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World's Leading CEOs Examine Purpose-Driven Leadership in Today's Global Climate

NEW YORK, February 27, 2025- Discussing purpose-driven leadership in today's global climate, leading CEOs who are a part of a coalition of more than 200 of the world's largest companies collectively representing \$9.6 trillion in annual revenue and \$37 billion in total community investment attended Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose's® (CECP) Board of Boards this week in New York, New York.

This closed-door, CEO-only session provided a **distinct opportunity for CEOs** to discuss how they can connect their investments in their people and communities and their corporate purpose to the business strategy. CEO discussion leaders included:

- Doug McMillon, President & CEO, **Walmart Inc**
- Hans Vestberg, Chairman & CEO, **Verizon**
- Noel Wallace, President & CEO, **Colgate-Palmolive Company**
- Richard Edelman, President & CEO, **Edelman**
- Roger Ferguson, Immediate Past President & CEO, **TIAA**
- Yvette Ostolaza, Management Committee Chair & Executive Committee Member, **Sidley Austin LLP**

Key Takeaways

- During live polling, CEOs indicated that these top four words describe how they are feeling in the current sociopolitical environment: anxious, uncertain, concerned, and optimistic. Three months ago, "optimism" led the way.
- Companies may want to identify fewer societal KPIs where they can make a greater difference and impact, rather than doing it all. Too many is too theoretical.
- What businesses do locally matters; these actions need to be consistent with a company's values, such as aligning volunteering to business strategy. With trust, companies can increase market share through services like volunteering, which leads to a better reputation.
- Talk to those who do not like you; that's where the innovation and insights often come from.
- Purpose, values, and culture matter and are a North Star, especially in tough times.

"CEOs utilized the Board of Boards conversation to openly discuss their journeys, achievements, and obstacles in shaping and integrating corporate purpose into their business strategies," said Daryl Brewster, CEO of **CECP**. "These top executives use their corporate purpose as a guiding principle to steer through today's challenges, which is more important than ever as they are operating in a rapidly changing and uncertain world."

The event was limited to CECF CEOs, and the list of attendees included:

- **Arianna Huffington**, Founder & CEO, **Thrive Global**
- **Brian Fahrney**, Chair Elect of the Executive Committee, **Sidley Austin LLP**
- **Brian Shaw**, CEO, **Discovery Education**
- **Calvin Butler**, President & CEO, **Exelon Corporation**
- **Chris Maloof**, CEO, **Benevity**
- **Christiana Riley**, CEO of Americas and Management Board Member, **Santander Bank**
- **Daniel Crowley**, Chairman, President & CEO, **Triumph Group**
- **David Best**, President & CEO, **Newman's Own**
- **Doug Conant**, Founder & CEO, **ConantLeadership**
- **Hamdi Ulukaya**, Founder & CEO, **Chobani, LLC**
- **Henrietta Fore**, Chairman & CEO, **Holsman International**
- **Jaclyn Leibl-Cote**, CEO & President, **Collette**
- **Jason Stevens**, Executive Vice President, **Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas)**
- **Jessica Foster**, CEO, **RHR International**
- **Lawrence Coben**, Chair, President & CEO, **NRG Energy**
- **Margaret Rogers**, CEO, **Pariveda**
- **Mark Pearson**, CEO, **Equitable**
- **Mauricio Guitérrez**, Former President & CEO, **NRG Energy, Inc**
- **Michael Pisani**, CEO, **Jimmy's Gourmet Bakery**
- **Neha Parikh**, Former CEO, **Waze** and President, **Expedia Group**
- **Rohit Kapoor**, Chairman & CEO, **EXL Service**
- **Scott Boatwright**, CEO, **Chipotle Mexican Grill**
- **Steve Beard**, Chairman & CEO, **Adtalem Global Education**
- **Theodore Dysart**, Managing Director, **Russell Reynolds**
- **William Cyr**, CEO, **Freshpet**
- **William McNabb**, Former Chairman & CEO, **Vanguard**

"It's always meaningful when I have the opportunity to join other CEOs at Board of Boards to discuss our journeys, achievements and obstacles in integrating corporate purpose into our business strategies," said Calvin Butler, President and CEO, **Exelon**. "This network of top executives is harnessing the collective power of its responsible, purpose-driven businesses when navigating today's toughest challenges. And when we do, our customers and our communities benefit."

This year's 2025 Force for Good honorees, recognized at the event, are:

- **Doug McMillon**, President & CEO, **Walmart Inc.**
- **Hans Vestberg**, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, **Verizon**
- **Noel Wallace**, Chairman, President & CEO, **Colgate-Palmolive Company**

Force for Good honorees advocate on behalf of their companies to create a better world through business, and the recognition acknowledges a CEO's leadership in the community and within their companies.

Additionally, this year's Lawrence A. Wien Legacy Award honoree is Roger Ferguson, Immediate Past President & CEO, **TIAA**. This acknowledgement highlights many of his contributions to making a significant positive impact on society through his leadership in finance, economics, and corporate responsibility. Specifically, as Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve, Ferguson played a critical role in maintaining financial stability, especially in responding to the economic impact of 9/11. Ferguson has also been a strong advocate for diversity in corporate leadership and financial services. He has worked to create opportunities for underrepresented groups in the industry. This exemplifies CECP founder Paul Newman's belief that businesses can always "do more", where CEOs purpose-driven and values-first work raises the bar.

"Sidley is honored to once again host CECP's Board of Boards and to facilitate discussions with some of the most influential and innovative global leaders," said Yvette Ostolaza, Management Committee Chair, **Sidley Austin LLP**. "Sidley is focused on providing the highest level of service to our clients, while also giving back to our communities and cultivating the next generation of civic leaders. We are proud of our Built to Lead® Civic Leadership Academy, attorney development program. We are also proud to be a member of and to support CECP, which convenes leaders to discuss purpose-driven trends and share experiences, and is invaluable in positively impacting the communities we serve."

CECP thanks its sponsors for their generous support of 25th anniversary year: **Visa Foundation, Bank of America, Exelon, Panasonic, RHR International, StateFarm, Tata Consultancy Services, Vanguard, and Wynn Resorts**. CECP also thanks **Sidley Austin LLP** for hosting the event, and the Empire State Building for lighting in CECP Blue.

The 2026 Board of Boards will be held in New York City. Interested CEOs can reach out to info@cecp.co.

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About Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose (CECP)

Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP) is the only business counsel and network dedicated to driving measurable returns on purpose. We promote responsible purpose-driven business as it increases customer loyalty, builds employee engagement, improves brand trust, attracts top talent, connects with strategic investors, and contributes to the bottom line.

More than 200 of the world's leading companies seek to improve their return on purpose through access to CECP's solutions in insights and benchmarking. With our companies, we harness the power of purpose for business, stakeholders, and society.

For more information, visit <http://cecp.co>.