

Carol Lavin Bernick

Carol Lavin Bernick is CEO of Polished Nickel Capital Management, a privately held company that manages diversified investments and owns all or substantial stakes in diverse companies ranging from retail sales to thoroughbred racing.

In her prior business career, she spent 37 years in key executive roles in the Alberto Culver Company until its acquisition in May 2011 by Unilever. At the time of the acquisition, she was Executive Chairman of Alberto-Culver, a \$1.6 billion global manufacturer of consumer products including Alberto VO5, TRESemmé, Nexxus, Motions, St. Ives, Noxzema, Simple Skin Care, Mrs. Dash and Static Guard — the latter two brands which she created. In 2006 Carol had also overseen the process that separated the then \$3.7 billion company's consumer products business and its Sally Beauty Company into two free-standing public companies.

For over a decade Mrs. Bernick served as president of Alberto-Culver's consumer products unit prior to her election as executive chairman in 2004. In the president's role, she reenergized the consumer businesses, dramatically growing the company while instituting a nationally-recognized cultural overhaul of the company. Profiled in the June 2001 Harvard Business Review, it was subsequently reprinted in the Review publication Culture & Change and featured in the 2014 Resurgence – The Four Stages of Market-Focused Reinvention. An acknowledged expert in strategy and branding, she contributed a chapter to Kellogg on Branding, a marketing book from the Kellogg Management School, published by John Wiley & Sons, and her thoughts on culture and communication are profiled in Apples Are Square: The 6 Critical Values That Are Changing the Way We Lead and Succeed by Thomas & Susan Smith Kuczmariski, published by Kaplan.

A self-published author, in 2018 Mrs. Bernick released a collection of over 300 life lessons entitled, Gather As You Go: Sharing Lessons Learned Along the Way, covering business, branding, philanthropy, corporate culture, and family life. Over 35,000 copies are currently in distribution. She more recently published Alberto Culver: The Dream • The Drive • The People • The Brands, an engaging visual history of the company's extraordinary growth and innovation behind its 56-years of success. Shared with family, friends, company employees, college students, business leaders, historians, fashion designers and pop culture enthusiasts, Mrs. Bernick has been asked to speak at various business colleges, universities, corporations, financial firms, and nonprofits across the country.

Mrs. Bernick is deeply committed to community leadership. She currently serves as chair of the Northwestern Health Network board, overseeing nine hospitals and 3,400 physicians in association with Northwestern Memorial Hospital, a top-ten nationally ranked institution. She was the first woman to chair the Northwestern Memorial Healthcare board. From July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2024, Mrs. Bernick served as board chair of Tulane University and continues to contribute as a current board member of her alma mater. Her past leadership roles also include serving on the Northwestern University Board of Trustees and the Chicago Community Trust Executive Committee. She is a member of the Economic Club of Chicago, the Commercial Club of Chicago and C200.

Mrs. Bernick is the founder of Friends of Prentice, a volunteer network of executives and professionals that has raised millions of dollars for Chicago's Prentice Women's Hospital advancing infant and women's health. In 2017, she launched Enchanted Backpack, a nonprofit that provides over 20,000 students each year with essential school supplies, books, athletic equipment, coats and personal items. She also founded CC's Wish List, which amplifies community impact by distributing in-kind donations of brand-new clothing, footwear, winter coats, bedding, towels and more to over 100 nonprofits annually.

Mrs. Bernick has three kind, compassionate adult children married to incredible spouses and eight grandchildren.