
SIMMONS

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The preeminent authority on women's leadership

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Leading *with* Purpose

Thursday
April 13, 2017



Diane von Furstenberg
*Fashion Icon, Women's Rights
Advocate and Philanthropist*



Marlee Matlin
Actress and Humanitarian



Reshma Saujani
*Founder and CEO
Girls Who Code*



**Sister Rosemary
Nyirumbe**
*Director, Saint Monica Girls'
Tailoring Center*

Leaders

Courtney Dornell
Director of Marketing & Sales, Otis Latin America

At United Technologies, we believe that diversity and inclusion fosters open minds, differing perspectives and a willingness to welcome new ideas – the kind that drive the innovation we need to create and deliver the best solutions for our customers and for the marketplace.

Angela Li
General Manager, EMSI, Carrier

We are committed to developing the full talents of our entire workforce to ensure that women don't just strive but thrive as leaders.

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Lily Fu
General Manager, China Customer Training Center, Pratt & Whitney

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the 2017 Simmons Leadership Conference, long recognized as *the world's premier leadership conference for women*.

Now in its 38th year, today's program celebrates *Leading with Purpose*, focusing on the many ways that women are redefining the meaning of power and success.

For some of the exceptional speakers on this year's roster, this has meant persevering under daunting circumstances to achieve seemingly impossible goals, driven by their commitment to a purpose larger than themselves. In this category are Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe, the Ugandan nun who has given new hope of self-sufficiency and self-worth to thousands of women and girls ravaged by war; and Diana Nyad, world-class endurance swimmer who refused to give up on her lifelong dream of making the treacherous Cuba-to-Florida swim. Other speakers have had to triumph over less physically perilous, but no less difficult, conditions. Heading up this list is Diane von Furstenberg, designer of the iconic wrap dress, who managed to pull off one of the fashion industry's greatest comebacks.

Over the course of the day, inspiring keynote speakers offer candid stories about their experiences on the way to the top, as well as principles for success to help you pursue your own professional path. There is a choice of lively panel discussions, signature dialogues, and skill-building workshops on topics ranging from business strategy and innovation to career management and personal branding. In between formal sessions are chances to meet the speakers at book signings, visit the corporate marketplace, enjoy a delicious lunch, and network with some of the 3,400 aspiring women who attend the conference from companies and organizations around the world.

The Simmons Leadership Conference has once again partnered with extraordinary sponsors, without whose support we could not provide the high-quality programming we deliver each year. Please allow some time to visit their booths in the corporate marketplace. We are most grateful for their generosity and participation in today's event. In this ever-changing world, Simmons has always sought to respond to the needs of our sponsors and audience. We are pleased to announce that we will once again be bringing this transformative experience to the international stage. The second annual International Simmons Leadership Conference will be held in Geneva, Switzerland on October 26-27, 2017.

The Simmons Leadership Conference is a must-experience for all women leaders and for men who support their success. Most importantly, all proceeds support scholarships for students in graduate programs at Simmons College. Thank you for joining us today!

Sincerely,

Helen G. Drinan '75LS, '78SM
President
Simmons College



Judy Benjamin
Executive Director
Simmons Leadership Conference



The Day at a Glance

6:45 – 7:45

Check-in & Continental Breakfast

7:45 – 8:30

Welcoming Remarks

Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

Joyce Kulhawik

Master of Ceremonies

Helen G. Drinan

President

Simmons College

Karen Quintos

Executive Vice President and Chief Customer Care Officer

Dell

Marianna Accomando

Vice President of Sales and Assistant General Manager

Seaport Hotel and World Trade Center

Jill Larsen

Senior Vice President of Strategic Talent Acquisition, People Planning and Services HR

Cisco Systems, Inc.

Elizabeth B. Amato

Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer

United Technologies Corporation

Maggie Ruvoldt

Executive Vice President and Regional General Manager

2U

Leslie Maher

Vice President and General Manager, Enterprise Servers and Converged Systems

Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Dawn Frazier-Bohnert

Senior Vice President, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

Liberty Mutual Insurance

Barbara Fedida

Senior Vice President for Talent and Business, ABC News

The Walt Disney Company

8:35 – 9:25

Opening Keynote: *Challenging the Status Quo*

Nina Tassler, Former Chair, CBS Entertainment

Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

9:35 – 10:55

Concurrent Morning Sessions

1. Signature Dialogue: *Courage Under Fire*

Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe with Raquel Eatmon

Harborview Ballroom, Seaport WTC, Plaza Level

2. Gender Equity: *Leveling the Playing Field*

Josh Levs

Lighthouse I, Seaport Hotel, Plaza Level

3. Executive Presence: *Changing Perception, Building Credibility*

Karen Hough

Plaza Ballroom, Seaport Hotel, Plaza Level

4. Business Panel: *Leading with Purpose*

Panelists: Barbara Fedida, Senior Vice President for Talent and Business, ABC News, The Walt Disney Company

Megan Schneider Gift, Vice President, Corporate Communications, 2U

Gail Jackson, Vice President, Talent, Inclusion and Engagement, United Technologies Corporation

Bryan Palma, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Cisco Advanced Services, Cisco Systems, Inc.

Moderator: Stacy Blake-Beard, Ph.D., Professor, Simmons College

Seaport Ballroom, Seaport Hotel, Mezzanine

5. Career Management: *Own Your WOW!™*

Roshini Rajkumar

Waterfront Ballroom, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

6. Leadership Lessons: *How to Move Like a Maverick*

Jade Simmons

Amphitheater, Seaport WTC, Mezzanine

7. Team Development: *Changing How We Work, Lead, and Innovate*

Susan Cain

Cityview Ballroom, Seaport WTC, Plaza Level

10:55 – 11:25

Meet the Speakers Book-signing Break

Corporate Marketplace, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

11:25 – 12:15

Morning Keynote: *Accept No Limits*

Marlee Matlin, Actress & Humanitarian

Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

12:15 – 1:30

Luncheon

Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

1:30 – 2:20

Afternoon Keynote: *Find a Way*

Diana Nyad, Author, Journalist and Long-Distance Swimmer

Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

2:30 – 3:50 Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

8. Signature Dialogue: *Learning the Art of Imperfection*

Reshma Saujani with Nora Poggi
Harborview Ballroom, Seaport WTC, Plaza Level

9. Gender Equity: *Leveling the Playing Field*

Josh Levs
Lighthouse I, Seaport Hotel, Plaza Level

10. Executive Presence: *Changing Perception, Building Credibility*

Karen Hough
Plaza Ballroom, Seaport Hotel, Plaza Level

11. Business Panel: *Leading with Purpose*

Panelists: Melanie M. Foley, Executive Vice President, Chief Talent and Enterprise Services Officer, Liberty Mutual Insurance
Christine Fraser, Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer Strategy and Operations, Dell EMC Services and IT, Dell
Leslie Maher, Vice President and General Manager, Enterprise Servers and Converged Systems, Hewlett Packard Enterprise
Moderator: Stacy Blake-Beard, Ph.D., Professor, Simmons College
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12. Career Management: *Own Your WOW!™*

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3:50 – 4:20 Meet the Speakers Book-signing Break

Corporate Marketplace, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

4:20 – 5:20 Closing Keynote: *Paying it Forward*

Diane von Furstenberg, Fashion Icon, Women's Rights Advocate and Philanthropist
Commonwealth Complex, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

5:20 – 6:00 Connection Reception

Corporate Marketplace, Seaport WTC, Harbor Level

Diverse backgrounds with different perspectives.

At Cisco, we empower people to make a difference. How? Through diversity, inclusion and collaboration. We embrace these words which are fundamental to who we are. We live and work by them every day, and they're how we are making the unimaginable a reality.

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Conference Schedule

6:45 – 7:45 Check-in & Continental Breakfast

7:45 – 8:30 Welcoming Remarks



Joyce Kulhawik

Emmy Award-winning journalist and Simmons alumna Joyce Kulhawik has been part of New England’s cultural landscape since 1978. As WBZ-TV’s arts and entertainment anchor/critic, she’s covered events from Boston to Broadway to Hollywood and has co-hosted movie review programs with Roger Ebert and Leonard Maltin. Kulhawik is currently president of the Boston Theater Critics Association, a member of the Boston Society of Film Critics and Boston Online Film Critics Associations. She delivers her arts and entertainment reviews at JoycesChoices.com and WBUR’s The ARTery.

A three-time cancer survivor and honorary chairperson for the American Cancer Society’s fundraising campaign for over 25 years, Kulhawik continues to raise millions for the ACS. Among her many awards are an Honorary Doctorate in Communications from Simmons, induction into the MA Broadcasters Hall of Fame, and the Governor’s Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences NE Chapter.

8:35 – 9:25 Opening Keynote: *Challenging the Status Quo*



Nina Tassler

As former chair of CBS Entertainment, Nina Tassler occupied a singular position in the television industry as the only female—and first Latina—to run a broadcast network. During her tenure at the top, this self-described “loudmouthed feminist” made sure that CBS became a more female-friendly place, both on and off camera. In her kickoff keynote presentation, Tassler relates some of the successes and setbacks she experienced working to empower women executives and talent in an industry where gender inequity is legendary.

9:35 – 10:55 Concurrent Morning Sessions

1. Signature Session: *Courage Under Fire*



Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe

Sister Rosemary served at the epicenter of Uganda’s civil war for 30 years. Although the gunfire has now ceased, an important battle remains—to restore the future of the country’s children. At Saint Monica Girls’ Tailoring Center, she has created a care and rehabilitation community that provides war-shattered women and children the practical skills they need to support themselves, and in the process, regain independence and a sense of hope. In her inspiring talk with author and entrepreneur Raquel Eatmon, Sister Rosemary describes her long commitment to education as the savior of her country.



Moderator
Raquel Eatmon

2. Gender Equity: *Leveling the Playing Field*



Josh Levs

As family policy activist Josh Levs argues, achieving gender equality in the workplace requires tackling outmoded structures built in the Mad Men era—laws and policies that prevent both women and men from receiving equal treatment and hurting business in the process. In this session, the author of *All In: How Our Work-First Culture Fails Dads, Families and Businesses—And How We Can Fix It Together* advances some of his ideas about the legal and corporate changes that would not only lift women as leaders, but also support men as family caregivers.

3. Executive Presence: *Changing Perceptions, Building Credibility*



Karen Hough

Do you want to be seen as a leader but not quite sure you have that elusive quality known as executive presence? In this high-energy workshop, ImprovEdge founder and CEO Karen Hough details how to leverage your own authentic presence to build trust in others. Using improvisational exercises, real-life examples, and a good dose of humor, Hough demonstrates immediately useful techniques for shaping how others perceive you, improving the clarity and effectiveness of your communications, and building long-term relationships with colleagues and clients alike.

4. Business Panel: *Leading with Purpose*



Barbara Fedida
The Walt Disney Company



Megan Schneider Gift
2U



Gail Jackson
United Technologies Corporation



Bryan Palma
Cisco Systems, Inc.

Purpose is the why and the how of an organization, defining what it is and does, whom it serves, and how it contributes to the well-being of society. The challenge of leadership is to bring others together to achieve this common vision. In this dynamic panel discussion, top executives from some of the country’s major corporations exchange views about what leading with purpose means for business strategy, management, employee satisfaction, and ultimately competitive performance.



Moderator
Stacy Blake-Beard,
Ph.D.

Conference Schedule Continued...

5. Career Management: *Own Your WOW!™*



Roshini Rajkumar

Don't leave money and influence on the table, urges presence engineer and personal brand strategist Roshini Rajkumar. As she explains in her lively presentation, the way to avoid this mistake is to power up your differentiation and clearly communicate your WOW!-ness in the marketplace. Sharing anecdotes from her decades as a TV and radio host who has interviewed some of the world's most powerful figures, Rajkumar reveals the secrets of defining or refining your space, and then taking the steps necessary to truly master and showcase your unique expertise.

6. Leadership Lessons: *How to Move Like a Maverick*



Jade Simmons

Jade Simmons, known as classical music's number-one maverick, has built an exceptional career by what she calls organic reinvention. To help spark similar momentum in your own journey, she guides you through a process of discovering your unique truth—about who you are, who you were created to be, and how you were meant to function. She then provides a strategy for reinventing yourself and your team to position for breakthroughs in life and in business, using powerful musical examples to underscore her message.

7. Team Development: *Changing How We Work, Lead, and Innovate*



Susan Cain

As today's leaders are well aware, one of the central challenges of any organization is to bring out the best in its employees—individuals of vastly different personality types and abilities. Drawing on years of research and the latest in neuroscience and psychology, renowned leadership and innovation expert (and well-known introvert) Susan Cain delivers an enlightening and practical presentation that may radically alter your views about developing talent, managing teams, and making smart hires.

10:55 – 11:25 Meet the Speakers Book-signing Break

11:25 – 12:15 Morning Keynote: *Accept No Limits*



Marlee Matlin

From an early age, Oscar-winning actress Marlee Matlin learned to walk around barriers rather than let them define who she is or could be. Her success on both stage and screen is a testament to this philosophy, as is her longtime activism on behalf of diversity and LGBT rights, deaf and hard-of-hearing children in developing countries, and many other humanitarian causes. In her inspiring and often humorous presentation, Matlin makes her message clear: with courage and vision, you can do anything if you set your mind to it.

12:15–1:30 Luncheon

1:30–2:20 Afternoon Keynote: *Find a Way*



Diana Nyad

When Diana Nyad emerged from the ocean after her historic swim from Cuba to Key West, millions of people around the world cheered her epic feat of tenacity and endurance. But how did she find her way to this achievement at age 64 when she could not at age 30? How had her four previous failures actually pushed her toward success? Nyad provides answers to these questions as she explains what this grueling challenge taught her about facing fears, pursuing a dream, and living each day without regrets.

2:30–3:50 Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

8. Signature Session: *Learning the Art of Imperfection*



Reshma Saujani

A true political entrepreneur, Reshma Saujani started Girls Who Code with a single mission—to close the gender gap in technology. She soon realized, however, that encouraging girls' interest in computer science and the trial-and-error process of coding involved first teaching them to embrace risk rather than seek perfection. In her conversation with journalist and filmmaker Nora Poggi, Saujani describes how program participants who learn this lesson are, in turn, using their technical skills to become leaders and change agents in their communities.



Moderator
Nora Poggi

9. Gender Equity: *Leveling the Playing Field*



Josh Levs

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Book-Signing & Sales

Books are available for purchase in the Corporate Marketplace. Make your purchases early to avoid long lines.

Published speakers are signing books during the morning and afternoon breaks (10:55 a.m. and 3:50 p.m.) in the Corporate Marketplace.

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Karen Hough

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Melanie M. Foley
Liberty Mutual
Insurance



Christine Fraser
Dell



Leslie Maher
Hewlett Packard Enterprise



Moderator
Stacy Blake-Beard,
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3:50–4:20 Meet the Speakers Book-signing Break

4:20–5:20 Closing Keynote: *Paying it Forward*



Diane von Furstenberg

Fashion designer and philanthropist Diane von Furstenberg started out in 1972 with a suitcase full of jersey dresses and the idea that she wanted to be “the kind of woman who doesn't rely on a man to pay her bills.” Now one of the most influential and admired business leaders of our time, she achieved this independence and much more as she saved her company from collapse and built DVF into the global luxury brand we know today. von Furstenberg takes the stage to recount some of the ups and downs of her truly fascinating life and the purpose she has found in empowering up-and-coming women leaders and entrepreneurs around the world.

5:20–6:00 Connection Reception



Speaker Profiles

Stacy Blake-Beard



Stacy Blake-Beard is the Deloitte Ellen Gabriel Professor of Women and Leadership at Simmons College's School of Management, where she teaches organizational behavior. She is also faculty affiliate at the Center for Gender in Organizations at Simmons. Blake-Beard's research focuses on the challenges and opportunities presented by mentoring relationships, and specifically on how these relationships may be changing as a result of increasing workforce diversity. She is also interested in issues facing women as they develop mentoring relationships and in the dynamics of formal mentoring programs. A widely published author, she is co-editor of *Handbook of Research on Promoting Women's Careers* and the upcoming *Mentoring Diverse Leaders: Changing People, Processes and Paradigms*. Blake-Beard was recently named as representative for the Board of Governors for the Academy of Management, and has served on the advisory boards of MentorNet, the Harvard Project on Tenure, and Harvard Medical School's Center for the Study of Diversity in Science.

Susan Cain



Susan Cain is co-founder of Quiet Revolution, a for-profit company focused on the work, education, and lifestyle of introverts, and of the Quiet Leadership Institute, which teaches leaders how they can best draw on the strengths of introverted employees. Her long-time bestseller, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, earned her a spot on Fast Company's list of Most Creative People in Business. Her writing has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, among other publications, and her record-breaking TED Talk has been viewed over 14 million times. Cain is the recipient of Harvard Law School's Celebration Award for Thought Leadership and Toastmasters International's Golden Gavel Award for Communication and Leadership, and has been named one of the world's Top 50 Leadership and Management Experts by *Inc. Magazine*.

Raquel Eatmon



Entrepreneur, author, and possibility broker, Raquel Eatmon is CEO of the communications company Rising Media LLC and founder of the Woman of Power Leadership Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. Starting out with a promising career in television, she quickly climbed the ranks as an anchor/reporter in top markets. But over time she grew disillusioned with the broadcast news business and left her high-profile position in search of deeper purpose. That purpose became women's empowerment. Eatmon documented her own struggle to overcome rejection and give meaning to her work in *Strut Your Stuff: Principles in Purpose, Power, and Position*, a resource guide for women seeking to change their lives. She continues to deliver her motivational messages in a national newspaper column, Be Inspired with Raquel, and is a regular contributor to *The Huffington Post*. Eatmon currently serves on the advisory board of the Ursuline College Center of Excellence in Leadership.

Barbara Fedida



Barbara Fedida, Senior Vice President for Talent and Business at ABC News, is responsible for developing and executing strategic planning for the next generation of both on-air and off-air talent. In addition to hiring, developing, and placing all anchors and correspondents for ABC News programs and bureaus worldwide, she also oversees all editorial recruiting, hiring, and growth and development opportunities. Fedida rejoined ABC News in 2011 after four years at CBS News, where she was Vice President of Talent and Development and the executive in charge of *The Early Show*. During her earlier tenure at ABC News, she was an award-winning producer for Peter Jennings at both *World News Tonight* and his documentary unit, and also served as Director of Standards and Practices before turning her hand to talent recruitment and development. *The Hollywood Reporter* named Fedida to its "35 most powerful people in New York media" list in 2015.

Melanie Foley



Melanie Foley is Executive Vice President, Chief Talent and Enterprise Services Officer for Liberty Mutual Insurance. Over her 20-year career at the company, she was promoted to positions of increasing responsibility in the sales and marketing function, and now leads the company's talent, procurement, communications, real estate and workplace services and strategies. In this role, she headed up an initiative to develop and implement a common way of working across the global enterprise. This new approach to planning work, delivering value to customers, and engaging front-line employees in defining and improving processes has enabled the organization to share best practices, leverage talent, continuously improve, and better compete in the marketplace. Foley formerly served on the board of Insurance.com, a privately held Internet insurance agency. She is currently a member of the Board of Trustees at Boston Medical Center and an executive advisor to the Shingo Institute.

Christine Fraser



Christine Fraser led the EMC Integration PMO as part of the Dell | EMC merger, with primary responsibility for managing and coordinating integration across all aspects of the business. She is now Senior Vice President, Strategy and Operations for Dell EMC Services and IT as part of the recently formed Dell Technologies. In this role, her responsibilities extend to include Dell EMC's Global Network of Centers of Excellence and Education Services. With over 20 years of experience in the technology industry, Fraser has played a number of leadership roles within EMC as well as in previous positions at Ascential Software, Lucent Technologies, Stratus Computer, and Prime Computer. She has served on EMC's Executive Diversity Council and has a personal commitment to supporting the development of female professionals through mentoring. Fraser is an active fundraiser for the American Cancer Society and has held a variety of volunteer positions within the community, particularly in support of STEM.

Speaker Profiles Continued...

Megan Schneider Gift



Megan Schneider Gift is Vice President, Corporate Communications at 2U, an educational technology company that partners with nonprofit colleges and universities to offer online degree programs. In this role, she oversees internal and external communications, PR and brand marketing, strategic projects, community outreach, and events. She brings over a decade of experience to this position, with a diverse background in domestic and international communications, organizational development, and strategic marketing. Before joining 2U in 2013, Gift served as a consultant for The Futures Company, a strategic insight and innovation consultancy where she worked directly with for-profit and nonprofit clients to unlock new sources of growth. She previously worked in the nonprofit sector, leading efforts in fundraising, events, and corporate development. Gift also served as manager of corporate services and country operations for an African technology company delivering solutions in the education, government, and healthcare space to institutions throughout Africa and Southeast Asia.

Karen Hough



Karen Hough is the founder and CEO of ImprovEdge, a corporate training and consulting company that brings the skills of improvisation—ability to think on your feet, arrive at solutions through the side door, and communicate in ways that bring people together—to the challenges of business. Her firm is a recent winner of a Silver Stevie Award for Most Innovative Company and the Athena PowerLink Award for outstanding woman-owned business. Hough started out her career as a professional improviser and actor who trained with Chicago's legendary Second City and was featured in more than 100 radio, TV, and film productions. She then had a stint as a successful executive in network engineering before becoming an entrepreneur. She is the author of the Amazon #1 bestseller *Be the Best Bad Presenter Ever: Break the Rules, Make Mistakes and Win Them Over*, as well as *The Improvisation Edge: Secrets to Building Trust and Radical Collaboration at Work*.

Gail Jackson



As Vice President of Talent, Inclusion and Engagement at United Technologies Corporation, Gail Jackson is responsible for driving initiatives that inspire a culture of high performance, inclusion, innovation, and engagement. She is tasked with building on the momentum of program and system enhancements in the areas of diversity and inclusion, key learning and development, employee engagement, and talent acquisition. Previously in her 30-year career with the UTC family of businesses, Jackson served as Director of Talent and Development for UTC's Otis and Climate, Controls and Security divisions. She also held key HR leadership positions at Sikorsky Aircraft and Perkin Elmer.

Josh Levs



Joshua Levs is an award-winning broadcaster, investigative journalist, and expert on issues facing modern families. Named to the Financial Times's top 10 list of male feminists, Levs fought his employer, Time Warner, after he was denied parental leave when his child was born prematurely. His legal—and very public—victory led to a radical change in corporate policy. Since then, Levs has emerged as a leading voice and advocate for fathers in America, combating negative stereotypes of dads. Known to millions for his work on TV, radio, and online over 20 years of reporting for NPR and CNN, Levs has collected many of the highest honors in his field, including five Peabody Awards and two Edward R. Murrow Awards. He is also the author of the book *All In: How Our Work-First Culture Fails Dads, Families, And Businesses—And How We Can Fix It Together*, detailing how and why the best family-friendly programs benefit businesses and the economy.

Leslie Maher



Leslie Maher is Vice President and General Manager for Hewlett Packard Enterprise Servers and Converged Systems for North America. In this role, she directs product management and product marketing, plans route-to-market roadmaps, grows business development, and oversees supply chain management. Before joining HPE, Maher was Cisco's Senior Sales Director of the US Enterprise Data Center and Virtualization team. Previously in her career, she spent 21 years at Sun/Oracle serving in a number of senior sales and technical leadership capacities. Among those positions was Vice President of the Americas Systems Practice, with responsibility for the product sales specialists and architects for both the SPARC and X86 product lines, representing \$3 billion in annual sales. Maher also served as Vice President of the US East and Northeast Areas, and had direct sales and profitability responsibility for all lines of business, including servers, storage, software, and services.

Marlee Matlin



For her debut film performance in *Children of a Lesser God*, Marlee Matlin became the youngest actor to receive an Academy Award for Best Actress, as well as the first hearing-impaired person to be given that honor. She continued to garner critical praise for starring roles in subsequent feature films before refocusing her talents on the small screen. Among her long list of television credits are the lead in her own series *Reasonable Doubts* and the Emmy Award-winning *Picket Fences*, along with appearances on *ER*, *Desperate Housewives*, *The West Wing*, *Law and Order: SVU*, and, most recently, *Switched at Birth*. Dedicated to a variety of humanitarian causes, Matlin is a longtime champion for those struggling against domestic abuse and addiction. She has also helped raise awareness for better hearing health for millions of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and adults in developing countries. Matlin is the author of a bestselling autobiography, *I'll Scream Later*, and three novels for children.

Speaker Profiles Continued...

Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe



Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe has been director of the Saint Monica Girls' Tailoring Center in Gulu, Uganda, since 2001, providing care and rehabilitation to more than 2,000 young women who had been abducted, raped, and tortured during Joseph Kony's 20-year reign of terror in that country. In addition to providing a safe harbor for the former abductees, who are often shunned and persecuted by the people of their own villages, she has given them a way to support themselves through job training in tailoring, catering, and other skills, helping to restore their independence, dignity, and self-worth. For her extraordinary humanitarian work, Sister Rosemary was named a CNN Hero in 2007 and was included in *TIME Magazine's* "100 Most Influential People" list in 2014. Her lifelong championing of women and girls is the focus of a documentary entitled *Sewing Hope*, along with a book of the same name, relaying the story of one woman's fight to restore hope to her nation.

Diana Nyad



In the 1970s, Diana Nyad was the greatest long-distance swimmer in the world. In one epic feat after another, she broke time or endurance records for swimming around Manhattan Island and the span between the Bahamas and Florida, among other ocean swims. These achievements earned her membership in the National Women's Hall of Fame and the International Swimming Hall of Fame. Nyad then built a successful career as a sports broadcaster, filing reports for NPR, ABC's *Wide World of Sports*, *Fox Sports*, and *The New York Times*. Then, at the age of 60 and having not swum a stroke in decades, she decided to take up the Cuba-to-Florida challenge that had defeated her in her 20s. It took four years and five attempts, but she finally emerged from the waters off Key West as the first person to make the 111-mile swim without the benefit of a shark cage. Nyad describes this momentous undertaking in her recent memoir, *Find a Way: One Wild and Precious Life*.

Bryan Palma



Bryan Palma is Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Cisco Advanced Services Group. He leads the development and execution of Cisco's professional, managed, and subscription services portfolio across a global team of more than 6,500 employees. His organization helps customers design, build, and operate technology capabilities across network, data center, cloud, collaboration, video, mobility, and security. Before joining Cisco, Palma was Vice President of Cyber and Security Solutions at Boeing, where he was responsible for critical infrastructure protection, network surveillance, data analytics, and cybersimulation solutions. Earlier in his career, he served as Vice President of Service Delivery Operations for Hewlett Packard and was named PepsiCo's first Chief Information Security Officer. In that role, Palma worked with the US Secret Service to help pioneer efforts to combat cybercrime around the world.

Nora Poggi



French journalist Nora Poggi is co-producer and co-director of a new feature-length documentary, *She Started It*, focusing on five women entrepreneurs determined to stop at nothing to pursue their dreams. Shot in Silicon Valley, New York City, Mississippi, Vietnam, France, and other locations, this is the first film to take a behind-the-scenes look at what it is like to run a high-tech startup as a young woman. Poggi originally came to the United States to work for the French social network Viadeo.com, but soon decided to return to her first love—filmmaking—by making a move to Lucky Dragon Productions, where she trained in all aspects of film production and promotion. Passionate about technology, storytelling, and women's empowerment, she also started reporting for Examiner.com on major Silicon Valley events, producing video interviews with tech industry players. Poggi continues to write about entrepreneurship, technology, and entertainment for a variety of media outlets, including the French newspaper *Usine Nouvelle*.

Roshini Rajkumar



Presence engineer Roshini Rajkumar is CEO of Roshini Performance Group and host of *News & Views with Roshini Rajkumar* on CBS Radio Minneapolis. Known for her informative and often irreverent commentary, she is a popular analyst for print, radio, and TV outlets across the country on such topics as political candidates' media mishaps, pro sports scandals, and communicating across generations. When not behind the microphone, Rajkumar is an executive coach, drawing on more than 30 years of public speaking engagements, a decade-long career as a television reporter, and experience as a licensed attorney to help business professionals successfully conduct high-stakes communications and build their personal brand identity. She also teaches communication and negotiation skills at St. Catherine University, and writes for *Twin Cities Business* and *C-Level Magazine*. Rajkumar summarizes her well-honed presentation tips in a book entitled *Communicate That: Your Toolbox for Powerful Presence*.

Reshma Saujani



Reshma Saujani is the founder and CEO of Girls Who Code, a national nonprofit organization working to prepare young women for the technology jobs of the future. A former attorney, Saujani left the private sector to become the first Indian-American woman to run for US Congress. During that race, she visited local schools and observed firsthand the gender gap in computing classes that inspired the creation of Girls Who Code. Although unsuccessful in her congressional bid, Saujani moved on to become deputy public advocate of New York City. In her recent book, *Women Who Don't Wait in Line*, she argues that aversion to risk and failure is the final hurdle holding women back in the workplace. Among other honors, Saujani has been recognized as *The Wall Street Journal's* Technology Innovator of the Year and named to CNBC's *Next List*, *FORTUNE's* 40 Under 40, and *Forbes' Most Powerful Women Changing the World*.

Speaker Profiles Continued...

Jade Simmons



Called a “musical force of nature,” world-renowned pianist Jade Simmons is among most versatile concert artists performing today. Committed to expanding the boundaries of classical music, she is able to move from Rachmaninoff to rap with ease, using the piano as an instrument for providing inspiration and information as well as entertainment. At the same time, Simmons is a leadership coach and consultant who specializes in teaching business, technology, and arts organizations “maverick behavior” and out-of-the-box branding techniques. And her talents hardly stop there. Simmons also heads up the School of Emergence, providing programs to help creative entrepreneurs market their messages and expand their platforms; writes about the arts and its intersection with pop culture, politics, business, and technology for *The Huffington Post*; and was recently tapped to portray legendary jazz pianist and entertainer Lillette Harris in the upcoming musical *Lillette’s Rhythm Club*.

Nina Tassler



One of the country’s most respected executives in network television, Nina Tassler is former chair of CBS Entertainment. Under her leadership, CBS was the number-one network in 12 of the 13 years of her tenure, with megahit programming of such popular and critically acclaimed shows as *The Big Bang Theory*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *The Good Wife*, and *Madam Secretary*. And in a notable advance against the legendary gender inequality in Hollywood, she is credited with bringing many female executives along with her to the top. Tassler is an inductee of the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Lucy Award from Women in Film. She currently serves on the executive committee of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Foundation, and is a member of the board of trustees for Boston University and the board of the Paley Center for Media. Tassler recently published her first book, *What I Told My Daughter: Lessons from Leaders on Raising the Next Generation of Empowered Women*.

Diane von Furstenberg



Founder and chair of DVF, Diane von Furstenberg revolutionized fashion in 1972 with the launch of her iconic wrap dress—a dress that came to symbolize power and independence for generations of women. Since then, she has expanded her company into a global luxury lifestyle brand offering an extensive collection of ready-to-wear clothing, accessories, and home furnishings. In recognition of her impact on fashion, von Furstenberg received a lifetime achievement award from the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) in 2005, and has served as CFDA’s president since 2006. Throughout her career, she has consistently worked to mentor emerging talent and empower women through philanthropy, including establishing the DVF Awards to provide grants to activists who have displayed leadership, strength, and courage in their commitment to their causes. She also sits on the board of Vital Voices, a nongovernmental organization supporting female leaders and entrepreneurs around the world. von Furstenberg relates the fascinating story of her extraordinary life in a recent memoir, *The Woman I Wanted to Be*.



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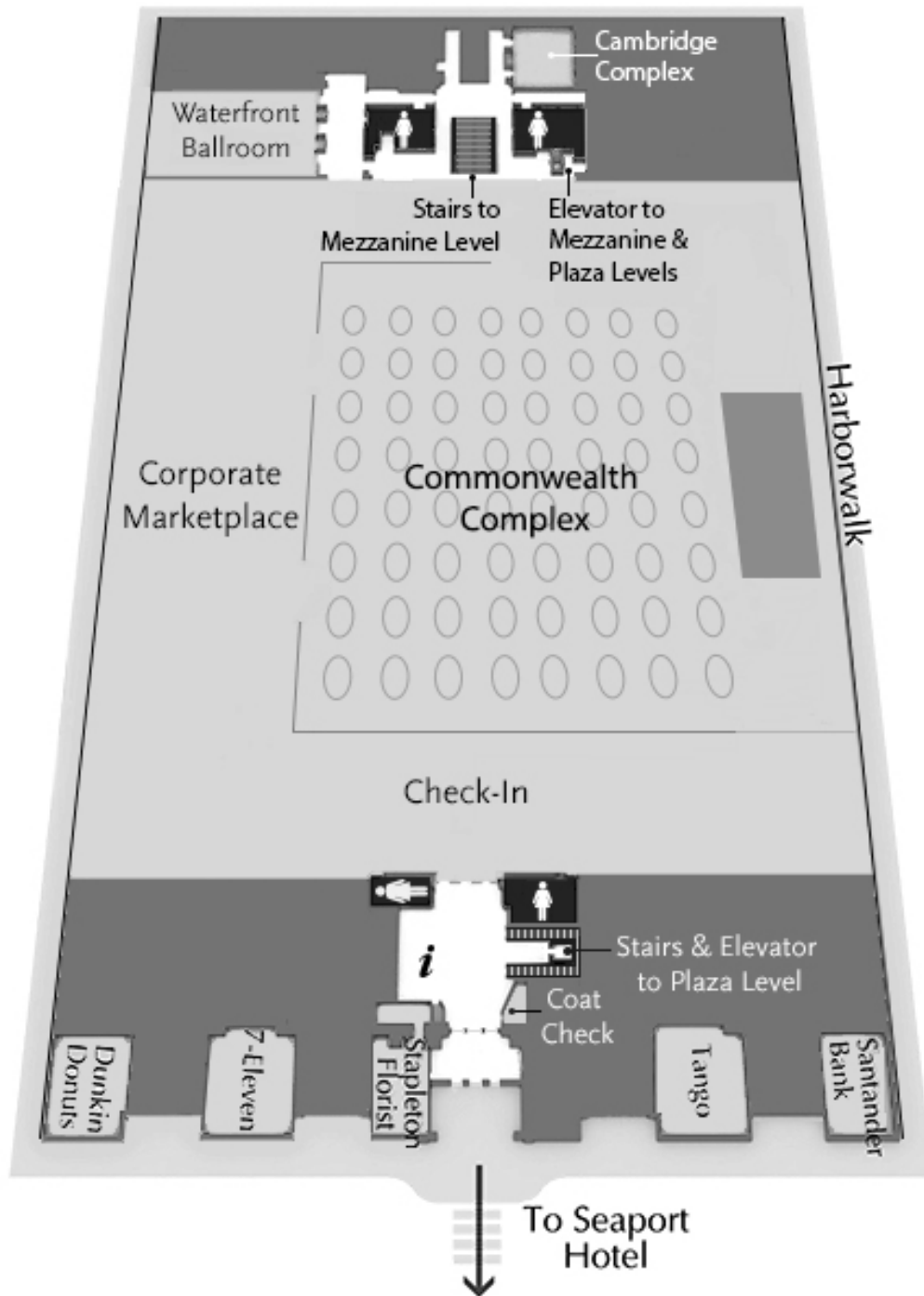
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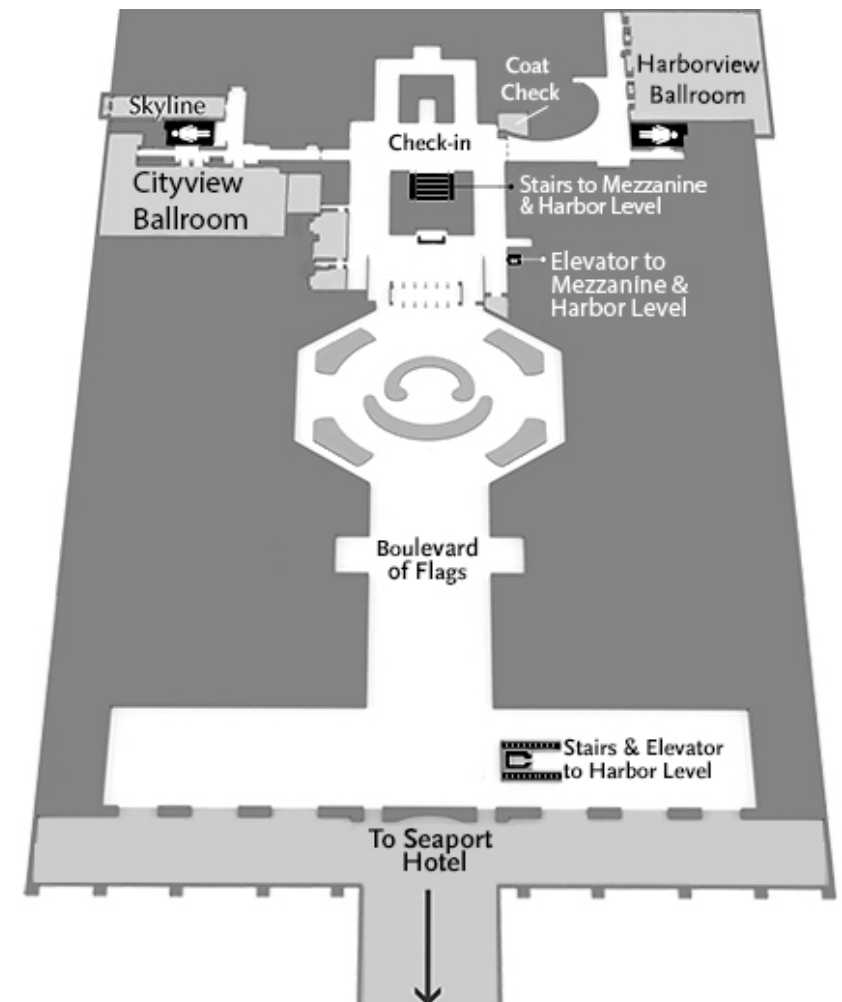
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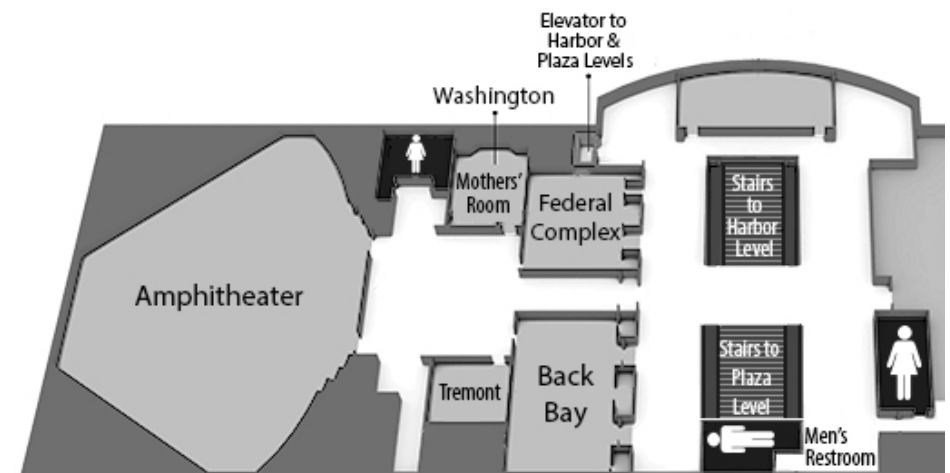
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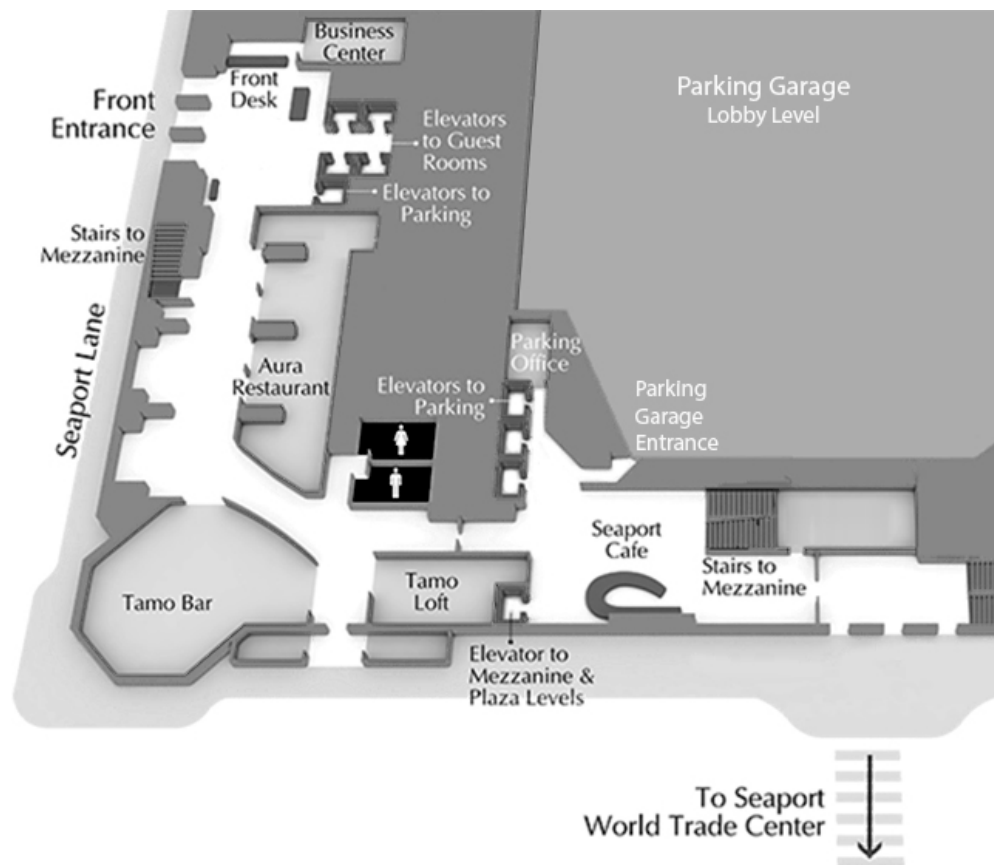


Mezzanine

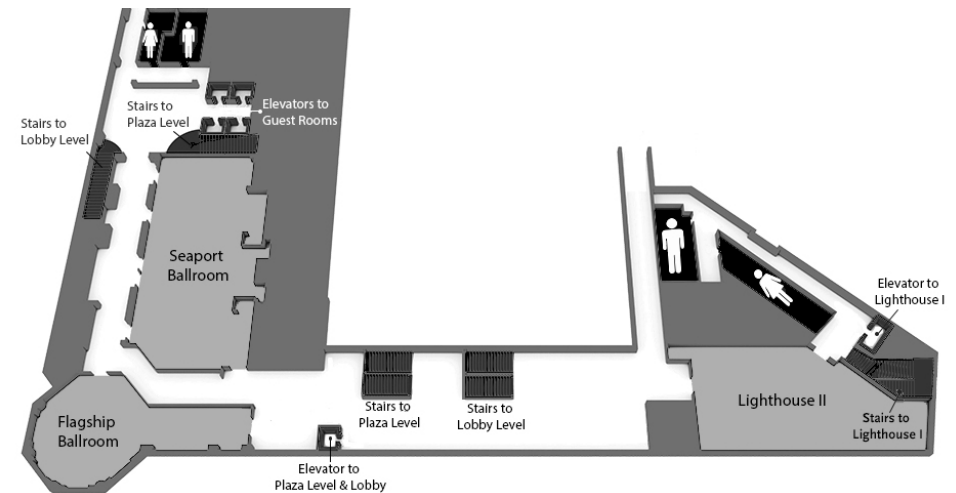


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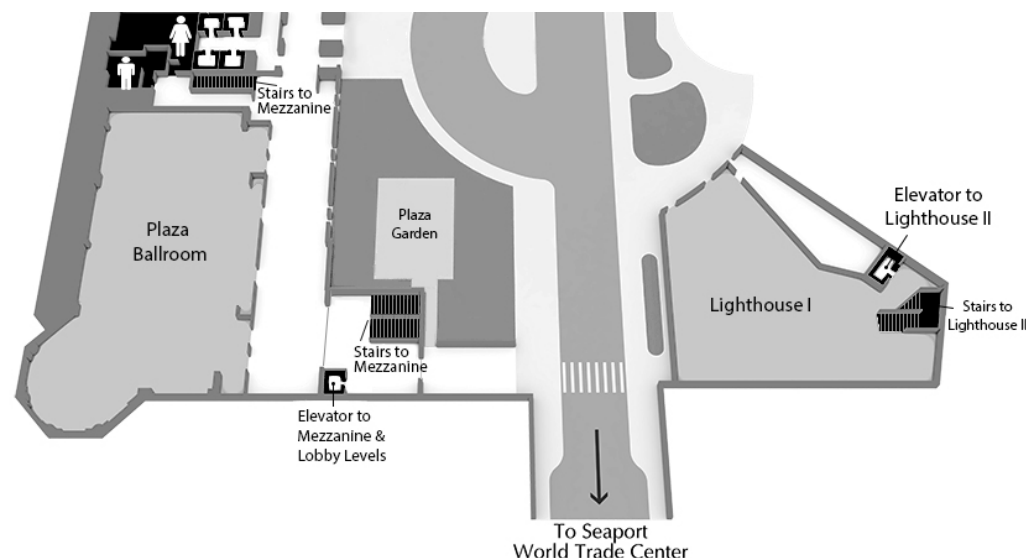
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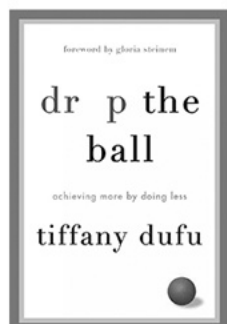


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WOMEN AND CONFIDENCE: AN ALTERNATIVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ‘CONFIDENCE GAP’

The enormous popularity of recent books like Sheryl Sandberg’s *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead* (2013) and Katty Kay and Claire Shipman’s *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance—What Women Should Know* (2014) suggests that what has been termed the “confidence gap” between men and women has become an almost universally accepted explanation for the shortage of women in leadership positions. This theme reinforces the notion that the shortage is the fault of women, and not a result of social norms and expectations, including definitions of confidence. However resonant that theme might be, these popular approaches to women, careers, and confidence suffer from a number of shortcomings. For one, they tend to treat women as a monolithic body, ignoring differences of race, class, and sexuality, among others. In addition, they tend to espouse an understanding of confidence that is seldom defined and often borders on the mystical: Kay and Shipman, for example, refer to confidence as “an air of command” (2) and “the purity of action produced by a mind free of doubts” (3). Further, such approaches seem grounded in a deficiency model that suggests that women should learn to emulate male standards of confidence and behavior. Finally, these accounts tend to be largely anecdotal and personal in nature.

With these limitations in mind, a research team from Simmons College designed a survey to investigate what women professionals think about confidence in general and their own confidence in particular. More on the methodology and study population can be found in the full article on the conference’s mobile app.

It is important at the outset to acknowledge that these professional women are not typical of the average American working woman in terms of their career status and their salaries. First, the women in our sample were in mid to high level management positions in their organizations. Second, the salaries of the sample were dramatically different from the national average. According to the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, in 2015 a woman’s median annual salary in the United States was \$40,742. Among the survey respondents, only 4.1% earned less than \$50,000 a year; in contrast, almost 20% earned between \$150,000 and \$199,000, and 13.5% earned more than \$200,000. Even though our sample findings may have limited applicability to broader categories of women and careers (such as women in hourly jobs, early careers, etc.), it does align with the samples of the senior professional women used in the books and articles charging that women have a “confidence gap.”

Some of our findings support, others conflict with, or add nuance to earlier research. Our key findings include:

- As most research suggests, this survey reveals that women are ambitious and aspire to high levels of leadership.
- Unlike the findings from a research study commissioned by Bain in 2014, these data suggest that interest in moving up in the company does not seem to decline after several years in an organization.

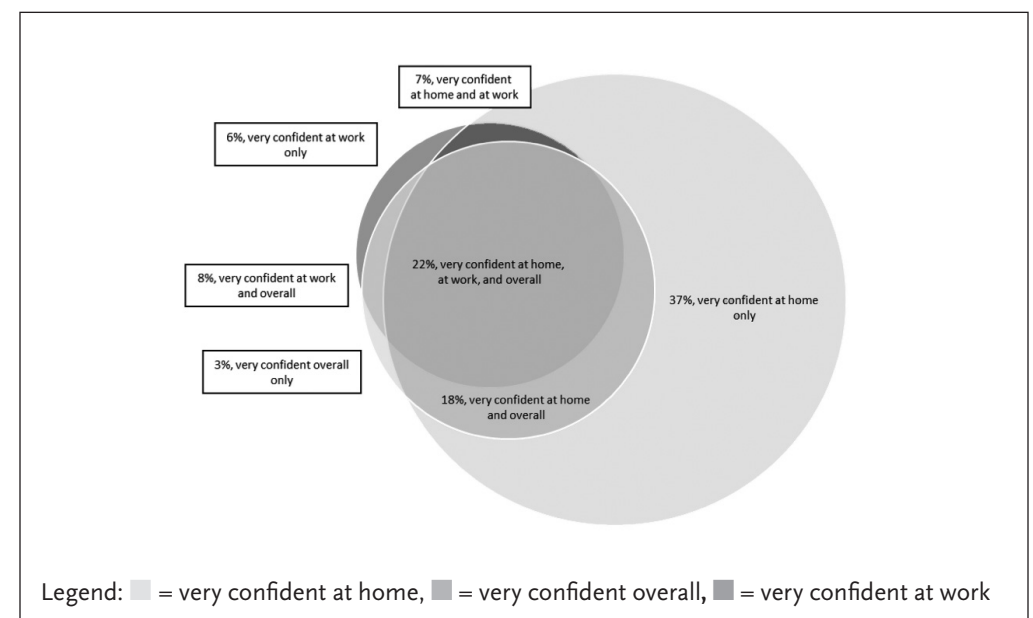
- The respondents to this survey are not only highly confident; their confidence, as they perceive it, has increased over time.
- Perhaps the most telling result relates to the question of what women see as vital to their confidence on the job. Overwhelmingly, the top answer was “Mentoring and Feedback,” with 112 responses, almost double the next ranked response. Second on the list is “Inclusion,” and these top two answers taken together constitute 48% of the total responses.

Our findings have both challenged and brought nuance to the popular conversation that claims that women aren’t confident and that that deficit has hobbled their progression into top leadership positions. We have found that women are confident, and speculate that because they may project confidence differently it is either seen as lacking (by social—and masculine—standards) or at least deficient. **For more details on our findings, please read the full article on the app.**

These results have important implications both for employers and for working women. For one, employers should recognize their top employees and understand that female professionals are ambitious and want opportunities. In addition, the survey data suggest that addressing the wage gap is important for reasons beyond the financial because of the strong correlation between higher confidence and higher wages. And, finally, as this and other research suggests, workplaces need to develop strong mentoring programs and build inclusive teams that can nurture women’s strengths and help to build confidence. Women who need support should ask for a mentor; more seasoned professionals should seek out other women to mentor.

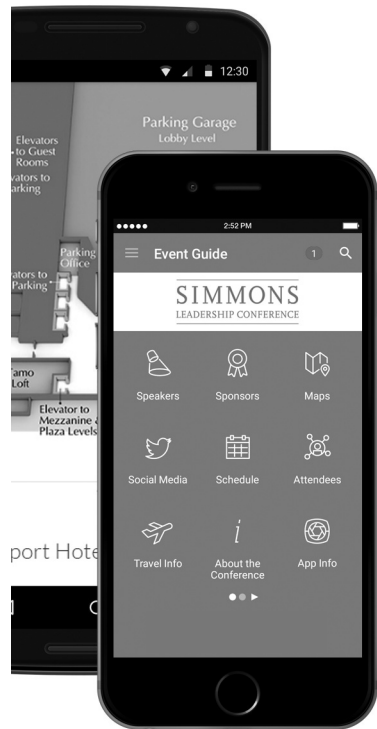
CORRELATIONS OF WOMEN’S HIGHEST CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Women’s overall confidence level, confidence at work, and confidence at home are all highly correlated, as indicated in the Venn diagram. However, among all 562 respondents, only 277 indicated that they were very confident either at work, at home, or overall. Among them, the largest group is women who felt very confident at home only, about 37%.



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