

>> Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to the podium, ambassador Candace Bond, United States Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago.

>> Good afternoon and thank you for inviting me to address you today. A special shout out to EXIM president and chairwoman Rita Joe Lewis, thank you for this opportunity. I am so honored to be here among women trailblazers fighting for equity and inclusion. It is truly energizing. Energizing. Let's recognize, shall we? The 25th anniversary of EXIM's minority and women-owned business division. That's right. And let's recognize the fact that Chair Lewis has authorized more than 349 million in financing for minority and women owned businesses. Now I'm inspired that we are thinking big today, taking big subjects head on, talking about transforming organizations and communities and hearing from some amazing women leaders. I think all of us here recognize that transforming communities means lifting up all members of the community. Now, as a business woman, I recognize instinctively that to leave half our resources untapped is like competing with one arm just tied behind your back. And the resources I'm talking about here are of course our human resources, the talents, the brains, the skills and the grit of women and girls. That must be a part of our inputs for if we are not meaningfully included, we will surely lose our global competitiveness. Now we all know that courageous women create and inspire a better world. And no doubt that is why we are promoting gender equity and equality and the social, economic and political empowerment of women and girls in all of their diversity. It's a longstanding cornerstone of US foreign policy ensuring that all people, regardless of their gender identity, can achieve their full potential. It is both a moral and a strategic imperative that works to ensure local, national, and global prosperity. Now, you know, equity inclusion, equity and inclusion are not just buzzwords that cause internal combustion for some people, you know, equity and inclusion are serious economic issues. Societies that exclude entire demographics restrict access to opportunity and stifle inclusion. They pay an economic cost. For example, it is estimated that closing gender gaps in the workforce around the world would add between 12 and 28 trillion to our global GDP. I'm gonna repeat that. 12 and 28 trillion to our GDP, so don't sleep on that. The Biden Harris administration has placed a strong emphasis on gender equity as a fundamental priority, recognizing that women and girls thrive entire communities and nations prosper. In fact, one of the administration's first actions was the establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council charging them with developing and implementing a government-wide strategy to advance gender equity and equality in both domestic and foreign policy. The National Gender Equity and Equality strategy is the first ever national gender strategy in the United States. Only a handful of countries have issued gender strategies and this strategies released in early 2023. This sent a strong signal about the commitment of the Biden Harris administration to advance gender equity and equality both here at home and abroad throughout the world. The Biden Harris administration has also launched other initiatives, including the Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund, the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, the Let Girls Learn Initiative and the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative just to name a few. And all of these have been successful in transforming lives, breaking cycles of poverty, and enabling women to become leaders in their communities and drivers of economic growth. My boss, secretary of State, Anthony Blinken has underscored that true progress requires an intersectional approach that addresses the discrimination, systemic barriers and human rights abuses and violations that have for too long inhibited the full employment of women and girls around the world. He has consistently advocated for access to education, skills, training and mentorship to actively equip women with the tools they need in the workforce in order to foster more resilient and peaceful societies around the globe. All in all, the efforts of the US State Department and the US EXIM Bank and the broader US government reflect a strong dedication to women and girls and be assured they are not content to rest on their laurels. They will continue to work tirelessly to create a world where every woman and girl can reach their full potential. With that promise, I thank you for inviting me here today. I'm grateful for this opportunity. Thank you for the work that all of you do every day to advance equity and equality for all members of society. Thank you for lifting up our families, our communities, and indeed our world. Now it is time to hear from and be inspired by our powerhouse

panel. I thank you so much for your time and attention.

>> Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our next panel Transforming Organizations and communities, insights from Women Trailblazers, our moderator, Anna Palmer, founder and CEO Punchbowl News is joined by Stephanie Von Friedeburg, managing director Citi Regina Gwynn, co-founder Black Women Tech Talk, Grace Stanke, clean Energy Advocate, constellation Energy and Miss America 2023 and Gwen Young, CEO Women Business Collaborative.

>> Alright, well good afternoon everyone. Thank you all so much for having us. I'm thrilled to be moderating this conversation on transforming organizations and communities with insights from women trailblazers. We have an amazing panel with a lot of expertise and a pretty short time to share with you. So I'm gonna jump right in. I'm gonna go kind of down the line on this first question. And Stephanie, I'm gonna start with you set the stage a little bit for the audience here. Can you talk about one or two of the main challenges as well as opportunities you've seen when it comes to inclusion and empowerment for women in finance?

>> Absolutely. So I've spent the majority of my life in development finance, a lot of that really focused on gender. And I've often said thinking about 50% of your population outside of the workforce is like reading every other page of a book. It's like reading War without the Peace. So, you know, the World Economic Forums done a lot of research on this and they say that if we were to include all the women in the workforce, that we could add \$12 trillion to the global GDP. And if you think about what we need to continue economic growth, kind of post COVID in the, you know, the geopolitical tensions that we're in today, we really need economic growth. So bringing women into the workforce matters. And quite frankly, the data actually proves out that bringing women into the workforce is good. The IFC and the Goldman Sachs banking on Women data clearly says women are better borrowers, they have fewer non-performing loans and they have fewer default rates. The Rock Creek team of Belos and I did some really interesting research around 700 funds and private equity funds in emerging markets. And what we found is those that were gender balanced actually outperformed their peers by more than 20%. Wow, Regina.

>> Absolutely. So when we think about kind of the work that I do at Black Women Talk Tech, we focus on building the next billion dollar business, which we believe will be a woman of color. And so one of the biggest challenges to creating these types of technology startups is access to capital, right? And right now we're looking at less than half of a percent of venture capital funding goes to black women entrepreneurs. That's not even a percent right? Ha Less than half of a percent. And so when we think about the ways in which businesses can form grow and scale, we have to think about other ways to get access to funding. So here I am at the EXIM bank office and so, you know, when we think about like how can we change this, this is, there's an economic interest for women entrepreneurs and technology startups to win. This is not about a feel good, this is not about a give back, this is not a charity case. Investing in women entrepreneurs, as Stephanie just mentioned, creates more valuable businesses for investors, which also creates a stronger return. And so I'm really excited about being able to expand the finance options for these women entrepreneurs and be able to give them the opportunities that's afforded to everyone else. Right.

>> Another tool in the

>> Toolbox. Absolutely Grace.

>> Yeah, I think one thing to really address here is starting people at a young age thinking about this. So I work with a lot of young students and I specifically work on educating about the power sector and energy and electricity. You know, I feel like we've talked a lot about that today and how our electricity grid is gonna be changing. But one thing that we don't do enough is provide these, the access to these opportunities at a young age, getting them

involved as high school interns, college interns, things like that. Letting young girls see powerful women be in powerful roles. That is something that has the ability to truly improve that amount and truly change that influence.

>> Absolutely,

>> Gwen. Absolutely. And to continue on that, in terms of the opportunity, part of the question and what you were saying, you know, there's many groups that are connecting young women with women as role models and opportunities, but also funding their businesses. You know, I was just at a, at a conference where they funded over 150 high school girls starting their businesses. And so starting young and really doing it. The other thing I think from the opportunity standpoint to everything you all said is we know that a lot of women own businesses sit in sort of the services space, but the opportunities now, the way the economy has grown, the way tech has grown, the way AI has grown are these opportunities to move into other sectors and to really create, we've got tech people on the stage and nuclear energy, right? And I think there are these opportunities in these either what they call 'em newer fields or newer opportunities with the rise of technology for women to really create businesses that can tie into things like the CHIPS act and manufacturing space and nuclear energy.

>> We kind of touched on this at a hundred thousand foot level, kind of the, the power that women actually can have when they find access to capital that they are good investments. But let's pull that thread a little bit more. How do you see it where, you know, kind of women, it's not just a nice to have if they, they can, you know, kind of run a business or get that capital, but it's actually good business.

>> So, you know, and it is good business and I think we have have proved that consistently. It is not a nice to have. And if you look around the world, so I don't have to look any further than the Ukraine, okay, the men have been conscripted to war and the women are running the economy and the economy grew 5% last year and it's staged to grow 3% this year. The country would never have been able to hold themselves together had they not had a well educated, well mentored group of women that could run those companies. So I think that's a great example. Right?

>> Absolutely. Gwen, you wanna jump

>> In? I was gonna add in that, you know, at the, at the sort of profit level, at the business level, we know that having diverse leadership at the table, whether it's at the border and business drives profits, right? And, and in women owned business space as well, the biggest rise this year has been black women owned businesses and their profit rates are like 33, 35, 40 2%. Whereas the profit rate from a male owned business is down in the 20%. So we know that they're generating better revenue. We also know that there's the 12 trillion, right? And there's like the three to 6% increase in GDP. Part of that is the diverse perspectives, right? Part of that is the ability to to to talk about whatever the product's impacting the whole community and the percentage of women in the community. So I think it's really looking at the hard number, it's business sense. It just makes good business and that's the shift from only shareholder to stakeholder capitalism and really understanding what that means.

>> We were talking Regina, sorry, we were talking behind back backstage a little bit about getting into rooms like this, finding capital we where maybe, you know, that we aren't traditionally in these kinds of rooms. Can you talk a little bit about what that's been like, the effort that you're making? Where have you seen some opportunities when it comes to that?

>> Absolutely. So we've been working on getting into these kinds of rooms for years. And I think that the idea of you don't know what you don't know, this is where the impact of not being in the room really does come to light. So when we think about how we're building technology startups and how we're thinking about

these, these entrepreneurial opportunities, there has to be the education. And so there's only a certain amount of education that's kind of widely available. Yes, you can go on the internet, yes you can go on YouTube, yes you can do these things, but the social capital that's needed to build a business is developed through the relationships that, that are in this room and the relationships that are across Capitol Hill. So the way in which we do this is through community creating resources and creating curated experiences that allow for the the right investors, the right allies, the right resources to connect with the, the high potential ready to buy, right, ready to sell, sell, ready to scale. Making sure that those people are, are put together at the right time to create the value that we know exists in, in building these businesses.

>> And grace, what have you said? I mean you're doing a lot of the education part of this where you're kind of, you're talking to like the next generation hopefully that are already in the rooms that aren't gonna have some of the challenges that maybe my generation and previous generations have had when it comes to kind of seeing people like them in business roles, seeing people like that women, other women like them, able to get capital also being the investors themselves. Talk a little bit about that.

>> I think it's really funny because I'm 22 years old and thinking that I'm talking to the next generation is already a little scary. Not gonna lie, But it is a fair question. It is a fair question because I've already started to see people who are going into college right now, such a major difference in mindset. You know, they went through those crucial teenage years during the pandemic that affected the socialization skills so much. And it's really important to address this, to make sure that we're providing opportunities and comfortable opportunities for people to get exposed to those levels as we're sort of, I don't wanna say fixing this, but aiding in this transition of generational differences. That knowledge gap is something that I know in the nuclear sector we struggle with a lot with addressing knowledge coming from an older generation who has worked at a nuclear power plant for 50 years. And then there's me who comes in who only has three months of experience, right? It's about the communication skills that are able to build up that workforce and that knowledge and those skills.

>> Let's

>> Talk a little bit about the lifecycle. 'cause I think I, I I wanna get to kind of why it's important that women are the decision makers, but it's also important that women are the investors, right? Talk a little bit about what you've seen or how we might kind of increase the number of women who are those angel investors? Are the people that are helping kind of create that deal flow that maybe they, they look at opportunities differently than the, than a white male would?

>> Yeah, so I mean, and I go back to the survey that I referenced with, with Rock Creek. I mean, the other thing that we found was when you have balanced management teams and balanced investment committees, you actually invest in more women entrepreneurs, which tells you that, you know, that sense of putting the right diversity at the table helps you make better decisions from a return perspective. And you know, I, I spent a lot of time working in Africa, so I look at a lot of the statistics in Africa, a couple of really interesting things. Only 7% of the private equity and venture capital above \$10 million tickets in Africa went to women. So, and if you look at the online presence in Africa, on the commercial side, 60% of the companies sell online are women owned. So they're getting less of the capital, yet they're providing most of the goods in merchandise. So we do need to change the paradigm and I believe that, so we've talked a lot about skills, we've talked about education, we've talked about mentoring. I think the other piece that is missing is sex disaggregated data. And lots of times people kind of glaze over when I say that, but it matters because that's how we can prove the business case. And even in the United States, in the developed world, in a bank like Citibank, we can't sex desegregate our data. We can't tell you we've lent to this many women companies

and this many companies that are owned by men at the SME level and this is how they've performed for privacy reasons and lots of other things. But that's important and I think it's something we collectively really need to focus on. Hmm.

>> Regina, talk about that kind of in the sense of, of what you've seen or are there any kind of things that make you excited or you look forward in five, 10 years, there could be some change, you know, kind of going forward.

>> Absolutely. The, you know, the idea of of bringing more women and more diverse investment managers, more venture capitalists, more angel investors online is critical because there is the power and the value of lived experience. And so oftentimes when investments are reviewed in committee, if you don't have that voice at the table, then you're going to miss a key opportunity or a key insight that's going to essentially allow you to lose the deal. There are untapped markets, there are untapped consumers that, excuse me, that are, you know, huge economic opportunities, huge trillion dollar markets, not only here in the US but also abroad. And so if those investors don't have that understanding and be able to understand the nuance in terms of how that value can be realized, that it will definitely be ais for, for tons of, of investors that truly wanna make money, who raise, raise anyone's hand, who likes money in the room. I put both my hands up. I, I wanna make sure right, that we are keeping this focus on an economic outline, an economic outcome, right? And so that I think is extremely critical when it comes to expanding the pipeline of, of women and diverse investors. For sure.

>> Gw, I know we've talked a lot about this. I know you have a lot of thoughts about why we need to have more women who are angel investors, why we need to have more women at that decision making level.

>> No, and I agree with it, but I, and I agree with that in the sense that, you know, we've been talking about the network, right? It's sort of who you talk to. I, I don't know about any of you, but people come up to me all the time and say, I can't find any women to fill my board seat. I can't find any women owned businesses for my supplier diversity or my value chain. And I'm like, wait a minute, they're all there, right? So one of the things, you know, we talk a lot about 'cause that's the purpose of women business collaborative. It's more leadership. And we do a women's capital summit where we have 150 women owned businesses and 150 women investors, debt venture capital, angel, all in the same room to build that network and to build that understanding. And that also starts to change the framework of what type of business are you doing, who's the community you're serving, right? And, and then so what criteria do we need to have in order to make those loans and put that investment into it? Because you can look at population numbers, we've all talked about the revenue numbers and the growth numbers. So that sort of women's leadership at the table. And that over 30% percentage really starts to make a difference. And angel investment is actually where there are the most women. I think women comprise 40% of angel investors. So there's a place from which we can start and start to look at sort of what those outcomes are and what the benefit of women's leadership is.

>> I wanna kind of dive into a little bit of a different area, which I think is really interesting. Talking about how women owned businesses grow revenue faster than men, oftentimes that critically aren't in those kind of hard skilled industries, manufacturing other areas. What is the impact of that? And you know, is that a problem or do we need to have more, more women going into manufacturing? Or is it, hey, actually let's just focus on where we see some of the growth and that's where we should be kind of putting our, our, our money.

>> I mean, I think I kind of want to jump into this here, okay, because looking at trades work in general, right? We just don't have enough trades workers right now. Like that's just a common piece of knowledge. And one thing that's really interesting is we've actually had, at a nuclear power plant, the first time ever a control room was full of women for people who were operating the reactors, senior reactor operators. And that's very unheard of in this industry where of

the entire nuclear industry, only 22% are women. So having one control room all entirely ran by women was incredible. And it's awesome because that provides this opportunity for us to say, Hey, look at how these women operated it differently. Look at the different approaches that were taken, if there were any, and understand what is the practice that we can pull from that into the trades work moving forward. We need more women on the work floor in an aspect of being those technical operators, not necessarily in the control room, but the people pushing the valves and everything like that, turning the valves open. And that's something that it brings up different perspectives, different ideas, different approaches and different levels of, of knowledge coming into it that can lead to different perspectives leading to improvement.

>> So you know, when I was at IFC, we did some really interesting work with Google and we looked at Southeast Asia and we looked at Africa and again, we looked at what were the, what was happening online. And again, depending upon the different regions, somewhere between 60 and 70% of the businesses selling online were women owned. But the largest businesses and the fastest growing businesses were all owned by men. And when we dug into that, what we really found was men were more willing to take risk. They sat in that chair and said, I own this company, I'm willing to do this. And the women were much more cautious. So I do think it comes back to recognizing that there are cultural differences, but maybe more importantly, skills and education are critical so that women actually begin to understand what does leverage do for my business? How's it gonna help me grow? And how do I take those risks in

>> An appropriate manner? I wanna ask

>> You,

>> Regina, talk a little bit about diverse business owners online, what you've seen in those trend lines in the us but also I think there's a really, the interesting story about the impact that they can have on GDP and the idea of kind of coming to a group like this to say, hey, it's not just the US market, actually maybe we started our business here, but what, what a world and an opportunity to think about the importing and exporting of goods.

>> So we represent tens of thousands of entrepreneurs, not only here in the US but abroad. We started our, our community in 2017 out of a personal need. Myself and my business partner are both tech entrepreneurs and we've seen just explosive growth and it's industry agnostic. FinTech founders, education tech founders, healthcare tech founders. One actually quick note into the previous conversation, climate tech, innovation. You know, when we think about clean energy, decarbonization, desalination, these are also wildly underrepresented verticals that we do need more diverse thought. And so when we think about how, you know, these businesses have grown over the years, oftentimes they're solo entrepreneurs, right? So they're the CEO, the CMO, the COO, the CTO, like all the things. And so even if they add one job, if they add two jobs, if they add two part-time jobs, this completely changes the makeup of our GDP. And not only that, when you invest in a women entrepreneur, you invest in her school, you invest in her church, you invest in her community, there's a halo effect that happens when you're building these businesses run by women. So that not only is there that economic impact, but there's absolutely that social and the community piece that's just as valuable. Interesting.

>> Gwen, I wanna go to you talk a little bit about the, we're in Washington DC right? This is a conversation that could, it happens all over the globe all the time about kind of women, women in business, kind of thinking about how do we get more of, of us into different places? What's the role of Washington here? What is the conversations you're hearing on the ground here?

>> That's so interesting 'cause I was gonna take it from a point that we should have this conversation, not just in Washington, right? But that, that role of Washington globally is to be able to bring people, convene and bring them here to have that conversation. And I always say it's to be able to have it with the

public and the private sector. We've heard that theme today, right? It's to bring, you know, the hill together with Citibank, right? To sit down at that same table. But also because of the large diasporan international, international business and global policy here is you can have this conversation about what's different in India than Sub-Saharan Africa, right? What's similar, what's different, what's gonna work? And you can really learn from each other about where those innovations are, where you're going and around women's leadership. You learn about and talk about things like, is a quota necessary? Is it not necessary? You know, what types of mechanisms can you use to reach more women? How do you talk about capital? Where are there online trainings for skilling up? So I think Washington plays a really critical role and also because people pay attention. So I always say you want government in the room and you want the business in the room because it's both of those policies that are impacting community healthcare, GDP and economic growth.

>> We always say at Punchable News when we, 'cause we we're very focused on Congress and what's happening on the hill, but you know, you really wanna have private sector, the nonprofit advocate world as well as government because when government gets involved, then you add a few more zeros behind the efforts Exactly. Than than the rest of us can, can, can put together. I wanna go down kind of the, the row here and talk a little bit about, we've talked about kind of the state of play right now where we see some opportunities, some, some of the challenges, the future, but what else needs to be done to advance gender equality in business? Maybe not just in the finance and the investing side of things.

>> I think we've covered most of the things. You know, again, I think it's skill building, it's mentoring, right? Yeah. And it's not only mentoring, it's saying to young girls and women, you need to be educated. You need to join the workforce and you need to stay in the workforce and help them do that. And that mentoring even from a personal experience and it has to come from both men and women, right? And some of the best mentors I've ever had in my career have been men who had daughters who realized, huh, you know, women need help. And so I think mentoring is critical. And again, I just put another pitch in for data and sex desegregated data. 'cause that's how we're gonna get there.

>> What talk about that is on the desegregated data side of things, is there any opportunity or do, is there talk of trying to make that more of a reality?

>> We pushed, you know, in the development world, we've pushed a lot and we've actually made more progress getting sex desegregated data in emerging markets than we have in the developed world. And a lot of it comes back to existing privacy policy and regulation.

>> Interesting. Talk to us, what, where, what else could be done to advance gender equality?

>> So I think one of the, the big things that is super important is just amplifying stories. So oftentimes we think, you know, oh, all women are just having such a hard time. There's actually quite a few women unicorns. So there's, there's, there's a, a black man named Toi Tope Alwa in, in Atlanta, Georgia that runs Calendly. So if anyone in here uses Calendly, it's run by a black man and it's a \$3 billion valued technology startup. So there are, there are wins that are happening. I think that's kind of the, the headline here is that, you know, and yes, there are challenges, but not only are there opportunities we're winning, like there's parts of, of, of these businesses where there's actual full on wins that are happening. Iman Abid from Incredible Health. She has a billion dollar, a black woman led startup. The woman from Canva is a, it's a billion dollar startup led by a woman. So, you know, i I do want us to kind of remember that and start to kind of amplify and, and raise awareness of stories that already exist.

>> It is so important. 'cause I think sometimes it's so easy to kind of get, you know, when you have these conversations they sometimes, some of the challenges

or they're long term and you're feeling like it's insurmountable. But I love the like positive note on a Friday and to say like, you know, we do have momentum here, right? Like, let's, let's speed the ball up. Yes. Grace.

>> Yeah. I think one thing that would be really interesting that would change the early career aspect for many young women is let's stop the narrative of the man as the breadwinner in a relationship or something along those lines. Because I find that a lot of my peers are holding themselves back because they feel bad for succeeding almost. And it's this really unusual thing that I, I feel like it just culturally and societally needs to change and it is slowly changing. Like I wanna, I wanna acknowledge, you know, I think it is really important to acknowledge that the good that comes of it, I always say the women before me, they removed boulders. I'm only removing rocks. Hopefully my daughter only has to remove pebbles in her pathway, right? But I think that one of the biggest things that would seriously impact the mentality of a lot of young women nowadays is it's okay to succeed. You don't have to be ashamed or apologized or apologizing for taking up space in the room you walk into. You can walk in there with confidence and command that presence. It is okay, it is okay to take the risk and to be there.

>> The joys of going last as you get to agree with everybody. But I do. But I think it is, I think it's data and transparency, right? So you've gotta have the data and you have to have it disaggregated, not just by gender, but race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, many other factors. And it's surprising how much data is not disaggregated, but it's only as helpful as one if you use it. Yeah. And we say make it transparent. Pay equity, anything. Make it transparent. Why did that promotion happen? And then I think the second, the second piece of it goes to look for the opportunities, right? Let's start in stage five where we can go, what can happen and how we can get there. We kind of know what's holding it back. We can talk about the less than 2% of funding for women-owned businesses, but let's look at where those, those opportunities are. And you do that by, you know, networking, conferences, events and conversations, you know, in various places and various things where you can meet and hear examples of the work you're doing in these tech companies that are growing. And I can talk to Citi and learn about something I didn't know about in India and we can say, well we're doing this and you're doing that. And so I think, and it's for women, but it's for companies. 'cause women business collaborative, we're trying to change the way the companies, organizations, systems and policies operate. But for women and men, I say go to these different conferences, go to places here, learn what is going on in climate tech industry. How do you grow your business?

>> All right? I'm not gonna make you go last this next time, but I wanna talk. All, all of you are trailblazers. All of you are making a difference. Whether it's in the data and it's in the research and it's what you're doing. Whether it's kind of lifting up all of these different entrepreneurs or training the next generation. There's a room of very powerful people here that have agency that have the ability to potentially make a difference. I'd love to kind of hear you and Gwen we'll start with you. Like, what is the one thing, if you were wrapping this conversation up, what's the one call to action for the the folks in this room that you think could really make a difference?

>> Be intentional and be intentional about what exactly you can do if you're at a bank or an investment firm. Be intentional and go out and absolutely invest in a diverse business, historically underrepresented business. So be intentional and make that commitment. You know, it's like when you're saying you're gonna get back in shape, they're like, just start 15 minutes a day, every day. Be intentional about it because there is nothing holding any of us back from being able to provide equity in business, invest in a women or minority owned business. So be intentional.

>> Okay.

>> To echo that, I to add on to that, really support women's education. You know, I, I cannot stress enough how much college costs nowadays and how much

it's continuing to increase supporting women's education is is incredibly life changing for so many young, for so many young women nowadays.

>> Yeah. And not just in the US but obviously certainly abroad in emerging markets. When you look at some of the, the work that's being done there when it comes to educating and giving opportunities to women in, in the globe, they really, that all of a sudden it can be a real galvanizing factor for them.

>> So one way to, sorry, two ways to support women entrepreneurs is to support universal healthcare and to support better childcare. Like hands down, I'm a new mom and it is, it is an experience to be an entrepreneur and, and to navigate the, the, the childcare. You know, that's, that's necessary because if you have to choose between your child and your family and your business, we know what the decision will be. And so I definitely think that, you know, if we think about some of the larger constructs that affect women entrepreneurs outside of money and funding and education and access and networks, it is healthcare and it is childcare, right?

>> It's hard to run a business when you can't figure out what your kids are gonna do after school, right? I mean, that's just the facts of the matter.

>> So, you know, WEF says that it's gonna take us 151 years to close the gender parity gap. And to me, if we can't put what we're doing now on steroids, we're not gonna get there. And every single person sitting in this room has incredible expertise. So what I would ask of you personally is go back to your companies and choose two or three young women and mentor them. Start at the beginning and let them mentor you too, because you're gonna learn from them. They're much more tech savvy. They look at the world differently. I think we've already heard that by the age differential on the panel. So use it both ways. But I would really request that you go back and, and find some young women to mentor.

>> Yeah, sponsorship is so important and I like you, I think most of my mentors were men based on the industry that I, you know, started in 20 years ago. But I think that that is a, a huge, hugely important. And not just like participating in your company's mentorship program, but like actually taking, actually doing the, the time and the energy and the investment. Because I think to, we talked so much about is this idea that sometimes women don't raise their hand or they aren't willing, you know, 'cause they, they aren't gonna take the risk because of either culturally or just for a lot of different reasons. We look at the, the risk factors so differently and kind of having somebody say like, no, you can do this. Like, you know that that matters and it doesn't take money even to do that. Right? It all it does is take some time. With that, we are gonna leave this afternoon's conversation. Thank you all so much for your time this afternoon and thank you all. We really appreciate it.