



REIMAGINING SOCIETIES: RECLAIMING HUMANITY WITH GENDER EQUALITY

Cobra Legal Solutions is delighted to congratulate Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Candice Hunter Corby as the 2019 recipient of the international “Women of the Decade in Law & Leadership” Award presented annually by the Women Economic Forum. The WEF’s annual meeting was held this year in New Delhi, India with the theme of “Reimagining Societies: Reclaiming Humanity with Gender Equality.” This large global event hosts over 2000 women from 120 countries, coming together to foster empowering conversations, connections and collaborations among women entrepreneurs and leaders from all spheres of life. The award, presented by Dr. Harbeen Arora, Chairperson of Women Economic Forum and ALL Ladies League, at the meeting on April 11th, recognizes Ms. Corby’s achievements and her leadership celebrating diversity and championing equality.

We asked Candice a few questions about the award and about her thinking on topics of diversity and economic empowerment of women.

Candice, tell us what this award means to you?

The award itself was meaningful, as it is a validation of Cobra’s fundamental values, and my own – we respect and honor people’s strengths and value their differences. I am proud that most of my executive team are women, and that 80% of Cobra employees are women.

That said (as proud as I am of the recognition of what we have built at Cobra), the event itself, the people I met, and the cause of the Women Economic Forum were even MORE meaningful to me because they demonstrated to me how much more needs to be done to bring true gender equality to the global workplace.

Tell us more about that.

The Women Economic Forum is really a terrific organization, focused on the basics that everyone needs to find financial stability. Over the past year, the WEF has supported low-income schools for girls, providing 1500 girls the materials they need to get the education they deserve and are entitled to. I met with WEF leaders and the head of the India Chamber of

Commerce and Industry to discuss micro-enterprises and training for women in small villages. Again, we are focused on the basics – education, training, and just plain opportunity for women to find their own footing in the Indian economy. And it wasn't just India – there were many countries in attendance. I was honored to meet the Ambassador of Ghana, who confirmed that so many things stand in the way of women being empowered and independent. We have to change that. I am proud Cobra, and companies with cultures like ours, offer women good wages and excellent family policies as well as training and education opportunities.

Why is it so important to have diversity in the workplace?

One of the things I have learned as a woman executive operating in what was, until fairly recently, a man's industry, is how differently men and women view the world. And maybe it's because I have always had to fight to be heard, and taken seriously, that I understand how important it is to have different points of view no matter what problem you are tackling. There is never one way to do something, but if everyone around you looks the same, went to the same schools, grew up with the same way of thinking, innovation doesn't happen. Cobra's very existence is because some people – men AND women – thought differently about how to deliver legal services. Status quo is easy – most people will opt for the conventional wisdom unless and until someone who thinks differently can be heard and her ideas tested for real. That's why, on a fundamental business level, diversity matters.

Can you remember a time when a woman really helped you to advance professionally, and what would you say to her if you could?

Both men and women have helped me enormously in my professional life, and I'd especially include in that list my husband, Ken Corby, who has been the greatest support I could imagine for this wonderful ride I am on leading the Cobra global team. But if I had to choose one, I'd choose Berry Crowley. Berry is a prominent attorney here in Austin who has led the way for women lawyers and legal professionals in our community. And what I would like to say to her is: "Thank you for showing me what a successful woman in the legal industry looks like and for being a pioneer in the field and paving the way, and for always providing sage advice and providing me with your unwavering support."

Cobra is a global organization and has operations in India. India has a reputation of not being strong on women's rights. What do you say to that, and how has Cobra brought its commitment to equal rights for women to Cobra?

My inclination is to defend India a bit. While it's true that there are significant gender inequality issues across India, there is also progress being made. For example, girls are going to elementary school than ever before, although there is a significant drop-off once they reach high-school age. Education for more girls and women is a high priority with the organizations and leaders that I have met, both on this trip and in past experiences – everyone understands that until girls and women have the same educational opportunities, they cannot achieve the same levels of professional success and stability.

That said, gender inequality is a huge problem in India – a financial problem as well as a social one. I read a McKinsey study that said that there are more women than men of working age in India, and yet women make up only 25% of the workforce and contribute only 19% of the GDP. They are significantly disadvantaged when it comes to promotion and advancement in the workplace, and overall gender inequality is costing India trillions of dollars.

I am committed, as a CEO with most of her workforce based in India, to hiring and promoting and advancing Indian women in the workplace. We have good pay, excellent family care policies, and a supportive, safe and fun environment. Many of the women who work for Cobra have told me directly how safe they feel in our workplace, and how grateful they are, because it's not a given that they will be safe in other jobs. Hiring and promoting women in our India office is not only the right thing to do, it's the economically smart thing to do – for Cobra and for India. Why ignore such a precious, productive resource? It doesn't make any sense. That's why our India workforce is 80% women.

Thank you, Candice. Any final remarks?

I would like to thank the women AND the men of Cobra who are the reason I received the WEF award. I am simply representing this tremendous group of people and their belief system. It's my honor and privilege to work with them.

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About Women Economic Forum

The Women's Economic Forum is the global conference of the All Ladies League (ALL), designed to foster empowering conversations, connections and collaborations among women entrepreneurs and leaders from all spheres of life. The annual week-long forum takes place in India, along with regional ones throughout the year and across the world. The vision of the WEF is to inspire every woman to become a businesswoman.

Women of the Decade/ Leader of the Decade:

This award is for women / leaders who are pioneers and front-runners in their respective entrepreneurial and professional endeavors, with a distinctive voice and vision that are inspiring and innovating a new narrative of leadership in all walks of life. It is for those whose expertise and spirit can inspire and inform the next wave of a more awakened and empowered leadership.

More information is available at <https://www.wef.org.in/annual-wef-2019/>.

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About Cobra Legal Solutions

Cobra Legal Solutions and CobrATX were formed over a decade ago to help you derive higher value from your legal functions. Cobra Legal Solutions is a diverse team of like-minded professionals with deep experience in both corporate legal departments and law firms united with one common goal: to improve the efficiency of legal support services. We combine our expertise in eDiscovery, contracts and due diligence, document review, legal research, and technology to deliver consistent, measurable results for our clients. Through a Value Sourcing approach and judicious use of technology assistance, we can significantly reduce the cost and risk in the business of law.

More information is available at our new site www.cobralegalsolutions.com.