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CEOs Align on the Long-Term Business Imperative: Leaders Must Watch Today's Business & Political Issues, but are Responsible for Tomorrow's Social Issues

12th Annual Board of Boards Concludes in New York City

February 27, 2017, New York, NY—Sixty CEOs who are a part of **CECP: The CEO Force for Good**—a coalition of leading companies that collectively represent \$7 trillion in annual revenue—met at [CECP's](#) 12th annual [Board of Boards](#) to examine critical success factors in building the business for the long-term. Key takeaways from this closed-door session included:

- **Current political climate:**
 - Leaders have the responsibility to be attentive to business needs to maintain economic growth--such as taxes, infrastructure, and trade, but need to stick with their corporate values and monitor social issues—such as sustainability and employment/education/training
 - Business' role is to hold government accountable and help educate it on complex issues; share insights on unintended implications of actions
 - It's in companies' best interest to be at the table; there is optimism as there are "tailwinds, not headwinds" for business
- **Long-termism:**
 - It takes years of doing the right thing to demonstrate values and define a company
 - Short termism in response to reporting and regulation, activist investors, and more, can be combatted by driving long-term value creation
 - Long-term conversations can be shaped by setting intermediate-term goals and sharing quarterly updates
- **Stakeholders:**
 - Companies are responding to stakeholder needs and providing choices they are looking for, including greater transparency and those guided by a sense of wellness
 - Employees take great pride in the difference a company makes; it's the place to they want to show up to work

Participating companies generated nearly **\$1 trillion in revenue last year** and represent approximately **\$1.3 trillion in market capitalization, employ 2 million individuals** around the world, and have led cross-sector initiatives on disaster relief, sustainability, education, employee engagement, health and wellness, veterans, economic development, and more.

Live-polling results show:

- **Sixty percent of CEOs feel equipped or well-equipped** to meet expectations in the current business and sociopolitical environment.
- Asked to identify **what bold moves** they could make toward sustainable business leadership, **37% of CEOs said “further integrating my company’s values into incentives and practices”** while **20% said “committing to public reporting of my company’s goals and progress toward them.”**
- A key question in the **Edelman Trust Barometer 2017** asked, **“which action most effectively builds trust in a company?”** When asked that same question at Board of Boards, **49% of CEOs in attendance said “ethical business practices”**.
- When asked, **“how far in the future is thinking long-term,”** CEOs consider three – four years long-term (46%). However, in 2017, 40% of CEOs now think five to six years ahead, up from 30% in 2016 (Board of Boards 2016 live-polling results).
- Among CEOs in attendance, **64% said that purpose is a powerful motivator for their companies** (up from 61% in 2015).

CEO Force for Good honorees who were recognized at the event and led discussions among attendees included:

- **Michael L. Corbat**, CEO, [Citi](#)
- **Brian C. Cornell**, Chairman & CEO, [Target](#)
- **Chad Dickerson**, CEO, President, & Chair, [Etsy](#)
- **Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey**, President & CEO, MD, MBA, [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)
- **Bill McNabb**, Chairman & CEO, [Vanguard](#)
- **Denise Morrison**, President & CEO, [Campbell Soup Company](#)
- **Anne M. Mulcahy**, Chairman, Board of Trustees, [Save the Children](#); Former Chairman and CEO, [Xerox Corporation](#)

Additional conversation leaders included

- **Mitch Barns**, CEO, [Nielsen](#)
- **Dominic Barton**, Global Managing Director, [McKinsey & Company](#)
- **Barbara Byrne**, Vice Chairman, Investment Bank, [Barclays](#)
- **Richard Edelman**, President and CEO, [Edelman](#)
- **Alex Gorsky**, Chairman & CEO, [Johnson & Johnson](#)
- **Andrew Liveris**, Chairman & CEO, [The Dow Chemical Company](#)
- **Kip Tindell**, Co-Founder & Chairman, [The Container Store](#)



Moderators included:

- **Gillian Tett**, US Managing Editor, [Financial Times](#)
- **Adi Ignatius**, Editor-in-Chief, [Harvard Business Review](#)

“Board of Boards provides an inimitable forum for conversations and connections between CEOs that recognize the fundamental importance of infusing stakeholder needs into core business strategy,” said **Daryl Brewster, CEO, CECP**. “As we move forward into a new year with many unknowns, business is expected to lead with diplomacy and compassion, and we know they will do so smartly.”

During a series of board meeting-style conversations, CEOs exchanged ideas and best practices on subjects vital to the world’s leading and most enduring companies, including: **the evolution of the Board, the corporate role in wellness, creating a people- and profit-focused business strategy, developing long-term business plans, and the case for long-term value creation**. CECP also [shared research](#) that found that – across the board – **companies that implemented environmental, social, and governance (ESG) measures into company operations demonstrated improved year-over-year financial performance**, particularly when compared to companies not part of the CEO Force for Good.

New this year is the inaugural CEO Investor Forum (CIF), convening in the afternoon of the Board of Boards, where several CEOs from leading corporations across many industries are **presenting their long-term plans to nearly 200 strategic investors**, collectively representing **more than \$20 trillion in assets under management**. The forum – hosted by CECP’s [Strategic Investor Initiative](#) (SII) – is the first step in the effort to **move trillions in capital** by working with leading companies to develop and deliver their long-term plans to strategic investors. The second CEO Investor Forum is scheduled for **September 19, 2017** in NYC.

The morning’s proceedings also included a formal presentation of CECP’s [Force for Good Awards](#), given to current and former CEOs who lead on making corporate social strategy a priority in their companies and communities. This year’s CEO honorees were selected by the CECP [Board of Directors](#) and presented at the Board of Boards event in front of the honorees’ peers.

The convening was held at the Time Warner Center in New York City and the event was limited to [CECP CEOs](#). The agenda and list of attendees [can be found here](#). An Executive Summary including live-polling results, images, and highlight videos will be available on the [CECP website](#) following the event.



Peter L. Malkin, Chairman Emeritus, Empire State Realty Trust, and **Sanford Weill**, Chairman Emeritus, Citigroup Inc., who were instated as Co-Chairs of the Directors Emeritus of CECP, were honored for their long-standing service to the organization at the annual Chairman’s Reception at the Empire State Building on Sunday, February 26, 2017. Peter L. Malkin, along with Paul Newman, the actor and philanthropist, founded CECP. Sandy Weill was the third Chairman of CECP and served during a transformative time for the organization.

The date of the **2018 13th annual Board of Boards is February 26** in New York City.

CECP is grateful for the generosity of the event supporters **Newman’s Own Foundation, PwC US, and USAA**. CECP also thanks the Empire State Building for lighting in CECP blue this evening.

Note to Editors: Select CEO attendees, including award winners and speakers, and CECP executives are available for comment following the event. Please contact Jackie Albano, jalbano@cecp.co, 646-863-1926 to arrange interviews.

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About CECP: The CEO Force for Good

CECP is a CEO led coalition that believes that a company’s social strategy—how it engages with key stakeholders including employees, communities, investors, and customers—determines company success. Founded in 1999 by actor and philanthropist Paul Newman and other business leaders to create a better world through business, CECP has grown to a movement of more than 200 of the world’s largest companies that represent \$7 trillion in revenues, \$18.6 billion in societal investment, 13 million employees, and \$15 trillion in assets under management. CECP helps companies transform their social strategy by providing customized connections and networking, counsel and support, benchmarking and trends, and awareness building and recognition. For more information, visit <http://cecp.co>.