

IGNITING Women's Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Saudi Arabia

Wednesday, June 23, 2021

9:00 am ET/4:00 pm KSA

Hybrid event via Zoom

Speaker Bios



H.R.H. Princess Reema Bint Bandar Al Saud

Ambassador, Embassy of Saudi Arabia to the United States

Appointed Ambassador to the USA in February 2019, HRH is the first woman in the country's history to serve in this role. From 1983 to 2005, she lived in Washington, DC, when her father Prince Bandar was Ambassador. When Princess Reema returned to Saudi Arabia she focused on private sector initiatives and the empowerment of women. From 2007 – 2015 she was CEO of Alfa International Company Limited - Harvey Nichols Riyadh, a multi-brand luxury retail company, where she set the tone for female inclusion in retail. In 2013, she founded Alf Khair, a social enterprise elevating the professional capital of Saudi women through a curriculum enabling financial self-sufficiency. In 2016, Princess Reema left private sector and joined public service as Vice President of Women's Affairs at the Saudi General Sports Authority where she developed policies and programs benefiting women and children. In 2018 she was promoted to Deputy of Development and Planning before also being appointed President of the Mass Participation Federation, making her the first woman to lead a multi-sports federation in the Kingdom. In 2020 Princess Reema became the first Saudi woman to be appointed as a Member of the International Olympic Committee. Princess Reema's other roles and appointments include: Chairman of the Special Olympics (since 2019); Board Member of Saudi Arabian Olympic Committee (since 2017); Chairman of the Executive Committee & Board Member of the Fashion Commission at the Saudi Ministry of Culture; Board Member the Future Investment Initiative Institute (2020); Board Member Panthera's Conservation Council (2020); Member of the World Bank's Advisory Council for the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (2017 - 2020); Member Saudi Arabian Olympic Committee (since 2017); and Member International Olympic Committee (IOC) Women in Sports Commission (since 2018).



Ms. Lateefa Alwaalan

Managing Director, Endeavor Saudi Arabia

Lateefa Alwaalan is the Managing Director at Endeavor Saudi Arabia. She is a Board Member at Riyadh Chamber of Commerce and at GEN Saudi. She is the Founder of Yatooq and the Co-founder of Aroom and CellA+ Network. Formerly, she served as the General Manager of Alwallan Pharmacies Group and worked as an MIS Analyst at Atheeb Telecom Consortium. She started her career as a Junior Programmer at iLink before joining Riyadh Bank as a System Administrator. She earned an MBA and a Technology Entrepreneurship Certificate from the University of Washington in 2011 and graduated with a Bachelor's in Computer and Information Sciences from King Saud University in 2006. She was named Entrepreneur of the Year – KSA in 2014.



Ms. Amal Dokhan

Partner, 500 Startups MENA

Amal Dokhan is a partner at 500 Startups MENA and previously served as an advisor there. She is a board member of the King Abdulaziz University Female Advisory Board and the Cranfield University Saudi Advisory Board. Previously, she served as CEO of the Global Entrepreneurship Network Saudi and worked as a Vision Realization Office Consultant for the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia and as Director of the Babson Global Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership. Throughout her career, Amal has gained a diversified range of experience in management and marketing related roles particularly in education and consultancy. Amal was part of the Entrepreneurship Center in King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in a number of roles including the New Ventures Acceleration and Corporate Innovation program. Prior to that, she worked in the KAUST Seed Fund where she developed marketing and events, while also providing a range of services to startup clients. Amal has previously managed an educational organization; during that time, she designed programs and started several innovative initiatives to be implemented by the educators to improve the mindsets in order to foster creativity in the workplace and the educational tools. In parallel to this, she started her own business, which organized sports events and offered commercial consultancy to large organizations. During her master's degree research period in the University of Wollongong, she managed to be exposed to large organizations and built marketing strategies to several entities, such as Dubai government departments, Kempinski hotel, Infiniti Cars, and other service providers. She was also involved in a joint venture with another start up in Dubai focused on creating media and production services to other agencies including Starcom Dubai, Yahoo Dubai and many others. She also coauthored two business articles focused on services marketing during her master's.



Ms. Courtney Geduldig

Chief Public & Government Affairs Officer, S&P Global

Courtney Geduldig is Chief Public and Government Affairs Officer for S&P Global. She is responsible for leading global government relations, communications, corporate responsibility, brand, digital, creative and corporate events. Courtney joined the Company in 2013 and previously served as Managing Director, Global Government and Public Policy. Prior to this role at the Company, she was Vice President of Global Regulatory Affairs at S&P Global Ratings. Before joining the Company, Courtney was Managing Director and Head of Federal Government Relations at the Financial Services Forum. From 2008 to 2011, she served as Chief Financial Counsel to Senator Bob Corker (R-TN), handling a wide range of issues and played a key role in advising Senator Corker on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Courtney also spent two years as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Banking and Finance at the U.S. Treasury Department. In 2013, Courtney co-authored the book *Where the Jobs Are: Entrepreneurship and the Soul of the American Economy*. She is on the Public Affairs Council Board, Atlantic Council Board, Positive Coaching Alliance Board, Ford's Theatre Board of Governors, British American Business Transatlantic Policy Steering Committee and is a member of the Maryland State Bar. Courtney holds a Juris Doctorate from the University of Baltimore School of Law and a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland, College Park.



Ms. Esther Ndichu

Vice President for Community Relations and The UPS Foundation, UPS

In her current role, Esther is transforming and managing all international community relations, aligning UPS's philanthropic footprint with local engagement and driving brand awareness and relevance in key international markets. Most recently, has served as Managing Director for UPS in Southern and Eastern Africa based in Johannesburg, South Africa. She was responsible for managing the UPS business unit in South Africa and oversaw the management of the network of UPS Authorized Service Contractors in 21 countries in the region. Esther steered the company through the COVID-19 crisis, while transitioning part of the operation to an asset light model. From 2016 to 2018, Esther served as Vice President of Public Affairs and Government Relations for UPS in the Indian Subcontinent, Middle East and Africa, based in Dubai, since January 2016. In this role, she was responsible for public/government and customs affairs for the region. Her core focus areas and interests included increasing cross border trade and identifying ways to assist SMEs to access global markets. Prior to this, Esther was responsible for The UPS Foundation's global humanitarian engagements working with various organizations in the humanitarian space based in Brussels, Belgium. As a logistician, she has worked in various capacities at UPS and is able to lend her experience to the organizations she worked with. Her passion for working in the humanitarian sector was captured in TED Talk titled "Hunger isn't a food issue. It is a logistics issue."

Moderator Bios



Mr. Amjad Ahmad

Director and Resident Senior Fellow, empowerME, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, Atlantic Council

Mr. Amjad Ahmad is director and resident senior fellow of empowerME at the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. He focuses on shaping innovative investments to empower entrepreneurs, women, and youth in the Middle East. He develops strategies and policies to drive sustainable prosperity through the creation of dynamic entrepreneurial economies, the economic participation of women, and educational transformation. Amjad is also managing partner of the venture capital firm Precinct Partners and serves on the boards of Eyewa, Tapal Tea, RSA Global, Mumzworld, Mr. Usta and The Luxury Closet. Based in the United Arab Emirates for fifteen years prior to moving to Washington, DC, Amjad has collaborated with business leaders and entrepreneurs to build leading companies in the Middle East. Through his work as a venture capital and growth investor, Amjad established two investment firms in the region that provided over \$1 billion in funding to over fifty companies in sectors ranging from technology and education to healthcare and finance. During the past five years, Amjad has focused his investments on entrepreneurship, innovation, and technology. Amjad holds a master's degree in international affairs with a concentration in international finance and economics from Columbia University and is a graduate of the general management program at Harvard Business School.



Ms. Virginia Littlejohn

*Co-Head, US Delegation, Women20 (W20) of the G20
Co-Founder & President, Quantum Leaps, Inc.*

Virginia Littlejohn organized the National Association of Women Business Owners' first two National Public Affairs Days, was National President in 1984-85, led its participation in the 1986 White House Conference on Small Business, helped spearhead passage of the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988, and served on the National Women's Business Council for 4 years. She has organized 3 global best practice conferences on women's entrepreneurship for the OECD, was Vice President of the World Association of Women Entrepreneurs, created and incubated the Financial Alliance for Women during its first year, co-incubated WEConnect International, and helped the International Trade Centre develop its policy agenda. She is President and Co-Founder of Quantum Leaps, Inc., and is Co-Head of the US delegation to the Women20 (W20) of the G20 countries, and is the Co-Coordinator of the W20's Women's Entrepreneurship and Finance Working Group. She has won 4 lifetime achievement awards for her global work on behalf of women's entrepreneurship.



Ms. Anne Simmons-Benton

Co-Head, US Delegation, Women20 (W20) of the G20, and Deputy Chair and Board Member, Society for International Development

Anne Simmons-Benton was the Co-Head of the US Delegation to Women20 (W20) of the G20 and is the Deputy Chair and Board Member of the Society for International Development. Anne is an international development attorney with experience in trade, commercial law, WTO, competitiveness in economic growth, rule of law and gender. Anne brings experience working on international development from within the U.S. government (the US Agency for International Development (USAID), State Department, the Commerce Department) and on the ground in implementation. Previously, she worked for DAI, a leading international development firm, for four years in various leadership roles in headquarters and as Project Director in Jordan. Anne led a team to draft an Economic Empowerment Strategies for Women in Afghanistan in March 2012 and remains engaged in fostering women's economic empowerment there. Previous to DAI, she worked for Booz Allen as an associate and trade attorney in the Foreign Affairs Business leading USAID and State Department work on economic growth, business enabling environment, trade and gender. While with USAID, she was the Donor Coordinator and a Delegate to the World Trade Organization, a Senior Trade advisor in Washington and she also served at USAID/Moscow. With the Commerce Department, she served as Senior Counsel for Southeast Europe leading the USG contribution to the Stability Pact in trade. Anne has been a licensed attorney since 1984 and worked in D.C.-area law firms for the first part of her career. She holds a J.D. from the Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C., a Change Management Advanced Practitioner Certificate from Georgetown's McDonough School of Business and a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. She is married to Jonathan Benton, a Foreign Service Officer, and they have three adult children.



Ms. Jaime Stansbury

Chair, Women in Business Committee, American Chamber of Commerce in Saudi Arabia

Ms. Jaime Stansbury has been based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for over a decade. She first came to Saudi Arabia as a strategy and operations consultant in Deloitte Consulting's Federal Practice in Washington D.C. For two years, she led operations to set-up a bilateral program management office for the U.S Embassy in Riyadh. After launching her own consulting practice six years ago, Ms. Stansbury has been advising leading government ministries, higher education institutions, and multinational firms. Her insights into the local culture and ability to communicate in Arabic brings clarity to projects and helps create strong connections built on trust. Currently as a consultant to the Institute of International Education in the Gulf, Ms. Stansbury leads the effort to develop programs and partnerships for international exchange and workforce development with government entities, higher education institutions, foundations and the private sector. For over a century, IIE has been the global leader in international education and annually designs and manages over 200 programs with more than 27,000 participants from 180 countries including ExxonMobil, Chevron, Cargill and Adobe Foundation, GE, Baker Hughes, and Google. Ms. Stansbury currently chairs the Women in Business Committee for the American Chamber of Commerce Saudi Arabia and is spearheading efforts to increase and support the growing number of American and Saudi businesswomen and industry professionals working in Saudi Arabia. A graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service with a Master of Arts in Arab Studies program, Ms. Stansbury concentrated in economics and education in the Arab World. She is currently pursuing her MBA at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business.



Ms. Martina Strong

Charge d'Affaires, U.S. Mission to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Martina Strong is honored to lead the U.S. Mission to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as Chargé d'Affaires. She is joined in Riyadh by her husband, U.S. Army Col. John L. Strong (Ret.) and their daughter Eleanore. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Ms. Strong previously served in Iraq as Political Minister Counselor in Baghdad and as the U.S. Army's Political Advisor in Basrah. Prior to her arrival in Riyadh, she was the Deputy Chief of Mission in Bulgaria. Her other overseas postings included Poland, the Czech Republic, Bosnia Herzegovina, and France. Ms. Strong also spent two years as Director on the National Security Council at the White House, where she headed the U.S. government's multi-agency effort to organize the 2004 G-8 Summit in Sea Island, as well as two other G-8 Summits and various multilateral meetings. The Department of State has recognized Ms. Strong's achievements with numerous awards, including the AFSA Sinclair Language Award and eleven Superior Honor and Senior Performance Awards. During her service in Iraq, the U.S. Army awarded her the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and the Superior Civilian Service Award. In Bulgaria, the Defense Minister honored Ms. Strong with the Meritorious Service Medal for her contributions to the U.S.-Bulgarian security partnership.