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THE CHICAGO NETWORK'S KATE BENSEN HONORED WITH CHAMPION OF WOMEN AWARD
President and CEO recognized for a decade of leadership by 2020 Women on Boards Chicago

CHICAGO, IL, Nov. 21, 2019—Kate Bensen, President and CEO of The Chicago Network, will receive the first Champion of Women Award today from 2020 Women on Boards Chicago at their 8th Annual National Conversation on Board Diversity. The award to Bensen, who has announced she will step down from The Network in the spring of 2020, recognizes her decade of leadership of the organization of more than 500 women at the forefront of Chicago's business, professional, cultural, nonprofit and educational communities, elevating the importance of achieving gender equity across management and senior leadership and in board rooms.

"The advancement into corporate board director positions of the premier women in Chicago who are The Chicago Network members was notably evident under Kate Bensen's leadership," said Kathy Graham, 2020 Women on Boards Chicago Campaign Chair. "We created this special award in recognition of those executives, starting with Kate, who dedicate their efforts to elevating women into corporate board service." For 15 years, The Network's Census shone a spotlight on the progress of women on boards and in the executive suites of the 50 largest publicly reporting companies in Chicago.

2020 Women on Boards Chicago, which has the goal of increasing the percentage of women on U.S. corporate boards to 20% or greater by the year 2020, is also honoring two additional members of The Chicago Network. Sheila A. Penrose, Non-Executive Chairman of the Board of JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated) and a member of the board of directors of McDonald's Corporation, will be presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award honoring her extensive corporate board service. Christie Hefner and HatchBeauty Brands, where Hefner is Non-Executive Chair, will be recognized with the Chair Ambassador Award as a private company with an outstanding board gender diversity commitment. Ellen Rudnick, a director of First Midwest Bancorp, HMS, and Patterson Companies, will accept an Ambassador Award on behalf of First Midwest Bancorp's board diversity track record.

The 2020 Women on Boards Chicago conference brings together more than 300 attendees and more than 40 corporate board director presenters to discuss how to engage allies to increase gender diversity. The Network's members who are speaking also include:

- Eileen Kamerick, director of Associated Banc-Corp, Legg Mason Closed End Mutual Funds, Hochschild Mining, and AIG Funds/Anchor Series Trust;
- Chris Edwards, director of BMO Financial Corp. and Bank of Montreal;
- Kym Hubbard, director of State Auto Financial Corporation and PIMCO;
- Mary Josephs, director of Hisco, Manson, and Performance Contracting;

- Joan Steel, former director of Hershey Trust Company; and,
- Dorri McWhorter, YWCA CEO and director of William Blair.

The Champion of Women award honors Bensen's commitment to expanding opportunities—especially on corporate boards—for the current and next generation of women leaders, broadening The Network's mission from connecting Chicago's women leaders to empowering women to lead, and increasing the diversity of the membership.

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ABOUT THE CHICAGO NETWORK: We are an organization of Chicago's most influential women leaders. Our 500+ members are leaders at the forefront of our city's business, professional, cultural, nonprofit and educational communities. The Chicago Network's purpose is to empower women to lead. Our mission is to connect with each other for personal and professional growth, advance our civic, business & philanthropic communities, and inspire and support the next generation. Our vision is Gender Equity for Women of All Colors. At All Levels. Everywhere. thechicagonetwork.org