorities and stresses the important signal that visible balance at the top sends to female employees, who now comprise over 50% of Citigroup’s workforce:

“Whether you’re a woman or a U.S. minority, you want to be able to look up and see that people have pierced that glass ceiling, that the trail has been blazed and you can follow.”

“The search for subject expertise opened the door to more diversity including some very talented women.”

“As a bank we’re in the risk business. I think you run a risk of underperforming if you make decisions that haven’t had the appropriate perspectives. You also run the risk of backlash from your employees, backlash from your customers and clients and from your shareholders because people are paying attention to this.” ■



Beth Mooney
Chairman and CEO, KeyCorp

On May 1, 2011 Beth Mooney became the first woman to be Chairman and CEO of a top 20 U.S. bank.

"This company has a long history of a commitment to diversity. When you look at KeyCorp, 30% of my direct reports are female, 40% are women and minority. And in our total workforce, 67% are women and minority. I believe diversity in the boardroom helps shape a culture of diversity that extends from leadership ranks to management ranks and ultimately throughout a company. It's a virtuous cycle."

"More boards can migrate to greater balance with a really robust use of skills that is not job based. My recruiting was more than filling my board with the acumen of sitting CEOs. And it was not just randomly 'do you run a company?' We targeted specific industries, and geographies, for a background that was relevant to the strategies of KeyCorp."

"If you make a list of the relevant skills and perspectives that help your business strategies, you are going to find women to fit those skills."

"If you search for titles, you will get sitting CEOs, which will skew your population. If you make a list of what you think are the relevant skills and perspectives that would help your business strategies, you're going to find women who fit those skills. To me, that is the way to start opening up the diversity in a boardroom." ■



Laura Alber
CEO, Williams-Sonoma

Since Laura Alber became CEO of Williams-Sonoma in 2010, the percentage of board seats held by women has doubled. She has set the bar for those who follow, to live up to and to raise it even higher. While some keepers of the flame are maintaining the torch passed to them, equally important are those lighting the way for others to follow.

"The culture of the company is the foundation," Alber says. "When you establish a culture of inclusion and diversity, it becomes real."

"When you surround yourself with a diverse group of individuals, you drastically reduce or eliminate any negative bias and become a company that talented executives want to be a part of."

"We want some sitting CEOs, but more importantly, specific skill sets including technology expertise, supply chain experience, a global perspective and other unique qualifications our board may be missing."

Like many others, for her Board, Alber looks for skill sets many women qualify for. "We want some sitting CEOs, but more importantly, specific skill sets including technology expertise, supply chain experience, a global perspective and other unique qualifications our board may be missing."

"Leadership starts at the top – you need to set a direction and define a culture. I think it's every day and in everything you do." ■

INSPIRED BY EXPERIENCE

Many of the CEOs most committed to gender equity draw their conviction from personal experience, particularly the outstanding women executives they worked with earlier in their careers. These women not only helped shape their potential, they also instilled an early recognition of the contribution women leaders can make and how much of that talent remains untapped. These CEOs share how personal experience inspired them to accelerate change.

Christian Ulbrich
JLL

Stanley A. Askren
HNI Corporation

Rick Goings
Tupperware Brands





Christian Ulbrich
CEO, JLL

When Christian Ulbrich joined real estate consulting giant JLL in 2005 as a managing director for Germany, he found a company that had already embraced gender diversity in its most senior ranks: both the CFO who interviewed him and the Board Chair were women.

"JLL was one of the few companies to have a female chairman of the board. That obviously set a very strong example and made it easier for us to attract other senior women to our board and to our business," says Ulbrich. "But my personal commitment to providing equal opportunities for women happened much earlier."

"I owe part of my career success to the fact that at an early stage I saw what senior women could do to change the dynamic and create breakthrough results. It became one of my management principles to always try to identify women for any senior role to be filled."

"We know that to achieve more diversity at the leadership and C-suite levels, we need to create a pipeline of talent. In 2018, we successfully established and externally committed to a goal for our executive board to improve representation of women in senior leadership over the next three years. We have also given all of our senior leaders strategic diversity and inclusion goals as part of their performance review process."

"I believe that when it comes to creating gender equality, having stated goals is really important. Particularly in an industry like real estate, which has been traditionally male dominated, you are often fishing in a talent pool that is mostly men. That means it's easier to select a male candidate just as a function of math. If we really want to change the make-up of our work force, then quotas are one way to change the balance. I realize not everyone is pro quota, but when we get to a point that we're fishing in a pool that is representative of society, we won't need them anymore."

"To get to a diverse non-executive board is relatively straightforward because there are so many talented and qualified women out there. Getting women in executive leadership roles is harder. You have to nurture and promote female talent within the organization, and be bold enough to hire talent from beyond your industry or peer companies. There may be cases where you get pushback from your organization on hires outside the box but, in my experience, people soon see the benefits."

"Expanding the talent pool means moving beyond the sitting CEO requirement for board seats and being brave enough to recruit talent outside your sector."

"We have great success stories and we celebrate them. As part of this, it's very important to ensure that our women leaders are visible. This sets a motivating example for the female talent in our organization. It also sends a strong message to any men that don't fully embrace the diversity journey we are on."

"One of my first actions as CEO of JLL was to appoint a woman to our executive board. This was based on the merit of the candidate and, frankly, the appointment was probably overdue. It has clearly been the right move for the company and I believe it has contributed positively to the overall performance of the executive team."

"At an early stage I saw what senior women could do to change the dynamic and create breakthrough results."

"You have to bring a bit of boldness into your leadership and sometimes you need to take some calculated risks. At the end of the day if you're not willing to take some risks you just won't get there. I have never regretted it when I've put a woman into a senior role."

"To be successful on gender balance, you really have to believe in it. If you don't believe, and you are just ticking a box, it will not work. I am convinced that diversity across our business drives innovation and creativity and it opens up the talent pool in a very competitive market. Believing in the benefits is where it starts. And then just be bold." ■



Stanley A. Askren

Former Chairman and CEO, HNI Corporation

Stanley A. Askren, former Chairman and CEO of HNI Corporation, says the foundation for him to build a gender-balanced board started with three of the most formative mentors he had in his career, who all happened to be women. In particular, he credits his previous boss with where he is today and how he built a stronger board.

"Perhaps the foundation for my building a stronger board was a woman I previously worked for," says Askren. "She was the most competent, level-headed, practical human being I ever dealt with, who cared deeply about my personal development. That is why it makes so much sense to me."

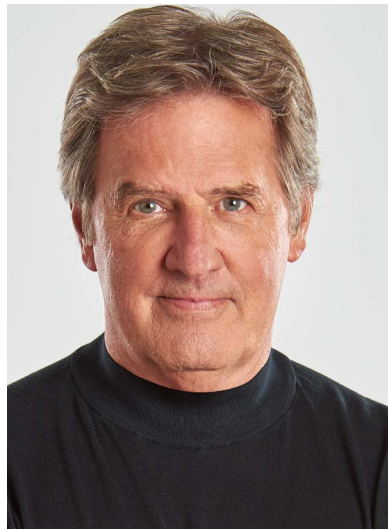
"It gave me a mind-set where it was just natural for me to have gender diversity on my Board, but it is common sense. We did it because we're looking for the best board, we're looking for the most dynamic decision making, we're looking for better results for our business. A more inclusive, diverse board helped me achieve all of that, so it was the best thing for me to do in my role as a CEO."

The course the HNI Board followed was to look for the best candidates. "The best candidates in the particular areas of expertise that we were seeking were females. The only thing we did was to make sure that female and male candidates were equally represented on the slate and the slate was broad enough to include all the best people. It was all about the best talent. We have been successful in having a board that's nearly 50% female."

"It wasn't just me as Chairman and CEO, it's the whole board that feels this way: the corporate governance group, the committee that's in charge of finding these candidates. We deserve some credit to make sure that we're not talking to the same over-recruited John who hangs out at the club, but it's really no more exciting or profound than our responsibility to represent our employees, our shareholders and our customers."

"Perhaps the foundation for my building a stronger board was a woman I previously worked for. She was the most competent, level-headed, practical human being I ever dealt with."

"Who cares about gender, the color of skin, religion or whatever else. You know, if you hang around the same fishing hole, you're going to catch the same fish." Askren concludes, "If you don't have an inclusive culture, what do you have? It's really more about a meritocracy. Let's get the best people we can find – wherever they may come from." ■



Rick Goings

Chairman Emeritus, Tupperware Brands

E.V. (Rick) Goings, Chairman Emeritus of Tupperware Brands, was Chairman and CEO from 1997 until 2018, when he stepped down as CEO.

"When I was at Avon in my late 30s, I found out what talent was there and so much of it was women," says Goings. "I made a decision that I was going to put those kind of glasses on in the future."

"I worked with these talented women, but I could see that they had limited opportunities. I saw that at Avon and again at Tupperware. I saw it as I lived and worked in Europe and definitely as I lived and worked in Asia Pacific – that was

something I wanted to change."

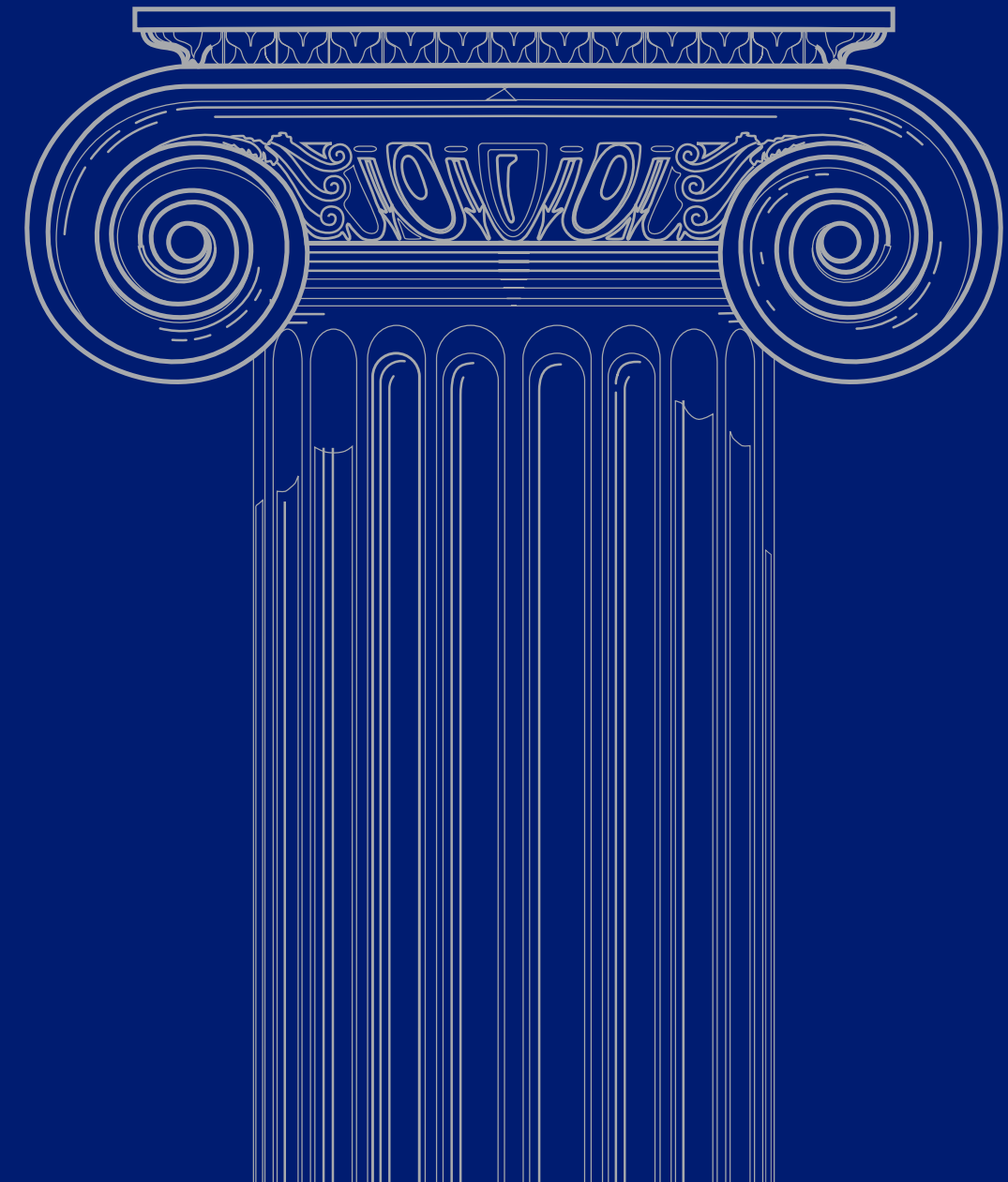
"I became CEO at Tupperware when we spun the company off from Dart & Kraft; at the time there were only two women on the board."

In 2019 over 50% of Tupperware's board are women as Goings replaced himself as CEO with a woman.

"When I was at Avon in my late 30s I found out what talent was there and so much of it was women – I made a decision I was going to put on those kind of glasses in the future."

"It's a sense of self-respect and pride that it's the right thing to do. It's not so much a pure business case – it's more about the productive culture you create through diversity. You create a culture of confidence and a culture of purpose – and that's a great motivator for everyone. People will work for money, but they will die for purpose."

"Our company has been selected as most admired, most trusted and among the best companies to work for many, many times. That helps us get the best talent and deliver the best results and our culture is a big part of that." ■



THE POWER OF THE TIPPING POINT

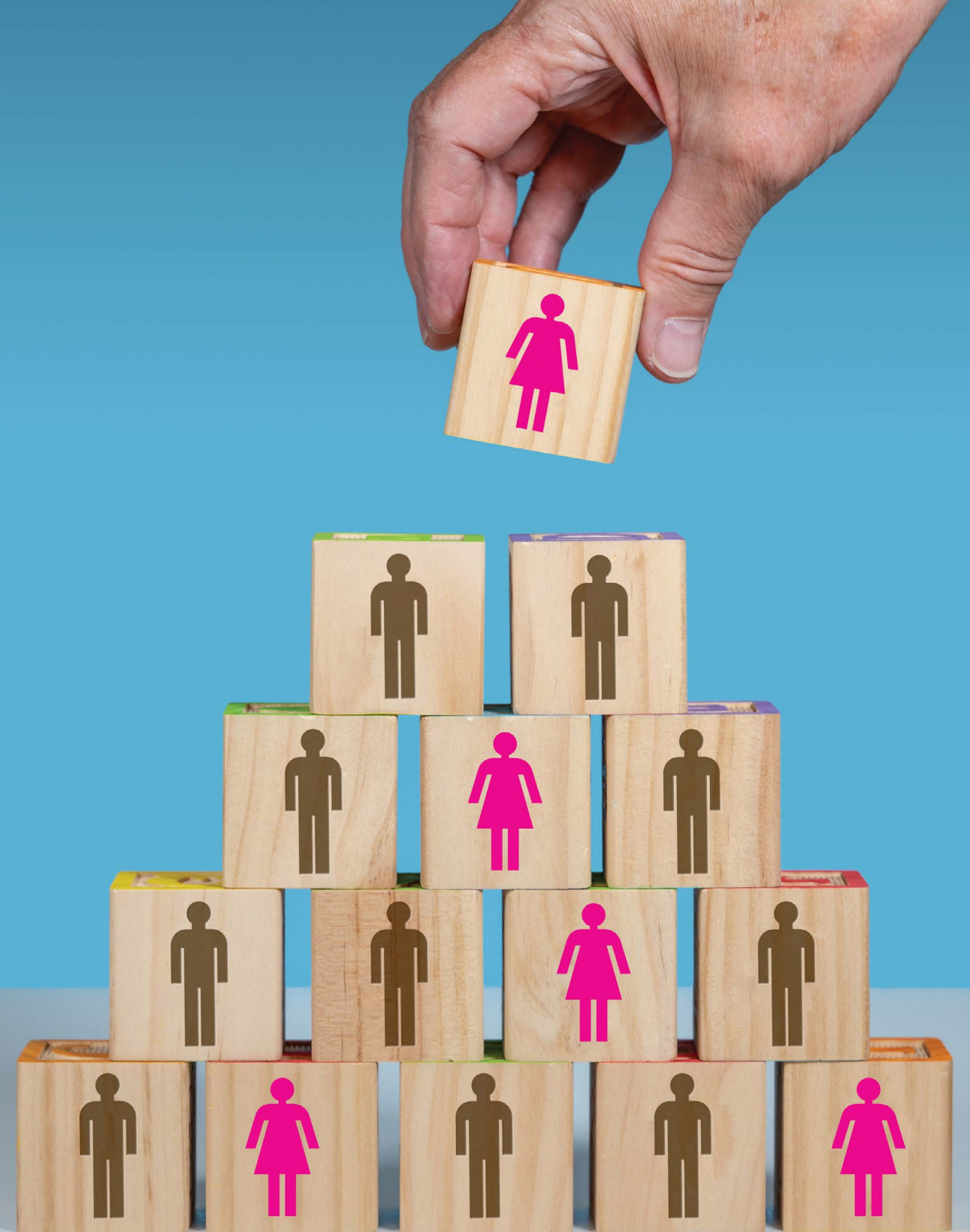
Progress to parity is driven by a recognition that critical mass needs to be reached to maximize the impact of diverse views on decision making. These CEOs share how reaching the “tipping point” of at least three women on their boards created more dynamic discussion, better decision making and more effective boards.

Kevin A. Lobo
Stryker

Patricia Poppe
CMS Energy

Susan N. Story
American Water Works

Ilene Gordon
Ingredion Incorporated





Kevin A. Lobo
Chairman and CEO, Stryker

Kevin A. Lobo, Chairman and CEO of medical technology leader Stryker, doubled the number of board seats held by women and championed a commitment throughout the company to motivate its female workforce at every level. Lobo's story demonstrates how a CEO's personal conviction and focus can accelerate change and evolve a company culture.

"I've always been a big believer in diversity. I've worked in four different industries and four different countries, and I've been around different cultures. I've had women bosses earlier in my career, and I quickly learned diverse and inclusive teams outperform teams lacking diversity."

At the board level, Lobo recognized the importance of a "tipping point" to truly access the power of diversity.

"I believe in the concept of critical mass - multiple women at the table, not just one, changes everything. The dynamic becomes healthier, things become more open - it's a real game changer."

Like most CEOs, Lobo starts with skill requirements but insists that recruiters bring a diverse slate. And he's leveraged flexibility. When he found an ideal female board member, he expanded the size of his board from nine to ten. He didn't wait for an opening.

Gender balance in the boardroom is only part of a company wide effort to leverage female talent at every level. When he became CEO, Lobo put his personal support behind a nascent employee resource group called the Stryker Women's Network, now ten years old.

"When I became CEO, our women's initiative had people with good intentions, but it wasn't global or fully empowered by leadership. So, we got serious and I personally got involved. I threw my full weight behind it and got our leadership on board. We set goals to improve and track metrics. A member of my executive team became the sponsor of the initiative. We allocated funding, and we engaged the women leaders at the top of our company."

"Providing flexible work arrangements to employees is critically important, including different arrangements around remote work, and being open to part time. This is about advancing diversity as part of an overall cultural evolution that we've been going through."

"I believe in the concept of critical mass - multiple women at the table, not just one, changes everything... it's a real game changer."

"We wanted this to be our company culture, so we built accountability to advance diversity and inclusion into business reviews - and this created a huge level of visibility and action. I'm a great believer in the old expression: What gets measured, gets done."

"At Stryker, our metrics are showing that this focus at all levels is working. If you hire from the same area over and over, you are not getting the best talent. It's really that simple to me." ■



Patricia Poppe
President and CEO, CMS Energy

Patricia Poppe, President and CEO of CMS Energy and Consumers Energy, is one of five women who run a S&P 500 company that keep the lights and heat on.

“Our evolution began in 2015,” says Poppe. “We traditionally had a woman on the board – even in the 1970s. That continued until about 2013. The tipping point happened in 2015 when we added three women to the board because they were the best candidates. When I joined later that year, we had four out of eleven board seats held by women.”

“When there’s one woman on the board and she is good, she’s considered exceptional because she is the exception. When you have four who are good, it eliminates the ‘gender lens.’ They are not good because they are women – they are good because they are capable and qualified and they happen to be women.”

“We didn’t have any real resistance in becoming more diverse,” Poppe continues. “Even the more traditional board members who were retiring, were very supportive. It wasn’t that they were against it, it just hadn’t been a priority to make sure there were women in the candidate pool. Today, with the drumbeat of shareholder activism on board diversity getting louder, any chair of a governance committee should ask, ‘How can we increase the diversity on this board – and not only for women, but diversity of all kinds?’”

“The board is a microcosm of the company. So I expand my thought process on diversity to the whole company – we monitor and track our gender equity within the company, gender pay, and gender representation. We want to make sure we have a diverse slate of candidates in the pool for all levels of positions, and we’re actively working on areas that are underrepresented.”

“When there’s one woman on the board and she is good, she’s considered exceptional because she is the exception. When you have four who are good, it eliminates the ‘gender lens.’ ”

“With another retirement on the board, we became even more overt about diversity – especially people of color. Our candidate pool had a strong list of women and particularly minority women. If I could have hired six board members I would have – it was an extraordinary list of people.”

“I think the hazard on many boards,” Poppe concludes, “is that they pick someone they know – your universe is too small if you are only one or two degrees from everyone else. We’ve got to open the aperture.”

“Having a board that is diverse in many dimensions improves your probability of a more successful company – that should be the priority.” ■



Susan N. Story

President and CEO, American Water Works

Susan N. Story, President and CEO of American Water Works, has been leading the largest publicly-traded U.S. water and waste utility since 2014.

"When you only have a couple of women on the board, gender becomes a big issue," says Story, "but when you have gender parity, the business becomes the big issue."

"American Water has been a company since 1886 - we were one of the first companies that actually had women on the board in the 1970s and 1980s.

Marilyn Ware was Chairman of the Board for several years in the 1990s. Study

after study have shown that if you have one woman on a board, typically it's very hard to make a difference because she tends to get drowned out. You get two, it gets better - but three tends to be the tipping point."

"Our American Water board is 50% female and we are one of only three S&P 500 companies with a female CEO and CFO combination. Real commitment to diversity is not just gender parity on our board or counting numbers but a genuine, passionate belief that this is how we run a better company--one that is financially sustainable for the long-term."

"It seems so fundamental to me. You can never understand your customers, your employees or your communities unless you have a group of people around the table who reflect them. It's a business imperative if you want your company to survive. And what do we do with business imperatives - we act on them!"

"Go out and find a couple of women with extraordinary backgrounds who would benefit your company and don't waste a lot of time. Basically commit, 'I am going to bring these two women on in the next three or six months and I am going to provide them with someone on the board and management who will help them get to know this company. Don't wait - people get paralyzed by analysis.' "

"When you only have a couple of women on the board, gender becomes a big issue; but when you have gender parity, *business* becomes the big issue."

"I'm very passionate about this," Story concludes, "because I know that at the end of the day we are highly successful because every person here - regardless of his or her background, gender, race, ability or sexual orientation - can develop to their fullest potential. And that's good for everyone!" ■



Ilene Gordon

Former Chairman, President and CEO, Ingredion Incorporated

Ilene Gordon, former Chairman, President and CEO of Ingredion Incorporated was the first female board member of five different boards starting in 1994. Fast forward to Ingredion where Gordon became Chairman, President and CEO in 2009 and the third female board member out of 10.

"When you get your first female board member it's important, but when you add the second and third you really add a lot of value," says Gordon.

"I could see the importance of diversity because not only did I become the third woman, there also was an African American and a Hispanic on the board.

I appreciated the benefits of all types of diversity – diversity in culture, gender and experience."

"We had term limits of 12 years and an age limit of 72 and as people reached those different milestones, the board and I were very focused on continuing the diversity push – we wanted diversity of thought because we were a global company, expanding via mergers and acquisitions and new product lines."

"The challenge is there aren't that many female CEOs of global companies – and they may be 'boarded up.' You have to be willing to go to the Fortune 1000 or to put on women who are running businesses, which is what I was doing when I first got my board experience."

"The number one criterion is to always keep your standards high – get people who are strong and analytical in their fields, are good listeners and know how to act in a team. By opening up the requirements we never had trouble finding diverse candidates."

"When you get your first female board member it's important, but when you add the second and third you really add a lot of value."

"By having both gender diversity and other types of diversity, you're showing that you're open to different ways of thinking about creating value for the company and your setting a leadership example for the rest of the company. The diversity of the board is the first step – it just leads to a very balanced atmosphere that is very focused on creating shareholder value." ■

RAISE THE BAR, DEMAND RESULTS

The investment community and exchange organizations have a unique role to play in accelerating gender balance in the boardroom. In the case of Nasdaq, there's a unique opportunity to "walk the talk" in front of member companies as a demonstration of what best practice looks like. In the case of investors, the opportunity is even greater. They can demand transparency and strongly encourage gender balance for one simple reason – better ROI.

Adena Friedman
Nasdaq

Bill McNabb
Vanguard

Ronald O'Hanley
State Street Corporation

Roger Ferguson
TIAA





Adena Friedman
President and CEO, Nasdaq

Adena Friedman, President and CEO of Nasdaq since 2017, is the first woman to lead a U.S. stock exchange

When Nasdaq demutualized in the mid-2000s and started its move towards becoming a public company, its role as a standard bearer for governance was magnified.

“Given Nasdaq’s position as an exchange and global technology leader, our governance is often seen as the standard that our listed companies look to,” says Friedman. “Board composition and diversity has become an increasing area of focus for the Nasdaq board’s nominating committee over the last five years. It has been a conscious choice to make sure we continue to recruit great women and diverse candidates as the opportunity to bring on new board members arises.”

“Our governance is often seen as the standard that our listed companies look to.”

“We ascribed to the work and statistical analysis that has been done around diversity in the C-suite and boardroom. The data showing that it drives better corporate performance speaks for itself, but it is also just inherently logical that the more diversity and views you bring into the company, the better decision making you’ll have.”

“The board agreed and then it was a matter of how to execute. There are so many accomplished women out there – but at the board level it’s about how you recruit. You have to set the tone and the expectations and don’t compromise on those expectations when it comes to having a diverse candidate pool.”

“Nasdaq hosts a blog called the Governance Clearinghouse that focuses on best practices in governance, and gender diversity is a frequent topic. One item the site looks at is diversity on public company boards and offers guidance on how to create more. Diversity on boards is an important element of showing our leadership, and it is a continuous journey.” ■



Bill McNabb
Former Chairman and CEO, Vanguard

Bill McNabb, former Chairman and CEO of Vanguard, says, “You need a high performing team culture that will last and that’s where diversity comes in.”

“I believe investors can be a voice for gender diversity in the boardroom. Our job is to steward five trillion dollars on behalf of more than 20 million people. We’ve actually studied it out in the marketplace and believe that broader inclusivity leads to better results.”

“There are plenty of women with the right level of experience and the right credentials. When a CEO says I can’t find women, well if you’re only looking at Fortune 500 CEOs then there aren’t enough women CEOs to populate the boards. If you think strategically about the experience and expertise you need, it gives you a lot more opportunities to think more broadly about candidates.”

McNabb acknowledges the evidence that having a more diverse board leads to better long-term results for investors with little downside, as long as it is not a “check the box” exercise. Further, he says there are plenty of women with the right level of experience and the right credentials when boards think a little bit differently about their needs.

“I believe investors can be a voice for gender diversity in the boardroom.”

“I believe that companies that do this the best will also perform the best. Companies that don’t think about this strategically do so at their peril. Big companies that drag their feet on this are going to probably find themselves dragging their feet in the marketplace as well.” ■



Ronald O'Hanley

President and CEO, State Street Corporation

Ronald O'Hanley, current President and CEO of State Street Corporation, previously served as President and CEO of State Street Global Advisors, the asset management company that put its belief in women on display for the world to see with the placement of the "Fearless Girl" statue near Wall Street in 2017. O'Hanley focuses on gender balance on boards and in senior management for a simple reason: better results.

"Empirical studies demonstrated the clear link between more women on boards and in senior leadership with better outcomes and better long-term value creation for companies," O'Hanley says.

"Our asset management business engages with companies on a number of issues to maximize the probability of attractive long-term returns, because our clients have long-term investment goals they need to meet. For us, effective, independent board leadership is foundational to long-term performance. Board effectiveness is tied to the diversity of thought that comes from having both men and women on boards who bring different experiences and perspectives. Therefore, we looked for evidence that companies are making progress toward increasing the number of women."

"Since we launched this campaign in 2017, the dialogue has changed from, 'Why do you people even care about this?' to 'Listen, we need help here to fix this problem,' which I think shows great progress. The first step toward solving a problem is admitting you have one."

"Some companies are really starting to think creatively about how to source more women. They are thinking, for example, about the highly talented women who have served as senior officers in the U.S. military over the last few decades. They are also acknowledging that boards do not need to be composed solely of sitting or former CEOs."

"You certainly want some sitting CEOs on boards. They provide great guidance and perspective, but boards also need industry and functional expertise, which extends the net to a bigger pool of qualified women. The boards that are making true progress are the ones that are thinking more creatively about finding talented women and, frankly, are willing to take a chance on a woman who does not necessarily check all of the traditional boxes. We need to widen the aperture."

"For us, effective, independent board leadership is foundational to long-term performance. Board effectiveness is tied to the diversity of thought that comes from having both men and women on boards."

"CEO sponsorship for female board candidates is vitally important. We all have a responsibility to move beyond our standard networks and to think of unconventional ways and places to identify qualified candidates so that we can continue to achieve the diversity of thinking needed to strengthen board effectiveness." ■



Roger Ferguson
President and CEO, TIAA

Roger Ferguson, President and CEO of TIAA, says, “We are very purposeful and intentional in how we approach diversity and inclusion. It’s core to our values and part of who we are. But we don’t leave it to chance – in fact just the opposite – we work on it daily.”

“We insist on diversity and we will not settle for less. For example, in our most recent searches, we were shown a really good slate of first-rate prospects, but we looked at it and said not enough diversity – go back and find us greater diversity and the search firm did.”

“40% of TIAA’s board is comprised of women, and I think over the next few years we may be one of the first Fortune 100 companies in our industry with over 50% of board seats held by women.”

“I look at my now 23-year-old daughter and know she’s talented with much to offer any employer. I certainly want to make sure she grows up in a professional world where she has choices and sees others like her in positions of management and in the boardroom.”

“For too long, corporations have sought out only recently retired CEOs to join their boards. But the fact is C-suite positions, especially the CEO role, are not well represented by women. Therefore, being more flexible and looking at a wider range of C-suite individuals (and their direct reports) is a wise way to approach board diversification. For some of these individuals it may be her first board experience, so let’s take a bit of a risk. It’s a smart risk because when you get to the C-suite of large companies, the women who work there are first rate business thinkers, strong business leaders, and they’ve all had many relevant experiences that will make them a good board member.”

“We insist on diversity and will not settle for less.”

“If you open the aperture just a little, in no way reducing your standards, you will access a world of highly talented board candidates.”

“Most companies know when their directors plan to step aside or retire, so they are always planning ahead. They know what their strategy is and what the skill gaps might be. You have to work a multi-year view of the likely transitions and what your organization is going to need. It requires thinking two or three years ahead.” ■

LEAD FROM THE TOP

Accelerating change means taking personal responsibility for making it happen. Ultimately successful change is a team effort from CEOs, non-gov chairs, directors, recruiters and senior managers – but the role of the CEO is crucial. These CEOs share their conviction on how making it happen means taking personal responsibility for change.

Peter T. Grauer
Bloomberg LP

Tricia Griffith
Progressive

Greg D. Carmichael
Fifth Third Bank

Fran Horowitz
Abercrombie & Fitch

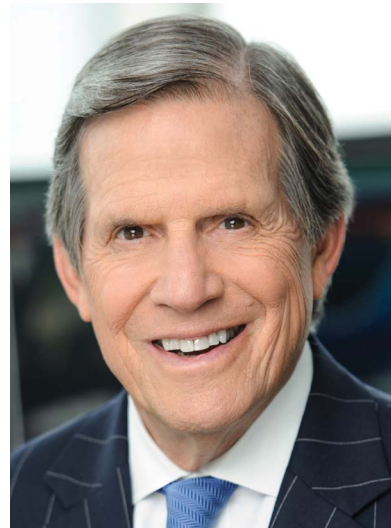
Alan B. Colberg
Assurant

Brian C. Cornell
Target

Christopher J. Nassetta
Hilton

Maggie Wilderotter
Frontier Communications





Peter T. Grauer
Chairman, Bloomberg LP

"Senior leaders have to be the catalyst for change," says Peter T. Grauer, Chairman of Bloomberg LP. "It's the responsibility of every board chair and CEO to set the tone by advancing women and changing the composition of their boards and leadership teams."

Five years ago, inspired by the business community in the UK, Grauer launched the U.S. 30% Club – a group of chairmen and CEOs committed to increasing the representation of women in boardrooms and senior management. The founding principle of the U.S. 30% Club is that change should be business-led

from the top of the organization.

"Board composition is an important factor in creating an environment where different opinions can be discussed with confidence. One woman on a board isn't enough - research shows that 30% is the critical mass required for a board to benefit from this environment."

"If anyone is recalcitrant about this issue, I think that shows a leadership void and a complete lack of understanding. The value of having a diverse and inclusive board is no longer contestable, the same way it's no longer contestable that companies need to focus on accessing the best talent in order to be competitive in a global market. Women are a critical part of that talent base."

"I had a remarkable and unique relationship with my mother. And, as I've said many times before, she was my harshest critic, my fiercest advocate, a source of advice in good times and bad. She had a tremendous impact on my life."

"It's the responsibility of every board chair and CEO to set the tone by advancing women and changing the composition of their boards and leadership teams."

"I really attribute much of my success with Bloomberg to the inputs from a diverse team including some really smart women, who have changed the way I think about things. The value that different opinions and views can bring to making more informed, impactful and all-around better decisions cannot be underestimated. There's a relentless move towards equality of opportunity and gender parity in all levels of organizations. When it comes to boards it's up to CEOs and board chairs to make it happen." ■



Tricia Griffith

CEO, Progressive

Progressive's Tricia Griffith is the company's first female CEO and the first woman to be named Fortune's Business Person of the Year in 2018. She worked her way up the ranks at Progressive from claims rep trainee three decades ago and her role as a champion of gender diversity and changing the culture was launched when she became Chief Human Resources Officer in 2002.

"My passion for diversity overall started in earnest when I took the HR role," says Griffith. "Our company stance had always been that diversity is absolutely the right thing to do for society, for customers and for the business. And we tend to think that good things happen naturally. It's not the case with diversity – you have to be more overt."

Griffith has doubled the board seats held by women since she became the CEO and a board director in 2016.

"It was a very intentional – very overt and very strategic. I wanted our board to reflect society and our customer base because I believe when you have that balance, great things can happen."

So Griffith worked with her Nominating and Governance Chair to plan replacements when retirements occurred.

"You have to be thinking far out in advance, and then you can make really smart decisions. As an example, while we didn't have an opening on our board, this fabulous cyber expert came to our attention. I flew down to Florida to meet her. And while she had no corporate board experience, she was smart as a whip and could add huge value. Again, you've got to be deliberate when an occasion presents itself. That's when our board went from 11 to 12 directors."

Griffith has learned that putting her own voice clearly in front of gender diversity at every level has benefitted her company.

"Young women inside and outside Progressive look to me. Recruiters tell me more women go for jobs at Progressive because they look on our website and see a female leader and the values we express. I underestimated how important that is – me being out in front on this issue is critical to the changes we want to make."

"CEOs need to do the work to make change happen. You have to commit."

"CEOs need to do the work to make change happen. If you sit there idling, changes are not going to happen. You have to commit. If you want a board that's diverse then you have to make a plan: here's how I'd like a board to look after so many years and here's how I'm going to make it happen. I wish people could be a fly on the wall in our boardroom. The conversations are so much more robust, and I know it's because of the incredible women we have added." ■



Greg D. Carmichael

Chairman, President and CEO, Fifth Third Bank

Greg D. Carmichael serves as Chairman, President and CEO of Fifth Third Bank. He became CEO and was appointed to the corporate board in July 2015, after 12 years with the company.

To Carmichael, it's about effort, putting a stake in the ground, exhausting all his options, and saying, "We are going to have diversity on our board."

When he took over as CEO, three new board directors were appointed, and all three were diverse.

"If you want to make it happen, you'll make it happen, because you've got to put effort into it and put a stake in the ground that says you're going to have diversity on your board."

"It starts with a mindset that diversity is extremely important for the success of our company. For me, that's a fundamental principle - not just at the board level but also with my executive leadership team. I have three female direct reports, which was unheard of ten years ago."

**"You have to be intentional. You have to be overt.
You have to commit and not accept an easy way out."**

"It's never been about the numbers. It's about the talent we need to be successful. It's extremely important that we have a diverse board to enable us to be competitive in the future."

"We actually switched to a search firm that specializes in diversity for our board searches. They've done a fantastic job of bringing in numerous diverse candidates who are extremely qualified."

"If you want to focus only on ex-CEOs, quite frankly, you're limiting yourself as to whom you can select. We recruit for the skill sets we need and make sure we have a board that has varying experiences to fill those needs."

"You have to be intentional. You have to be overt. You have to commit and not accept an easy way out. The more that becomes how you operate, the easier it gets. You want to be an attractive place to work, whether it is as part of the board, on the executive team, or in the broader organization. It's a lot easier to attract diverse talent when you have a diverse board." ■



Fran Horowitz

CEO, Abercrombie & Fitch

Fran Horowitz, CEO of Abercrombie & Fitch since 2017, was pleased to see that the Board already had significant female representation with three women when she joined.

"Diversity is not a second thought for us and I've always had that mindset - embracing diversity makes us stronger and allows us to reflect the broad and varied backgrounds of our associates and our customers to drive better outcomes."

"Diverse candidates are always part of initial conversations with any search partner, whether it's for Board seats or other positions. I believe it's important to have a balanced slate of highly qualified individuals, who might happen to be women, and if you don't specify to search firms how essential that is for your company, you don't get the right candidate base. In seeking additional directors and working with search firms, diversity has been very high on the Board's priority list."

"If you don't specify to search firms how essential a diverse slate is for your business, you don't get the right candidate base."

"The Board does go outside their industry sector as they see highly talented pool of candidates who can add value given their relevant experience." ■



Alan B. Colberg
President and CEO, Assurant

Alan B. Colberg, President and CEO of Assurant, says, “Diversity is an issue the CEO has to own. You need partners to help you, but you can’t delegate it.”

“When I became CEO in 2015, we had two women on the board and only one of my direct reports was a woman, and you can guess that role - HR. So, one of the first things I did was to evaluate the capabilities and diversity of my management team and used that as an opportunity to broaden the expanse of the team’s skill set and experience. I think about diversity not just in terms of gender or race, but even more so as diversity of thought and experience. After

my review, I elevated a woman to the leadership team and gave her a dramatically bigger role. The CEO has to make some decisions the organization might not be comfortable with and do it anyway, and in the right way.”

“There’s always going to be resistance from the organization – people are just more comfortable hiring and promoting people like themselves. Unless leadership leans in and forces some changes, it’s really hard to get traction. But you get a little bit of a flywheel going when you have several strong women in management and several strong women on the board, and it takes some top down management to make that happen.”

“I feel if you want to inspire women to join the company, you have to have women leaders; if you want to attract African American talent, you need to have African American leaders. We insist on a diverse slate, not only for the board and direct reports, but also for the top 200 positions in the company. When there’s a close call, I’ll go for the diverse candidate every time.”

Colberg started first with ensuring he had a diverse management team which the board could look to and replicate. He always believed that you needed to have different perspectives, people who make you a little uncomfortable and you need to listen to them. He looked to mitigate having an organization exclusively made up of people with similar backgrounds – and group think.

“Don’t wait for others to do it – take personal responsibility. You have to be the change you want to see.”

“If you want to build a lasting organization that’s going to be relevant over time – which is all any of us can aspire to – you have to do it. Remember the Mahatma Gandhi quote, which is ‘be the change you want to see.’ That’s what I would say to CEOs: don’t wait for others to do it – take personal responsibility. You have to be the change you want to see.” ■



Brian C. Cornell
Chairman and CEO, Target

Brian C. Cornell, Chairman and CEO of Target since 2014, increased the number of women directors on his board in his first 18 months.

“We made a number of changes to board structure at Target that helped bring new perspectives, enhance board effectiveness and strengthen the board and leadership team relationship,” says Cornell. “Included in those moves was bringing on four new directors including two female directors, who are also ethnically diverse, with valuable expertise in areas critical to our strategy. They joined three female directors already in place, each of whom had been on the

board for at least a decade.”

“When I arrived at Target, the board and leadership team had just completed the most comprehensive evaluations of Target’s business in company history. From there we worked quickly to chart the right strategic course for the enterprise – and diversity and inclusion were mission critical throughout this process.”

“While our numbers are certainly higher than most of the retail industry, there is still room to improve. We have a longstanding company commitment to diversity and inclusion and hold inclusivity as a core value. Female representation on our board isn’t a new concept. Since I arrived at Target, I’m proud that we have increased our gender and racial/ethnic diversity on the board as well as on our leadership team. Maintaining a rapid pace of change is important, we can’t take our foot off the gas just because we are pleased with our progress. It’s about doing more of what’s working and going faster.”

“I have two pieces of advice for CEOs who are assessing the case for diversity and gender balance in the boardroom. First, recognize that your team and leadership should reflect your customer base. Second, I can’t emphasize enough the importance of male advocates when it comes to advancing women. This is not a time for men to step back.”

“We can’t take our foot off the gas just because we are pleased with our progress – it’s about doing more of what’s working and going faster.”

“We need to continue building great working relationships with female colleagues and advocate for them with our peers and leaders. Diversity and inclusion is more than a Target commitment, it’s a personal priority for me.” ■



Christopher J. Nassetta

President and CEO, Hilton

Chris Nassetta, President and CEO of Hilton, says he has always believed in the importance of gender parity – both internally across all levels of business and in the boardroom.

“When I joined Hilton twelve years ago, there were a number of opportunities for us to increase our focus in that area, which is why we set a bold strategy to work toward a more balanced board. I am proud to say we have now achieved gender parity, with 50% of our board comprised of women,” says Nassetta.

“Additionally, our three standing committees – Audit, Compensation and Nominating & Corporate Governance – are chaired by women. Each of our board members contribute tremendously to our strategy and governance, while also being highly accomplished business leaders in their own right. At the end of the day, we are a business of people serving people, and that means that diversity and inclusion must always be a priority for us.”

“We’ve been fortunate to have board members who are extremely supportive of our business goals, and increasing the representation of women directors. Our leadership team collectively recognized the value that this change would bring, and we worked together to make it a reality.”

“Our Nominating & Corporate Governance committee, with the support of our entire board, made gender diversity part of our recruiting requirements.

“Making gender diversity a formal priority during our recruitment process made clear to candidates how seriously we took our commitment toward a more balanced board.”

“Having more women on our board and in corporate and property leadership has a huge impact for our 400,000 team members around the world. Not only does it show that we are serious about our commitment to diversity and inclusion, it also paints a picture of all that is possible and of the opportunities that are open to aspiring women leaders at every level of our organization. We know that our team members appreciate the investments we’ve made in our culture, as evidenced by our consistent recognition as a great place to work in every region of the world, including being rated the #1 best workplace in the U.S.” ■



Maggie Wilderotter

Former Executive Chairman and CEO, Frontier Communications

"I don't just talk about it, I do something about it," says Maggie Wilderotter, former Executive Chairman and CEO of Frontier Communications, a director of over 30 public companies since the age of 28 and a champion of gender balance in the boardroom.

"I was a trailblazer. It was an early time for women to get on boards – and once you're in a boardroom and you're competent and capable, you build trust and your male counterparts can see that women add value, bring different perspectives and help directors and companies make better decisions. That opens the

door for more women."

"So, I always had one hand out in front of me moving myself forward and reached my other hand back to yank up another woman along with me. I've put a lot of women on boards – even today because I get a lot of calls and I'm full up, but I always have a list of five other great women these boards should consider."

"Frontier was a great experience for me. It was a turnaround. We took the company from about \$750 million in revenue to over \$10 billion in revenue, and when I retired as CEO we had an 85% total shareholder return – the highest in the telecom industry."

"One of the factors that contributed to this success was a transformed diverse senior management, including the board. When I came in, I was the only woman in a senior level position other than a vice president of human resources among the top 500 managers. Within a 24-month window, 50% of my operating leaders with P&L responsibility were women and 50% of my direct reports were women. We replaced 10 of the 12 board members and wound up with five women on the board and three people of color."

"I did it because I knew that's the way you win. The way you grow revenue and profitability is by being aligned and in touch with your customers and employees. We were in about 40,000 communities in rural and suburban America and I wanted the board and my leadership to reflect the decision making in households and the small and medium businesses we served."

"I always had one hand out in front of me moving myself forward and reached back my other hand to yank up another woman along with me."

"Boards today have a very different role than they did when I went on my first board at the age of 28. Boards are a lot more accountable. They have to be more transparent and they have to be broader in their skill sets and their decision-making capability. They have to have tenacity and grit, and they truly have to be more courageous. They need the best talent they can get, and gender diversity helps get it." ■



he Women's Forum of New York is an invitation-only organization of more than 500 women representing the highest levels of achievement across all professional sectors and spheres of influence in our city.

Founded in 1974, when women were first entering the executive ranks, today's Women's Forum members are recognized among New York's thought leaders, influencers, trailblazers, policymakers, change agents, power brokers, innovators, icons, creators and business builders.

Forum membership provides extraordinary women with the opportunity to network with a diverse array of peers, to help one another succeed and to share unique experiences. We believe the potential for cross-collaboration among our diverse membership and generations of members ignites progress and transformation for all of us.

Our organization is apolitical and non-partisan. Our membership of diverse leaders is unified by shared values and beliefs as reflected in our Credo:

- ▶ We believe the potential for women is unlimited and opportunities should be as well.
- ▶ We believe leadership has no gender.
- ▶ We believe in equal pay for equal work.
- ▶ We believe women inspiring women never gets old.
- ▶ We believe women helping women never gets tired.
- ▶ We revere the women who blazed trails before us and revel in those who come after.
- ▶ We believe our diversity is our strength.
- ▶ We celebrate each other's success.
- ▶ We believe successful women can be successful friends.



Janice Reals Ellig

CEO, Ellig Group

Chair, Breakfast of Corporate Champions

President, Women's Forum of New York 2010-12



Janice Reals Ellig is CEO of Ellig Group, a global executive search firm in New York City, whose focus is *Reimagining Search* and dedicated to increasing the placement of women and underrepresented executives on boards and C-suites by 2025. Named by *Bloomberg Businessweek* as one of "The World's Most Influential Headhunters," she is a frequent media guest, has published numerous articles and has co-authored two books: *Driving The Career Highway* and *What Every Successful Woman Knows*. Janice's corporate experience includes Pfizer, Citibank and Ambac Financial Group. Janice is a Board Director of the National YMCA, Past Chair of the YMCA Board of Greater New York; Trustee Emeritus of the Actors Fund; and Chair of the University of Iowa Center for Advancement (UICA).

Carolyn Carter

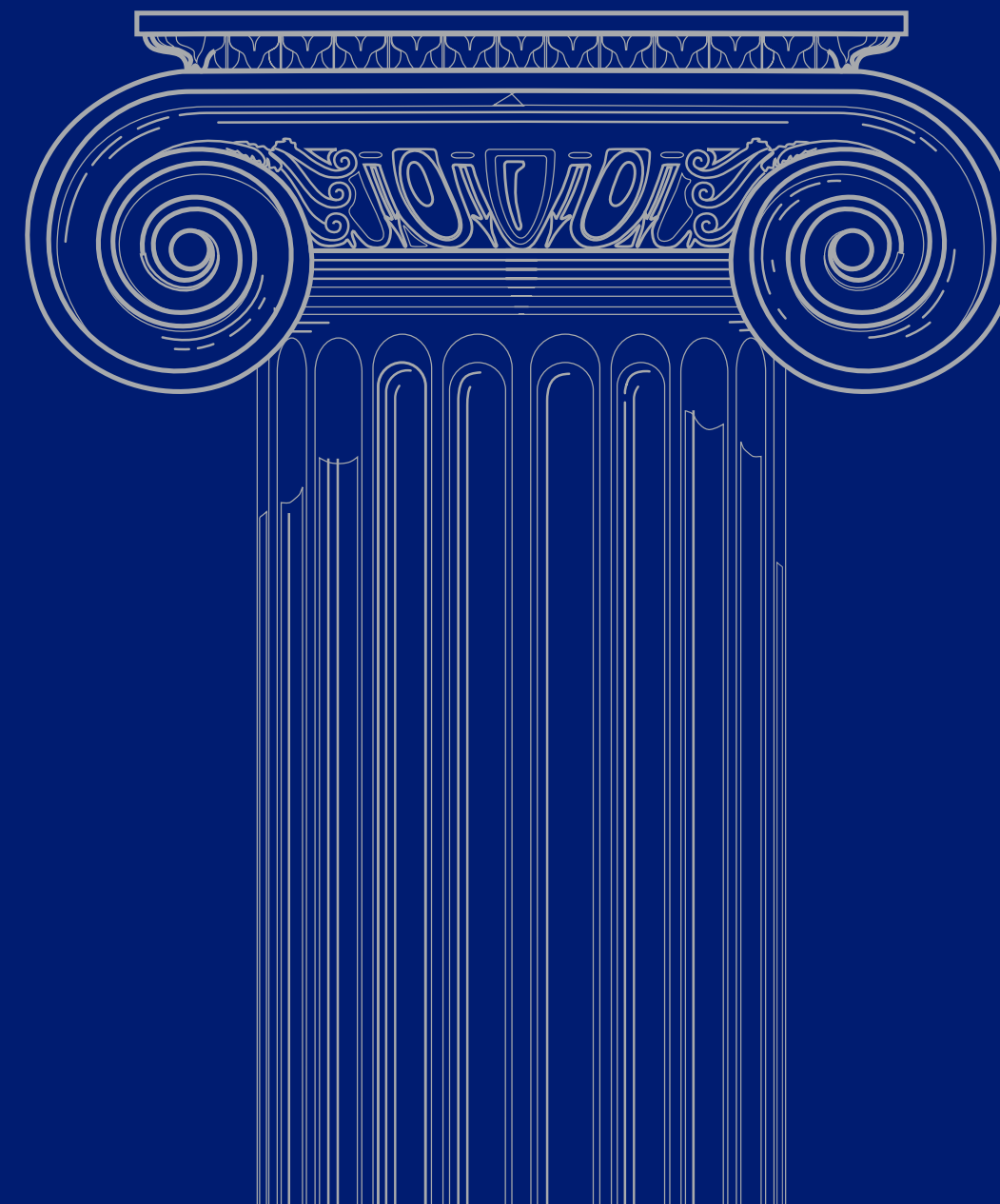
Former CEO, Grey Group, Europe, Middle East and Africa

Co-Chair, Breakfast of Corporate Champions

President, Women's Forum of New York 2016-18



Carolyn Carter's career in advertising spanned 35 years culminating in her position as CEO of Grey Group, Europe, Middle East and Africa from 2000-2010. Grey became part of WPP, the world leader in communications services in 2005. Carolyn's career concentrated in managing global teams for leading global brands, expanding network operations into developing markets and building and evolving creative capabilities. Grey EMEA was named Agency Network of the Year for communications effectiveness by the EACA a record five consecutive times during her tenure. Carolyn served domestically on the industry's self regulatory body, the National Advertising Review Board and was a regular speaker at international conferences. She has served on non-profit boards of HeartShare Human Services, Spoleto USA and The Actors Fund. She is a current director of the International Women's Forum.



“We started by looking for the skillsets we needed to transform our business and we found some very talented women with those skill sets.”

► **Hubert Joly**, Executive Chairman and Former CEO, **Best Buy**

“Women just bring different perspectives to a board. They ask different questions and they push the organization to have conversations I’m not so sure would have happened if they had not been on the board.”

► **Margaret M. Keane**, CEO, **Synchrony**

“I believe in the concept of critical mass – multiple women at the table, not just one, changes everything... it’s a real game changer.”

► **Kevin A. Lobo**, Chairman and CEO, **Stryker**

“To attract the best women and diverse candidates to your company, they have to have role models they can look up to and a conviction that there’s no limit to what they can achieve.”

► **Terry J. Lundgren**, Former Chairman and CEO, **Macy’s**

“Gender diversity has been a huge priority in having a culture that reflects Voya’s values and reflects a place that people want to be a part of.”

► **Rodney O. Martin, Jr.**, Chairman and CEO, **Voya Financial**

“It makes no logical sense to me that more companies are not moving toward a gender-balanced board.”

► **Eileen McDonnell**, Chairman and CEO, **Penn Mutual**

“Big companies that drag their feet on this are probably going to find themselves dragging their feet in the marketplace as well.”

► **Bill McNabb**, Former Chairman and CEO, **Vanguard**

“Diversity in the boardroom helps shape a culture of diversity that extends from the leadership to management and ultimately throughout a company.”

► **Beth Mooney**, Chairman and CEO, **KeyCorp**

“Making gender diversity a formal priority during our recruitment process made clear to candidates how seriously we took our commitment toward a more balanced board.”

► **Christopher J. Nassetta**, President & CEO, **Hilton**

“There’s real empirical data that shows conclusively that more women on boards and more women in senior leadership roles results in better outcomes and better long term value creation for companies.”

► **Ronald O’Hanley**, President and CEO, **State Street Corporation**

“The hazard on many Boards is picking who you know – your universe is too small if you are only one or two degrees from everyone else on the Board – we’ve got to open the aperture.”

► **Patricia Poppe**, President & CEO, **CMS Energy**

“We know the biggest untapped pool of skilled talent is women and we need to act on that.”

► **Jonas Prising**, Chairman and CEO, **ManpowerGroup**

“The key to achieving gender parity on your Board is to create opportunity through a committed process of Board refreshment.”

► **Teresa Rasmussen**, CEO and Director, **Thrivent Financial**

“We adopted a plan that could keep our Board relevant and competitive going forward, creating new opportunities for Board refreshment in set time frames.”

► **Jack F. Remondi**, CEO, **Navient**

“When you only have a couple of women on the board, gender becomes a big issue; but when you have gender parity, business becomes the big issue.”

► **Susan N. Story**, President and CEO, **American Water Works**

“You have to bring a bit of boldness into your leadership and sometimes take some calculated risks... I’ve never regretted it when I’ve put a woman into a senior role.”

► **Christian Ulbrich**, CEO, **JLL**

“I always had one hand out in front of me moving myself forward and reached back my other hand to yank up another woman along with me.”

► **Maggie Wilderotter**, Former Executive Chairman and CEO, **Frontier Communications**

