



Letter from the Founder



“Trailblazer” philanthropist Marc Benioff with *Lifestyles Magazine/Meaningful Influence* Founder Gabriel Erem, photographed at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

THE year was 1972. The historical record showed that major philanthropy was the rarified realm of the wealthiest families in North America; we set out to establish a dedicated media platform that saluted America’s culture of giving with the hope that, by showing good examples and best practices, we could inspire new givers to join.

We turned to philanthropist David Rockefeller for his advice. Based on his enthusiastic encouragement, we launched our magazine. We are now entering our 48th year of serving the community of the most committed individual philanthropists in the world.

Looking back on nearly five decades of service, we feel that we played an important role in helping to cultivate the culture of giving, hand in hand with three generations of the world’s most philanthropic families.

We started with the grandparents’ generation and continued with their children. Now we are working in tandem with this generation’s givers, sophisticated donors to a multitude of causes.

Who would have thought 48 years ago we would see billion dollar fortunes made in the blink of an eye and that we would see the birth of a whole new generation of social entrepreneurs, impact investors, and change makers who would raise the art of giving to never before seen heights? Who would have predicted that one day we would have successful, unprecedented efforts like the Giving Pledge, the brainchild of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett?

And who could have predicted the bold gifts that followed—including the astounding \$1 billion from Eric and Wendy Schmidt, announced as we hit our deadline, to fund talent

across the globe in service of others?

In 2015, we published an exclusive cover interview with Microsoft co-founder, the late Paul Allen. In the interview, he announced his extraordinary brain research initiative he funded that year with a half billion dollar donation.

Early in 2016, one of our *Lifestyles Magazine/Meaningful Influence* board members, a mega philanthropist, invited me to a party on Paul Allen’s super yacht, “Octopus”. I was very pleased to hear from Mr. Allen that following his *Lifestyles Magazine* cover story, he was approached by a number of leading philanthropists and families who were also interested in supporting brain research.

We spoke of one highly philanthropic couple in particular, one of the first signatories to the Giving Pledge—who were inspired by the story we ran, which addressed Alzheimer’s and dementia research. As it happens, the gentleman in question had appeared on two earlier covers of our publication.

I offered to initiate a dialogue between them and Paul Allen, and, shortly thereafter, we were delighted to announce a new mega-gift of \$185 million for brain research from the couple. That amount has grown to \$300 million.

As this issue of our magazine goes on press announcing over \$25.5 billion in new individual philanthropic gifts this year, a new announcement was made by the above-mentioned donors: On November 12, 2019, they declared an additional gift of \$106 million to launch a research initiative at three universities aimed at finding treatments for brain and nervous system diseases, estimated to cost the nation more than \$1.5 trillion a year.

We feel our publication serves an important

purpose: It provides an invaluable service by informing and inspiring potential new donors to a multitude of causes.

Today, we have a new goal.

We are in active dialogue with a new cadre of philanthropic leaders who successfully built bridges between their personal philanthropic philosophy, values, and their corporate responsibility.

The powerful combination of individual and corporate giving and a values-driven, ethical approach will cure diseases end pandemics, provide education to those who had no previous opportunities, and successfully address our world's mounting and most pressing challenges.

In recent years, attempts were made by some corporate entities to create the image, but not the substance, of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Companies should never engage in greenwashing or fake CSR. When companies pursue that kind of insincere CSR, they run the risk of upsetting both their employees and the public—doing this can, in fact, negatively impact a company's bottom line. While many companies might assume that genuine CSR is a costly venture, the opposite is in fact true.

CSR *can* be a major financial boon.

It is time for genuine CSR—and for all the right reasons.

By practicing corporate social responsibility, also called corporate citizenship, companies can be conscious of the kind of impact they are having on all aspects of society, including economic, social, and environmental. To engage in CSR means that, in the ordinary course of business, a company is operating in ways that benefit society and the environment.

Our first—and most well received step—in this direction was the exclusive cover story we presented on Brian T. Moynihan, the chairman and CEO of Bank of America, in our 2018 New Year edition.

Under Mr. Moynihan's direction, Bank of America has greatly expanded the size and scale of its

goals to advance economic, environmental, and social progress across the globe. In the decade since he became CEO, the company has committed about \$50 billion in community development lending and investing and \$2 billion in charitable giving.

Also, under Mr. Moynihan's outstanding leadership, in 2019 the bank announced its third environmental business initiative of \$300 billion over 10 years, having already committed \$145 billion low-carbon, renewable energy financing since 2007.

Based on the highly positive feedback we received from our readership after we wrote about Mr. Moynihan's exemplary leadership of Bank of America, we decided to continue focusing on corporate leaders and their organizations.

In this issue, we are very pleased to present one of the true originals in the right kind of CSR: "trailblazer" Marc Benioff.

"Philanthropy is good business."

This simple philosophy was turned into a fast developing science by visionaries like Mr. Benioff. Their completely revolutionary approach is opening new vistas in ways never before imagined.

The inspiring track record of Mr. Benioff's wildly successful company, Salesforce, is solid proof that developing a culture of giving among employees works magnificently.

Data provides solid, indisputable proof that giving back is the second highest reason new employees join Salesforce, and it ranks in the top three reasons why their employees stay. This is the ultimate "win-win" and it should be adopted by the corporate world as soon as possible.

Please enjoy the fascinating piece on Marc Benioff and his wife, Lynne, in addition to all the other game changers you'll find on the following pages.



Gabriel A. Erem

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