



Boardroom Briefings by WEL Educates and Connects Corporate Board Members

New Women Executive Leadership Series for All Genders Provides Opportunity to Hear How Others Approach Critical Issues

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Aug. 03, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Women Executive Leadership (WEL), a nonprofit dedicated to gender parity in the boardroom and the C-suite, has expanded its programming to offer Boardroom Briefings for members of public and private company Boards of Directors. These invitation-only briefings bring together experts and board members of all genders to delve into important topics being discussed in boardrooms.

The first Boardroom Briefing, held July 13, brought together directors from more than two dozen companies in an open dialogue with each other and an expert on environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics.

Participants noted that the conversations and connection with directors from other companies were invaluable.

The Boardroom Briefings, run by WEL's new Advocacy Committee, are a natural extension of the organization's work. For more than 20 years, WEL has empowered women leaders with a variety of training and preparation to advance their careers, position themselves to join boards of directors and connect with potential board opportunities.

The Advocacy Committee focuses on building relationships with boards in Florida by connecting, educating, and engaging in progress-oriented, mutually supportive conversations designed exclusively for Boards of Directors.

management are part of “sustainable investing” strategies. That means all corporate board members must be prepared to discuss related issues and help companies assess their ESG risks.

“ESG has never been more relevant for companies and boards of directors,” said Christine Cannella, chair of WEL’s Advocacy Committee, which organizes the Boardroom Briefings. Cannella, who is vice president of investor relations at Fresh Del Monte Produce Inc., added, “In particular, social and environmental issues – once considered peripheral – are now key considerations. Board members who understand ESG and can bridge investors’ concerns with company strategy will add tremendous value to their companies.”

The July Boardroom Briefing began with an educational session on ESG from the investor perspective, presented by Bhakti Mirchandani, director of responsible investing at Trinity Church Wall Street. Mirchandani is a leader in sustainable investing and a member of the Board of Commissioners for the New York State Insurance Fund. She developed and teaches an impact finance class in Columbia University’s Master of Science in Sustainability Management program.

“It was important to learn about investors’ perspective on material ESG matters directly from a leading sustainability investor,” Cannella said. “Mirchandani provided an excellent foundation that board members were able to build upon in their ongoing conversations.”

Mirchandani’s educational session was followed by three breakout sessions. She hosted one session, while the other two were hosted by WEL advisory board members Bonnie M. Crabtree, a senior client advisor at Korn Ferry, and Evelyn Follit, currently a director at MarineMax.

The breakout sessions allowed smaller group discussions about ESG reporting and KPIs, ESG and executive compensation incentives, and engaging in an investor-corporate dialogue around ESG. Many of the directors shared their own approaches to ESG issues.

“It was eye-opening to hear about how other organizations approach ESG,” one director said after the Boardroom Briefing.

The WEL Boardroom Briefing on ESG was sponsored by Equilar. WEL Boardroom Briefings are held quarterly throughout the year, complementing the organization’s other activities and events. For more

About Women Executive Leadership (WEL)

For over 21 years, Women Executive Leadership has been dedicated to gender parity in the Boardroom and the C-Suite. Although there's progress to celebrate, Florida lags behind other states. As of year-end 2020, only 19.7% of Board of Director seats on Russell 3000 Florida companies were held by women. WEL's Board recognized it was time to do more to move this number. As part of its 2021 "Year of Empowerment" initiatives, it formed WEL's Advocacy Committee. For more information about WEL, visit WELFlorida.org.

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