

Opportunity Rising:

Empowering Americans to Flourish in a Global Networked Economy and Revitalizing the American Dream

“The America we want our children to inherit—a country that is strong and inspires opportunity for all—is at risk. There is nothing more important than finding ways to advance Americans at all income levels to successfully transition to the economy of the future.”

– Co-chairs, Zoë Baird and Howard Schultz



In recent years, globalization and technology have changed our way of life more than anyone could have imagined. While enriching us in many ways, these forces also have eliminated traditionally secure jobs and eroded economic security for millions. Now we face a great national challenge: finding new strategies that help all Americans flourish in today’s economy.

“What big gear could we find that we could grab and move one way or another and make all the little ones spin?”

– Michael Leavitt

*Chairman, Leavitt Partners
Former Governor, State of Utah
Former Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Former Secretary, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

To tackle this pressing social need, a broad collaboration of entrepreneurs, academics, technologists, CEOs, diplomats, community activists, religious leaders, and others have come together through the Markle Economic Future Initiative. The Initiative is advancing transformative strategies to use globalization and technology as tools to achieve the America we seek. Ideas must be paired with powerful actions to accelerate innovations that return opportunity to Americans.

“One of the places where technology is going to meet opportunity is in deploying people in new ways.”

– Tim O’Reilly

Founder and CEO, O’Reilly Media

The Markle Economic Future Initiative is grounded in a common view that in our networked world, more people are connected more powerfully than ever before. Thanks to

limitless possibilities offered by online platforms, the digital economy can make it far easier for Americans and businesses of all sizes to offer skills and services to anyone, anywhere—here or abroad.

Through information sharing, online tools, and innovative forms of credit and finance, people can more easily expand or launch new businesses and hire more workers. Americans can learn and train in innovative ways that can better connect them to good-paying jobs.

The Initiative is both a catalyst and an advocate for actions that help Americans use the transformative forces of technology and globalization to their advantage in order to succeed in a world of constant change.

“We have to find a way in which we enable a rethinking of human capital development so we can find a way in which people are not left out of access to opportunity.”

– Michael Crow

President, Arizona State University

Inspired by their work with the Markle Initiative, Howard Schultz, chairman, president and ceo of Starbucks and co-chair of the Initiative, and Dr. Michael Crow, president of Arizona State University and Initiative member, collaborated on a groundbreaking prototype for reducing America’s education divide. The innovative plan will provide access to an online college education at ASU for thousands of Starbucks partners (employees) in the United States. Other Initiative members also are pursuing actions to help Americans succeed in a networked world that is leaving millions of Americans economically vulnerable.

Markle Economic Future Initiative Members

Zoë Baird

President, Markle Foundation
Co-chair, Markle Economic Future Initiative

Howard Schultz

chairman, president and ceo, Starbucks
Co-chair, Markle Economic Future Initiative

Madeleine K. Albright

Chair, Albright Stonebridge Group
Former Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

Michael J. McCloskey

Co-Founder and CEO, Select Milk Producers
General Manager and Partner, Fair Oaks Dairy Farms

Marc Benioff

Chairman and CEO, salesforce.com

Kenneth B. Mehlman

Partner, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts
Former Chairman, Republican National Committee

Cory A. Booker

Member, United States Senate
Former Mayor, City of Newark

Cheryl Mills

CEO, BlackIvy Group
Former Counselor and Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of State

John Seely Brown

Visiting Scholar and Advisor to the Provost, University of Southern California
Independent Co-Chairman, Deloitte's Center for the Edge

Craig Mundie

Senior Advisor to the CEO, Microsoft

Sheila P. Burke

Strategic Advisor, Baker Donelson
Senior Research Fellow and Member of the Faculty, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Gavin Newsom

Lieutenant Governor, State of California
Former Mayor, City of San Francisco

Calvin O. Butts, III

Pastor, The Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York City
President, State University of New York College at Old Westbury

Tim O'Reilly

Founder and CEO, O'Reilly Media

Geoffrey Canada

President and CEO, Harlem Children's Zone

Robert D. Putnam

Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy, Harvard University

Julián Castro

Mayor, City of San Antonio

L. Rafael Reif

President, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Michael M. Crow

President, Arizona State University

Walter Robb

Co-CEO, Whole Foods Market

James X. Dempsey

Vice President for Public Policy, Center for Democracy & Technology

Clara Shih

CEO, Hearsay Social

Jack Dorsey

Co-Founder and CEO, Square
Co-Founder and Executive Chairman, Twitter

Elizabeth H. Shuler

Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO

Esther Dyson

Chairman, EDventure Holdings

Michael Spence

William R. Berkley Professor in Economics & Business, Leonard N. Stern School of Business, NYU
Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations
Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University
Philip H. Knight Professor and Dean, Emeritus, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University

Michèle A. Flournoy

CEO, Center for a New American Security
Former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, U.S. Department of Defense

Roy Spence

Co-Founder and Chairman, GSD&M
Co-Founder & CEO, The Purpose Institute

Antonia Hernández

President and CEO, California Community Foundation

James B. Steinberg

Dean, Maxwell School, Syracuse University
Former Deputy Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

Leila Janah

Founder and CEO, Samasource

Dorothy Stoneman

CEO and Founder, YouthBuild USA

Lewis B. Kaden

Chairman, Markle Foundation Board of Directors
Former Vice Chairman, Citigroup

Ashley Swearengin

Mayor, City of Fresno

Nancy F. Koehn

James E. Robison Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School

Dave Wirtschafter

Board Member, WME Entertainment

Michael O. Leavitt

Chairman, Leavitt Partners
Former Governor, State of Utah
Former Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Former Secretary, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Philip D. Zelickow

Dean, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, and White Burkett Miller Professor of History, University of Virginia
Former Executive Director, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission)
Former Counselor, U.S. Department of State

Tara Lemmey

CEO, LENS

Robert B. Zoellick

Chairman, Board of International Advisors, Goldman Sachs
Senior Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics
Former President, World Bank

Gilman Louie

Partner, Alsop Louie Partners
Member, Markle Foundation Board of Directors

“In order to restore the American dream, in order to bring back hope and promise for so many people in this nation, we need strong visionary leadership. That leadership has to be more than just strong and visionary in the sense of rhetoric, it has to be ready to take risks.”

– Reverend Calvin Butts, III

*Pastor, The Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York City
President, State University of New York College at Old Westbury*

Initiative members are guided by the American past as well as the present. We've been through economic transitions before. New factories and industries displaced agricultural and craft workers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries before the U.S. emerged as the world's leading economy.

Once again, Americans can grab hold of the forces of change, learn new skills, and generate new opportunities for work.

Today, **Opportunity Rising** is a promise. The Markle Economic Future Initiative intends to turn it into a reality.

Please join us in our goal to restore America's dream that hard work, talent, and creativity can lead to success. Visit www.markle.org or write to us at Opportunityrising@markle.org to learn more about the Initiative.

“As people lose faith in big government, big business, and big institutions, no big idea or better path has emerged to take their place. But Siri cannot tell you how to build a democracy. You cannot tweet your way to good governance. There is no app for inclusive economic growth. Humanity's progress depends on human leadership.”

– Madeleine Albright

*Chair, Albright Stonebridge Group
Former Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State*
