



*A Dinner Evening with*

# *Bill Gates*

*Co-Founder of Microsoft and the  
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*



Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
6:30 pm – Registration and Reception  
7:00 pm – Program  
8:00 pm – Dinner

**SHERATON HOTEL**  
811 Seventh Avenue (at West Fifty-Third Street)  
New York City

*Co-Sponsored by:*





# *Welcome*

American Industrial Acquisition Corporation, Avara Pharmaceutical Services, and the Economic Club of New York are honored to extend a warm invitation to a dinner and award ceremony with Mr. Bill Gates, Co-founder of Microsoft and Co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This evening presents a unique opportunity to gain insights from a pioneering entrepreneur who has significantly influenced the tech industry and now dedicates his efforts to improving the human condition worldwide.

We encourage you to explore the biographies of our distinguished guests, whose varied experiences and proficiencies add great value to our assembly. May their stories ignite your curiosity as we celebrate this exceptional event.





## **Amit Arora**

Amit Arora serves as Managing Director of AIAC and as CEO of Avara Pharma Services Ltd. Formerly he served as COO of Jubilant Pharmaceuticals. He is a seasoned C-Level Leadership Professional with over 27 years of international experience, distinguished for his outstanding contributions to business transformation, strategic planning, financial restructuring, and valuation. Throughout his career, Amit has consistently demonstrated a remarkable ability to build and lead high-performing teams, foster a culture of unwavering quality, and maintain a steadfast focus on cost optimization while elevating customer service standards.

His extensive expertise extends to the development of sustainable business models and the formulation of manufacturing and operational strategies aimed at achieving strategic objectives. Amit has an impressive track record of establishing and nurturing customer partnerships, as well as implementing sustainable pricing strategies that drive substantial improvements in business profitability.

Amit holds a Chartered Accountant designation, which is equivalent to a CPA, and is also a qualified Cost Accountant from the Institute of Cost Accountants in India. Additionally, he has further enriched his leadership acumen through the Leadership for Senior Executives Program at Harvard Business School. With this unique blend of qualifications and a stellar career, Amit Arora stands as a highly regarded and accomplished leader in the global business arena.

## **Bill Isaac**

William “Bill” Isaac is Chairman of Secura/Isaac Group, a global advisory firm serving the financial services industry. Bill has an unparalleled career in the financial industry and public service, spanning over 50 years. He served as Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) from 1978 through 1985, working to maintain stability during the banking and thrift crises of the 1980’s, when over 3,000 banks and thrifts failed. Bill also served as chairman of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (1983-85), as a member of the Depository Institutions Deregulation Committee (1981-85), and as a member of the Vice President’s Task Group on Regulation of Financial

Services (1984). Bill is former Chairman of Fifth Third Bancorp, and has also served on the boards of Amex Bank and TransUnion. Bill is currently the Chairman of the Sarasota Private Trust and Cleveland Private Trust. For more information on Bill's past and current work, visit [securaisaac.com](http://securaisaac.com)

## **Brian Shiau**

Brian Shiau is the VP of Global Strategy and Mergers & Acquisitions at Paper Excellence, a global holding company of pulp, paper, and lumber manufacturing businesses with \$11 billion combined revenue and over 20,000 employees. He leads the North American corporate development team. Previously, Mr. Shiau worked at American Industrial Acquisition Corporation, planning and executing acquisition and divestiture transactions. He earned his AB at Princeton University and his MBA at the Yale School of Management.

## **David Cunn**

David Cunn is Vice Chairman of J.P. Morgan Private Bank. David leads the Private Bank's Financial Sponsors Lending Group and sets the strategic course for one of the firm's largest wholesale businesses. His

team of specialized lending professionals offers sophisticated financing to ultra-high-net-worth individuals, with a particular focus on partners of private equity firms and C-suite executives. In addition, much of the firm's subscription financing business is executed by the group.

David has spent his 40-year career in leveraged finance, asset-based lending, loan syndication and business development. He is proficient in advising partners on subscription financing for their private equity funds as well as crafting efficient lending structures to pursue personal interests, real estate, art, and aircraft acquisitions.

Before joining J.P. Morgan almost 20 years ago, David was a Business Financial Advisor at Merrill Lynch, advising entrepreneurs on liquidity and legacy planning, and a Business Development Director at GE Capital, orchestrating mergers and acquisitions. In earlier years, he held various senior positions at Summit Bank, IBJ Whitehall and U.S. Trust. David earned a B.A. in Economics from New York University and an M.B.A. in Finance from Baruch College.

A native New Yorker, David resides with Linda, his wife of more than 30 years, in Stamford, Connecticut. In addition to being an avid Peloton enthusiast, he devotes his free time to cooking, hiking, biking and traveling with family. David's and Linda's favorite days are spent enjoying the company of their adult son and daughter.

## **Dennis Flannery**

Dennis Flannery's career has spanned more than 55 years from early military service through formative and senior executive positions with leading global firms in commercial, investment and development banking, almost exclusively in emerging markets. Interspersed among private sector postings have been advisory and diplomatic assignments with the U.S. government.

## **Ed Grebow**

Edward Grebow is a seasoned professional with over 40 years of experience in finance, technology, and non-profit sectors. He currently serves as the Managing Director of Lakewood Advisors, LLC, a prominent financial advisory and consulting firm. Grebow's reputation is built on his remarkable problem-solving abilities and trusted advisory services, making him a go-to figure in these industries.

Ed's career includes founding Lakewood Advisors in 2018, following his six-year tenure as a Managing Director at TriArtisan Capital Advisors, a prominent private equity firm based in New York. His career highlights include successfully rescuing Amalgamated Bank, playing a pivotal role in the renovation of the iconic Ed Sullivan Theater, and senior executive roles at CBS Inc., where he managed operational and administrative functions for the \$4 billion broadcast network. His groundbreaking work in labor relations and pioneering efforts in implementing digital technology earned him an Engineering Emmy Award in 1992.

Throughout his career, Ed has taken on significant roles at Tele-TV systems and Sony Broadcast, leading the industry's transition to digital technology. His leadership and vision broadened Sony Broadcast's client base, extending beyond broadcasting and filmmaking industries to include corporations and internet companies.

In addition to his professional achievements, Ed is deeply committed to community service and holds trustee positions at WNET, New York

City's public television station, and the Laborers International Union Charitable Foundation. He has also served on the boards of various non-profit organizations, showcasing his dedication to giving back to the community.

## **Emily Lodge**

Emily began her career in government at the President's Council on Environmental Quality and the newly created EPA. She also worked as a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill. Later, she became Dan Rather's researcher on 60 Minutes and other documentary news teams for which she earned an Emmy Award and a Robert F Kennedy Award. She is also the author of two notable books. The first, entitled "The Lodge Women, Their Men, and Their Times," offers insights into American history as seen through the letters of her forebears and includes such luminaries as Edith Wharton, Henry Adams, and Theodore Roosevelt. Her second book, "The Falcon Diaries: an American in Jordan," chronicles a view of the East-West relations from the Eastern perspective, drawing on her eight years of experience as a Westerner living in Jordan. It has been hailed as required reading for the U.S. State Department.

## **Faanya Rose**

Born in Southern Africa, Faanya Lydia Rose spent her early years in Victoria Falls, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) before relocating to the UK in 1980. In London's financial center, she left an indelible mark.

Her professional journey included serving as the Group Treasurer of the British Airports Authority during the privatization era under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Additionally, she held a position on the Board of Heathrow Express. Her financial acumen also benefited the London Ambulance Service, where she served as a Financial Advisor. Notably, she was appointed by Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks to the Jewish Association of Business Ethics Committee.

Beyond her achievements in the corporate world, she dedicated her time to the not-for-profit sector. She assumed the role of Chair at the British Eye Research Foundation and played a pivotal role when it merged with Fight for Sight, the largest eye research charity in the UK, eventually becoming its President. In an historic achievement, she became the first woman and first British citizen to hold the prestigious position of President at The Explorers Club. Her deep involvement in exploration

and scientific discovery is exemplified through her active sponsorship and participation in numerous programs offered by the Club.

## **Gil Roth**

Gil Roth is the President of the Pharma & Biopharma Outsourcing Association (PBOA), a nonprofit trade group that advocates for the legislative, regulatory and general business interests of biopharmaceutical contract service providers. He founded the PBOA in 2014 and has been involved in this sector since 1999.

## **Janet L. Walsh**

Dr. Janet L. Walsh is the CEO and President of Birchtree Global, LLC, and Birchtree Performance HR. Birchtree Global provides the legal, financial, tax, and HR expertise to guide business leaders in international expansion. Birchtree Performance HR advises presidents, finance, and HR VP's on increasing corporate top and bottom-line financial performance through HR operations.

Dr. Walsh has worked in and established business operations in 82 countries and all 50 US States. She has been Vice President and Director in Fortune 500 multinationals. She is a noted thought leader and speaker in global market entry, global human resources, and financial performance. Her current research includes HR contributions to financial performance in the Dow 30, financial issues in high performance workplaces and organizational consequences of bullying. She and her team have won the outstanding research award at the 2019 and 2023 Global Conference on Business and Finance.

She serves on The Explorers Club Board of Directors as Chair of Ethics and Governance, the Human Resources Certification Institute where she sits on the Finance Committee, the Bedford Film Board and the Manhattanville College Corporate Educational Advisory Board.

Dr. Walsh is an amateur archeologist. She found a native American work camp on Pumpkinvine Creek in North Georgia. She has worked on multiple archeology and paleontology projects in the US and overseas. She is an award-winning watercolorist whose paintings have hung in the Booth Museum of Western Art, the largest Western Art Museum in the US. A competitive equestrian, she regularly competes in cross country events, winning the 2021 division championship in the 50th anniversary of the Peekskill Rotary Horse Show.

Dr. Walsh holds a BA in Economics from Bucknell University with a minor in Japanese, an MBA from Loyola University and a DBA from the University of Phoenix. She is an adjunct professor of global business at Columbia University, Fairfield University, and NYIT.

## **Dr. Joel N. Myers**

Dr. Joel N. Myers, Founder and Executive Chairman of AccuWeather, is considered the “father of modern commercial meteorology” and the nation’s most respected authority on the business of weather. A visionary entrepreneur who The New York Times named “the most accurate man in weather,” Dr. Myers started AccuWeather as a graduate student in 1962 and built the company into a global leader in forecast accuracy, weather-related big data, business, and predictive analytics. Today, AccuWeather is recognized as the most accurate and most used source of weather forecasts and warnings in the world, serving more than half of Fortune 500 companies and over 1.5 billion people. AccuWeather’s proven Superior Accuracy™ has saved tens of thousands of lives and prevented hundreds of billions of dollars in property losses. Dr. Myers has been recognized in Entrepreneur Magazine’s Encyclopedia of Entrepreneurs book as one of the greatest entrepreneurs in American history. He is also a Trustee of the Committee for Economic Development (CED), a Fellow of The Explorer’s Club, a Fellow of the Nantucket Project, and was an active Member of the Penn State Board of Trustees for 33 years. His new book, Invisible Iceberg: How Climate and Weather Have Shaped History, is due out in 2024.

## **John D. Negroponte**

Ambassador John D. Negroponte is Vice Chair of McLarty Associates, which he joined in 2009, following a distinguished career in diplomacy and national security. Ambassador Negroponte held government positions abroad and in Washington between 1960 and 1997 and again from 2001 to 2008.

He has served as Ambassador to Honduras, Mexico, the Philippines, the United Nations, and Iraq. In Washington he served twice on the White House National Security Council staff, first as Director for Vietnam in the Nixon Administration and then as Deputy National Security Advisor under President Reagan. He has also held a cabinet level position as the first Director of National Intelligence under President George W. Bush.



His most recent position in government was as Deputy Secretary of State, where he served as the State Department's Chief Operating Officer.

While in the private sector from 1997 to 2001, Ambassador Negroponte was Executive Vice President of the McGraw-Hill Companies, with responsibility for overseeing the company's international activities. During those years he was also Chairman of the French-American Foundation. Since 2009, Ambassador Negroponte has held teaching positions at Yale, the George Washington University, the University of Virginia, and Georgetown.

Ambassador Negroponte serves as Chairman Emeritus of the Council of the Americas/Americas Society. He is Co-chairman of the US-Philippines Society and a past member of the Secretary of State's Foreign Affairs Policy Board. He has also served as Chairman of the Intelligence and National Security Alliance.

Ambassador Negroponte has received numerous awards in recognition of his more than four decades of public service, including the State Department's Distinguished Service Medal on two separate occasions, the highest award which can be conferred by the Secretary of State, and on January 16, 2009, President Bush awarded Ambassador Negroponte the National Security Medal.

## **John Rogers**

John Rogers is a seasoned corporate leader, currently serving as a Board member and Executive of Corporate Development at Grenadier Holdings, a diverse private holding company with investments spanning diverse industries. His extensive executive experience includes prior CEO roles at three technology companies that achieved significant growth and listing on the European and NASDAQ stock markets. Presently, he is Chair of Paragon ID, the Euronext-listed secure identification technology leader. John's expertise lies in driving business transformations and turnarounds through aggressive expansion strategies, both organically and through acquisitions. His background includes financial and operational roles at General Motors and Delphi Automotive, and he holds degrees in Economics and Business from Trinity College Dublin and an MBA from ESCP Paris. John is fluent in French and German. John's notable achievements also encompass contributions to the RFID technology industry and extensive speaking engagements in the field.

## **Leonard M. Levie**

Leonard M. Levie is Chairman and Founder of American Industrial Acquisition Corporation ([www.aiac.com](http://www.aiac.com)), Avara Pharma Services ([www.avara.com](http://www.avara.com)), and each of its affiliates and foundations. He also serves as Chairman of the AIAC-Koch Industries joint venture, Liquid Cooled Motors.

Mr. Levie is a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Explorers Club and of the Forest Products Association of Canada, and is a Founding Trustee of the Pharma & Biopharma Outsourcing Association. He is a Member of the Trilateral Commission, the Bretton Woods Committee, the Council on Foreign Relations Legacy Society, the Chairman's Legacy Society of the Atlantic Council, the Patrons Circle of the Japan Society, the Centennial Society of the Economic Club of New York, and the Heritage Society of the National Academy of Sciences.

Mr. Levie is a Member of the Center for a New American Security's Council and its Leadership's Circle and is a Fellow of the Asia Society, of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, and of the Royal Geographical Society.

He has served as a guest lecturer at Harvard Business School, Yale School of Management, and the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.

He is a Member of the Dean's Council of the John F. Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University, the Oliver Wendell Holmes Society of Harvard Law School, the John C. Whitehead Society of Harvard Business School, and the Founding Grants Society of Stanford University.

He is Chairman of the D'Oyly Carte Foundation and is a Member of the Executive Committee and Patron of the Baryshnikov Arts Center. He is a Member of the Encore Society and the National Guild of the Metropolitan Opera of New York and is National Patron of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Mr. Levie was awarded the Turnaround Management Association's 2017, 2018, and 2019 Turnaround of the Year Awards for the revival of Vermont Aerospace Industries, Canadian Kraft Paper Industries, and Union Metal Industries.

## **Libby Locke**

Libby Locke is one of the nation's most sought-after libel lawyers. She is a trusted counselor and fierce advocate for Fortune 100 companies and high-profile individuals facing existential reputational attacks from the national media and other influential publishers, achieving remarkable results for her clients both in and outside the courtroom. Court watchers have called her "as good as they get," and "aggressive and not afraid to litigate." After co-founding Clare Locke LLP in 2014, Libby rapidly rose to national prominence for a highly-publicized, multi-million-dollar trial victory against Rolling Stone magazine about a fabricated gang rape at the University of Virginia. In 2019, she won a \$26 million federal jury verdict on behalf of a North Carolina businessman who was defamed by a public company during a proxy fight. As a skilled appellate advocate, in 2019, Libby achieved a rare win against The New York Times on behalf of former Gov. Sarah Palin in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. And in 2021, she secured a rare injunction and anti-SLAPP win against The New York Times on behalf of Project Veritas.

Libby is ranked Band 1 in the Chambers USA Guide for nationwide first amendment litigation and by Chambers High Net Worth in the category of global defamation/reputation management providers. She is regularly asked to speak on issues involving the First Amendment, media, and reputation, including publishing multiple op-eds in The Wall Street Journal and appearing as a guest on Fox News, CNN, and ABC's 20/20. Libby graduated from NYU's College of Arts and Science with a degree in Politics and Economics, and she received her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center. Libby lives with her husband, Tom Clare, and their children in Alexandria, Virginia.

## **Margaret I. Chustecki, MD**

Dr. Margaret I. Chustecki is an Assistant Clinical Professor at Yale School of Medicine. Educated at Warsaw Medical School, she completed her training at Newton Wellesley Hospital and the New England Medical Center. Before starting her internal medicine practice in 2003, she worked as an Attending Physician for the Hospitalist Service at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Dr. Chustecki completed her MBA program at the Yale School of Management in 2009. This contributed to her founding and leading Internal Medicine of Greater New Haven, with 10 locations in Connecticut. Her medical team aims to improve efficiency, performance, and communication with patients and the public. She has implemented a quality program that achieved NCQA accreditation in eligible markets and

supported a quality infrastructure for additional programs, such as Meaningful Use and PQRS. She coordinates the team of medical providers to support medical education and collect data to improve patient outcomes, manage costs, and improve healthcare quality. She is the author and co-author of multiple medical publications, including the latest Essential Rationale Healthcare Economics: Past, Present, & Future by New York, Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

As an attending physician, Dr. Chustecki has taught interns and residents at Yale New Haven Hospital for many years. She has also taught and supervised medical students, PA students, and residents from YNHH in Internal Medicine of Greater New Haven offices.

In 2015, she co-founded Chase Medical Research of Greater New Haven and started to intensify her research activities. She is currently the chief clinical trial investigator for multi-institutional trials. This work began with a long-term outcome study to assess the effectiveness of adding an investigational drug to a multi-center, randomized, double-blind, active-controlled, parallel-group, and phase III trial. The trial evaluated the safety, efficacy, and comparison of add-on therapy with different doses of an investigational drug.

Dr. Chustecki serves on the Board of Advisors of Avara Pharma Services Ltd. and the Board of Directors of the D'Oyly Carte Foundation.

## **Mark Vitner**

Mark Vitner is Chief Economist of Piedmont Crescent Capital. After spending the past 30 years as Managing Director and Senior Economist at Wells Fargo 's Corporate and Investment Bank, Mark Vitner founded Piedmont Crescent Capital in 2022. At his new firm, Mark provides analysis of the macro economy to clients located throughout the country and writes a series of reports on the US economy, local economies, small business, and residential and commercial real estate. He also provides economic content for CAVU Securities, writing their monthly newsletter, The CAVU Compass.

Originally from Atlanta, Mark earned a BBA in economics from the University of Georgia, an MBA from the University of North Florida and completed further graduate work in economics at the University of Florida. Mark is a member of the National Association of Business Economics and completed the NABE Advanced Training in Economics

Program at Carnegie Mellon University. He is also a member of NABE's inaugural Certified Business Economist (CB) class.

Mark is active in the community, co-founding the Charlotte NABE chapter and serving as board chair for the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community. Mark also chaired the Economic Advisory Council for the California Chamber of Commerce for several years and currently serves on the Joint Advisory Board of Economists for the Commonwealth of Virginia. His commentary has been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, and many other publications. Mark also makes frequent guest appearances on CNBC and other major networks.

## **Michael Aronoff**

Michael Aronoff is the Chief of Staff at The Park Group, a boutique consulting firm specializing in global governance and international security. He has previous work experience in South Korea and Israel and holds an MA in International Affairs and a BA in political science and history.

## **Michelle Caruso-Cabrera**

Michelle Caruso-Cabrera is currently the Chief Executive Officer of MCC Productions LLC, a communications and entertainment company she founded in September 2018, as well as a contributor to CNBC, and a member of the board of Wendy's and of Del Real Foods, a portfolio company of Palladium Equity.

Previously, Caruso-Cabrera spent over 20 years at CNBC, where she was the network's first Latina anchor and long-time Chief International Correspondent. Throughout her career, Caruso-Cabrera reported live from around the world, covering a wide range of stories including the 2008 financial crisis, U.S. elections, the debt crisis in Greece, the Brexit vote, the European banking crisis, and Russia's first invasion of Ukraine in 2014. She has reported live from Ukraine, Russia, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico, and throughout Europe. She joined CNBC from WTSP-TV in St. Petersburg, Florida, where she spent four years as a general assignment reporter.

Prior to that, Caruso-Cabrera was a special projects producer for Univision where she covered Latin America, winning an Emmy for

coverage of the AIDS crisis. She began her career in 1990 while at Wellesley College, as a stringer for The New York Times, reporting for the education section. Caruso-Cabrera has also been published in the Wall Street Journal and Washington Post, among other publications. The National Association of Hispanic Journalists awarded her “Broadcaster of the Year” and Hispanic Business magazine named her one of the “100 Most Influential Hispanics” in the country.

Caruso-Cabrera serves as President of the Ballet Hispánico Board of Directors and on the international advisory board of the IE Business School in Madrid, one of Europe’s top business schools. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Economics Club of New York, the Latino Corporate Directors Association, and an active supporter of Manna of Life Ministries in The Bronx. She previously served as a director of The Beneficent Company Group, a privately-held company, from September 2018 to February 2020 before becoming a candidate for federal and city-level political office from 2020 to 2021. She served on the Transition Committee for New York City Mayor Eric Adams in 2021.

## **Patricia Duff**

Patricia Duff is a prominent political activist, fundraiser for philanthropic causes, and founder of The Common Good, a nonpartisan, nonprofit pro-democracy organization that promotes greater citizen participation in civic life and the political process. In the late 1980s, Patricia started Show Coalition, a nonpartisan organization focused on the nexus between Washington politics and Hollywood. Patricia served as vice president of two of the country’s leading political strategy and consulting firms in Washington, D.C., Squier-Eskew Communications and Patrick Caddell & Associates, has worked on numerous campaigns, including presidential and senate election efforts, served on an investigative committee for the U.S. House of Representatives, and has been an activist for a number of causes. Patricia was regularly cited in major publications such as the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and elsewhere on politics, and was named a “Rising Star” by the *Los Angeles Times* and as one of the “Women We Love” by *Esquire* magazine for her work in politics. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Board of Advisors for Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, PEN America, the National Harbor Conservancy which oversees Federal Hall, and a former Presidential appointee to the Board of Trustees of the Library of Congress, among other boards, including National Public Radio, Save the Children, Lincoln Center Film Society, American Ballet Theater,

Hamptons International Film Festival, Planned Parenthood, and Brady United.

## **Paul W. Swaney III**

Paul W. Swaney III brings over two decades of experience in enhancing and transforming business practices, with a focus on Lean methodologies and continuous improvement. He is founder and Chair of the Swaney Group, a turnaround management advisory and investment firm. As Managing Director at Partners Group, a \$130 billion private equity firm, Paul sat on the Global Investment Committee and led the Industrials Investment Group. Paul served at McKinsey & Company and experience and in the US Navy's Nuclear Submarine Force, which fostered his operational insights and disciplined approach to management.

## **Rebecca Patterson**

Rebecca Patterson is a globally recognized investor and macro-economic researcher with more than 25 years' experience studying how politics and policy intersect with economic trends to drive financial markets.

Most recently, Rebecca was Chief Investment Strategist for Bridgewater Associates, the world's largest hedge fund. Previously, she was Chief Investment Officer of Bessemer Trust, overseeing \$85 billion in client assets. Before joining Bessemer in 2012, Rebecca spent more than 15 years at JPMorgan. There she worked as a researcher in the firm's investment bank in Europe, Singapore and the U.S. She also served as Chief Investment Strategist in the asset management arm of the firm and ran the Private Bank's global currency and commodity trading desk. Rebecca's transition to finance came after several years working as a journalist, covering financial markets, policy and politics in the U.S. and Europe.

Rebecca is currently a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission and the Economic Club of New York. She has supported the Federal Reserve in different capacities over her career, including as a member of the New York Federal Reserve's Investor Advisory and Foreign Exchange committees. She serves on the University of Florida's Investment Corporation Advisory Board and was Chair of the Board for three years. She currently chairs the Council for Economic Education and is a member of the board of the Bretton Woods Committee. Rebecca's insights are frequently sought after by the media. She co-hosted the first-ever television program dedicated to foreign-exchange markets, CNBC's "Money in Motion."

## **Richard Cohen**

Richard Cohen founded Capital Properties, a privately owned real estate investment, development and management firm in Boston in 1977. The company's portfolio includes premier residential, hotel and commercial properties and has acquired, managed, or developed over 18,000 condominiums and apartment units and over 8 million square feet of office space in 14 different states consisting of \$6 billion of assets. Capital Properties has offices in New York and Boston.

Mr. Cohen is a member of the Yale School of Architecture Dean's Council and of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute Board of Advisors at Harvard. He is a Trustee of the New York Public Library. A former Trustee of Boston University, he was a member of the Executive and Investment Committees and was Chair of both the Real Estate Committee and the Governance Committee and a member of the Dean's Advisory Council at the University's School of Management.

## **Robert Blumenfeld**

With over 30 years of experience spanning diverse industries, Robert (Bobby) Blumenfeld specializes in corporate restructuring, investment banking, and mergers and acquisitions. He currently serves as Managing Director of American Industrial Acquisition Corporation (AIAC), focusing on acquiring non-core manufacturing businesses across North America, Europe, and Asia. Additionally, Bobby is the Managing Partner of the Blumenfeld Financial Group, offering growth advisory, restructuring, and mergers and acquisition guidance to B2B and B2C companies.

Formerly the Executive Director of ACG New York for nearly a decade, Bobby's leadership brought together dealmakers representing over \$100 billion in investable capital. He has also contributed his expertise to several nonprofit organizations and received awards for his outstanding service in the financial industry. Bobby holds a BS degree from Babson College and an MBA from Fordham University.

## **Robert Pingeon**

Robert Pingeon is the president of Mestre, Inc., which operates as a consultancy in the Middle East. Mr. Pingeon lives in and works out of Amman, Jordan. Mestre has consulted with large and midsize companies on projects relating to infrastructure and financial services in Iraq since 2003. Notable clients have included: Siemens, Schneider Electric, Kohler Corporation, Vatech, Elliott Management, Power Really, Louis



Berger, and Shamara Group. Prior to moving to Jordan, Mr. Pigeon worked from Paris as a senior executive for Chubb Corporation and later the CIGNA insurance group, with responsibilities for their European operations. He has a BA in journalism from the Boston University School of Communications and an MBA in finance from the NYU Stern School of Business.

## **Stephen Dizard**

Stephen Dizard is the Managing Partner of Wood Capital Partners (WCP), a NYC-based diversified investment firm specializing in financial restructurings.

Stephen began his career on Wall Street in 1981 in Lehman Brothers' sovereign debt advisory group, working on restructurings in Costa Rica, Ghana, Guyana, Nigeria and Turkey. In 1984, he moved to Salomon Brothers (later Citigroup), establishing its emerging markets debt trading department, including the firm's local investment banks in Argentina, Brazil and Chile.

Moving to London in 1997, Stephen led the trading during that period's Russian financial crisis and the Asian financial crisis. Under his leadership, Citigroup's emerging markets trading group merged with its high yield group to form Citigroup's global distress investing effort, with a balance sheet of over \$5 billion.

In 2006, Stephen moved to the special situations effort at Wood Capital Partners, a global multi-strategy hedge fund, where he initiated and led efforts in Japan and the Middle East, as well as leading the firm's catastrophe insurance businesses. Current portfolio concentrations at WCP are in sovereign debt, mining, and the hospitality industry.

A native of New York City, Stephen was raised in Europe and Asia, graduating from Aiglon College (Switzerland) before attending The University of Michigan (Honors College, B.A.) and M.I.T. (Ph.D./ABD). He resides in NYC with his wife, Michelle Caruso-Cabrera.

## **Tina Park**

Dr. Tina J. Park is the Chief Executive Officer of The Park Group, a boutique consulting firm specializing in global governance and international security. At the University of Toronto, her award-winning thesis examined a century of relationship between Canada and Korea. For the past decade, Tina has trained senior ranking officers in the Canadian

Armed Forces and NATO Defense College in Rome on security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. As a Vice-President of the NATO Association of Canada, Tina is actively engaged in public diplomacy efforts and comments frequently in the media. Tina speaks six languages and has published widely in English, Korean and Spanish.

## **Tom Clare**

Tom Clare is one of the country's top libel lawyers. He co-founded Clare Locke LLP in 2014, where his practice is devoted to defending clients against high-profile reputational attacks in print, broadcast, and online media outlets. He has litigated defamation matters for Fortune 100 companies and prominent individuals, including CEOs, hedge fund managers, professional athletes and sports teams, and other high-profile individuals who find themselves under attack by the media. In 2023, together with co-counsel, Tom secured a \$787.5 million settlement from Fox News for his client, Dominion Voting Systems—the largest publicly known defamation settlement in U.S. history involving a media company. And in 2022, Tom secured a \$52.125 million defamation judgment before FINRA on behalf of client Daniel Micahlow against his former employer DE Shaw—the largest defamation award ever handed down by FINRA for a dispute within the industry. Tom is ranked Band 1 in the Chambers USA Guide for nationwide first amendment litigation and by Chambers High Net Worth in the category of global defamation and reputation management providers. Tom graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a BA in Government and from the University of Notre Dame Law School, where he was Editor-In-Chief of the Notre Dame Law Review. Tom lives with his wife and law firm partner, Libby Locke, and their children in Alexandria, Virginia.



## *Acknowledgments*

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to all who have contributed to making this luncheon possible. We extend our gratitude to the event organizers, sponsors, and volunteers for their unwavering dedication.

For inquiries or additional information, please contact us:

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