International Audience Gathers in NYC to Hear Data-driven Case for Diversity and Inclusion in Insurance

_Industry experts highlight how diversity fuels innovation at the Women in Insurance Global Conference_

NEW YORK, June 13 2017 – The Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) rallied nearly 600 attendees at its Women in Insurance Global Conference in New York City last week to discuss ideas at the intersection of diversity, inclusion and innovation. More than 50 renowned industry leaders, academic authorities and policy experts inspired attendees around the theme of “The Power of Diverse Thought and Innovation” over the two-and-one half day conference at the Sheraton Times Square New York.

A central take-away from the conference that resonated across many of the presentations was voiced eloquently by Myrna Chao, a co-chair of Willis Towers Watson’s Global Inclusion and Diversity Council. “At some point we have to tell leaders there’s enough data and analysis; now you need to do the right thing.”

Alongside the imperative for inclusion, speakers including Daniel Schreiber, CEO of insurer Lemonade, emphasized the need for the insurance industry to innovate and how radically Insuretech will alter the industry.

All of the speakers provided thought-provoking anecdotes and data-rich presentations that offered strategies for innovating, fostering diversity and creating inclusive work environments. Among the conference highlights were calls for action and critical topics of discussion, including:

- Identifying the business for diversity and gender equality in the workplace
- Leveraging diversity as a strength
- Leadership through change
- Insuretech innovation in China, driven by women leaders
- Recognizing bias in underwriting and how to eliminate it
- “When women thrive” - the impact of innovation and diversity

As Paula Downey, President and CEO of CSAA Insurance Group, a AAA Insurer, told conference attendees, “We are compelled to reinvent the industry by consumer demand.” These demands will be fulfilled through innovative solutions developed by a more diverse industry, and one more representative of the customers it serves.
“The response from participants has been nothing short of fantastic,” said Betsy Myatt, executive director of the IICF Northeast Division and chair of the Women in Insurance Global Conference. “We spent two and a half days immersed in discussions of diversity, inclusion and the role of advancing technology and business innovations that are remaking the insurance industry. What our attendees learned here, and the networking connections they’ve made, will build a diverse generation of insurance professionals leading innovative organizations.”

In conjunction with the conference, a special dinner was held on June 8 to honor IICF’s Inclusion Champion Award winners for 2017. Award recipients included Sarah Pang of CNA, Marya Propis of AIG, John Kinney of The Hartford and Hank Watkins of Lloyd’s North America. Bill Henry and Joan Lamm-Tennant of Marsh & McLennan Agency and Blue Marble Microinsurance respectively, were honored with IICF’s inaugural Inclusion Champion Career Achievement Award. Award-winning journalist Norah O’Donnell served as the featured speaker for the Inclusion Award Dinner.

IICF will continue the conversations from this conference by hosting Women in Insurance events in Los Angeles and Chicago later this year, and in 2018 will host five regional, day-long events in Chicago, Dallas, London, Los Angeles and New York as part of the Women in Insurance Conference Series. For details please contact Betsy Myatt at emyatt@iicf.com or visit womensconference.iicf.org.

Proceeds of the Women in Insurance Global Conference fund IICF’s Early Literacy Initiative, which aims to help provide every young child the opportunity to learn, read and write – regardless of economic means.

**About the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation**

The Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) is a unique nonprofit that unites the collective strengths of the insurance industry to help communities and enrich lives through grants, volunteer service and leadership. Established in 1994, IICF has contributed $25.3 million in community grants, along with more than 240,500 volunteer hours, to hundreds of charities and nonprofit organizations, reinvesting in local communities where funds are raised. IICF is a registered nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Learn more at www.iicf.org.