



WomenCorporateDirectors Names Starbucks, Shiseido, Elkay, and Ana Paula Pessoa as 2020 Visionary Award Honorees

NEW YORK – July 29, 2020 – In its tenth year recognizing exceptional corporate commitment to diversity, inclusion, and women’s leadership in the C-suite and board, [WomenCorporateDirectors Foundation \(WCD\)](#) has announced its 2020 Visionary Award honorees. The four Award recipients include two top global brands, [Starbucks](#) and [Shiseido](#); U.S.-based global manufacturer [Elkay](#); and **Ana Paula Pessoa**, chairman of artificial intelligence company Kunumi AI in Brazil and board member of [Newscorp](#), [Credit Suisse](#), [Suzano](#), and [Vinci Group](#).

The awards will be presented for the first time in a virtual setting on September 9, 2020, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., U.S. EDT (more details will appear in subsequent announcements).

“Our Visionary Award honorees represent, globally, the kind of inclusive thinking, innovation, and agility we need to move our companies and our countries forward during this pivotal time in history,” said **Susan C. Keating**, CEO of WCD.

Visionary Awards committee co-chair **Barbara Bowles** remarked on the award recipients: “As in past years, they were selected based on proven industry leadership, and on their continuing commitment to ESG – environmental, social and governance – in both the boardroom and the C-suite.”

“Recent events have further increased awareness of the need for inclusion and leadership,” said **Deb Kelly**, co-chair of the committee with Bowles. “This year’s Visionary Award recipients have continued to demonstrate that leadership during the unsettling events of this year.”

Awards include:

- **Award for Innovation in Shared Value:** With more than 32,000 stores in 83 markets, **Starbucks’** board is 40% women, and women comprise 35% of its global 55-person management team.

“Starbucks epitomizes the meaning of ‘walk the walk,’” said Bowles. “Most recently, the company has been widely noted for its adroit handling of the COVID-19 crisis with colleagues, customers, and communities. It also stands out due to its work on eliminating racism, including dealing with important issues within its own ranks. Starbucks is certainly the right awardee for Innovation in Shared Value in this moment, and possibly for the ages.”

Starbucks takes on a broad range of issues in its efforts around social impact, including providing free college tuition to employees, supporting sustainability programs, supporting veterans, and providing opportunities to local youth communities.

“The power of staying true to your brand in trying times pays dividends far beyond reputation. I’m immensely proud of how Starbucks has lived up to our values these past few months while managing through COVID-19 and advocating for racial justice,” said **Roz Brewer, chief operating officer and member of the board of directors at Starbucks**. “No matter what’s ahead, we’ll continue to show up for our partners (employees), customers and communities in meaningful and innovative ways that serve to uplift all.”

- **Award for Leadership and Governance of a Public Company:** Founded in Japan in 1872, **Shiseido** is one of the oldest cosmetic brands in the world. Shiseido stands out as a diversity champion in the region, with 46% female representation among its board.

“Shiseido not only fits our criteria as an honoree this year, but its inclusive brand-building philosophy should benefit the company for years to come,” said Kelly. “In its product development and innovation, Shiseido recognizes the diversity of its primarily female customers who have different needs and different experiences.”

“As a measure of Shiseido’s commitment to community, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the company shifted production to meet healthcare workers’ needs. In April, Shiseido began producing hand sanitizer for medical personnel with sensitive skin within Japan, as well as disinfectant for use in medical facilities elsewhere.”

Masahiko Uotani, President and CEO of Shiseido Company, Limited, remarked: “I am very honored to be selected for this award. In pursuit of our mission BEAUTY INNOVATIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD, we at Shiseido respect and appreciate individual differences and diversity in one another across gender, age, religion, and race, desiring to achieve better, more enriched lives and society with the power of beauty, and striving to be a global winner with our heritage.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, people are facing difficulties unlike any before. Even in these extremely challenging circumstances, we believe that we can help revitalize society through beauty; that beauty is a source of strength to change the world. Shiseido members across the globe are united in our efforts to surmount the challenge together, for swift recovery and growth, and to deliver even further innovation.”

- **Award for Leadership and Governance of a Private Company:** A private Illinois-based manufacturer of plumbing fixtures and commercial interior systems, **Elkay** is celebrating its 100th year in business in 2020. Of its 12-member board of directors, five are women, with women chairing two of the four board committees.

“It takes vision, strong values and commitment to survive as a private family-owned company for 100 years and Elkay demonstrates all of these qualities,”

said Kelly. While being the #1 selling stainless steel sink company globally, Elkay has also led its industry in innovations such as bottle filling stations and sustainable materials.

“Considered an ‘essential business’ in the pandemic because of the critical products it supplies to healthcare and others, Elkay has continued to operate and innovate – manufacturing its antimicrobial copper sinks, and its hands-free faucets, water coolers, and water bottle filling stations,” Kelly said.

“We are delighted to receive this award in recognition of our long-standing commitment to ESG,” **Ric Phillips, President and CEO**, stated in response to being named a 2020 honoree. “Elkay is deeply dedicated to environmental and social responsibility and to giving back to our community. Empowering our people is central to our culture, and fostering diversity of thought across the company has been key to our success for over 100 years. Today, more than ever, holding fast to strong values and embracing equitable social practices – which begin at the top and in the boardroom – are essential to thriving in an increasingly diverse and interdependent world.”

- **Award for Strategic Leadership:** Based in Brazil, **Ana Paula Pessoa** serves on the boards of Credit Suisse, Newscorp, Suzano, and Vinci Group. She is Chair of Kunumi AI, a disruptive Brazilian research and process reframing and restructuring company using the lens of artificial intelligence; 60% of the company’s leadership team is women. Pessoa was the first woman to be CFO of the Olympic and Paralympic Games – for Rio 2016, the first Games held in South America.

“We applaud the leadership of Ana Paula Pessoa, a leader who accomplishes change around the world,” said Bowles. “Beyond being the first woman CFO for the 2016 Olympics, Ms. Pessoa brings a high level of expertise in marketing, communications, and artificial intelligence, and serves on the boards of major global corporations. WCD is proud to announce that Ms. Pessoa is the first Visionary Awards honoree from Latin America and an exemplary WCD member.”

“I am honored to be recognized with WCD’s award for Strategic Leadership,” said Ana Paula. “Life post-COVID 19 will require all of us to ask new questions so we can collectively come up with new outcomes. This crisis places a new light on the implications of the data revolution, the impacts of human consumption, the sustainability of our planet, and the definition of social inclusion. The most successful companies of tomorrow will lead this reframing, will address these issues, and will thrive in a world of new possibilities. The boardroom should reflect these societal changes. And we, as individuals, must personally rethink our own choices and responsibilities.”

WCD established the Visionary Awards in 2011 to recognize companies and leaders demonstrating the best in corporate governance, leadership diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to expanding female representation on the board. Past Visionary Award recipients include: **Alaska Air Group, BMO Financial Group, Canadian National Railway, The Coca-Cola Company, Dot Foods, Intel, L’Oreal, NextEra Energy, Publix Supermarkets, Publicis, Procter & Gamble, Ulta Beauty, and Unilever.**

The Visionary Awards celebration will be part of the 2020 WCD Global Institute, the organization's first virtual Institute, to be held September 9-11, 2020. Over three days, participants will explore a range of topics under the theme "Leading Today, Transforming Tomorrow."

2020 WCD Visionary Awards Selection Committee

The award winners were determined by an independent committee comprised of WCD members.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- **Barbara Bowles**, President, Landers Bowles Family Foundation; Retired Presiding Director, WEC Energy Group; Retired CEO and Chair, The Kenwood Group, Inc.; WCD member, Chicago
- **Deborah Elise Kelly**, Partner, Genesis, Inc.; Director, Perdue Farms; WCD Member, Colorado

Committee Members:

- Agenia Clark, Michelle Lynn Collins, Noel Harwerth, Christie Hefner, Ashley Duchossois Joyce, Izumi Kobayashi, Anastassia Lauterbach, Lucy Pamboukdjian, Theo Schwabacher, Susan S. Stautberg, Joan E. Steel, and Mary Beth Vitale.

For media inquiries, please contact Suzanne Oaks Brownstein or Trang Mar of Temin and Company at 212-588-8788 or news@teminandco.com.

About WomenCorporateDirectors Education and Development Foundation, Inc.

The WomenCorporateDirectors Education and Development Foundation, Inc. (WCD) is the only global membership organization and community of women corporate directors. A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, the WCD Foundation has 76 chapters around the world. The aggregate market capitalization of public companies on whose boards WCD Foundation members serve is over \$8 trillion. In addition, WCD Foundation members serve on numerous boards of large private and family-run companies globally. For more information visit www.womencorporatedirectors.org or follow us on Twitter [@WomenCorpDirs](https://twitter.com/WomenCorpDirs), #WCDboards.

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