

Travel & Tourism and the Common Good: A Call for Integrative Global Citizenship

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I don't believe that the solutions in society will come from the left or the right or the north or the south. They will come from islands within those organizations, islands of people with integrity who want to do something.

—Karl-Henrik Robert, MD, Renowned Swedish oncologist, medical researcher, and a key figure in the worldwide sustainability movement

Each and every day around the world billions of people rise to engage in an economic pursuit. Whether that pursuit brings value beyond employment opportunities and shareholder returns is a question increasingly being asked by consumers, governments, and civil society—even business itself.

It is the good fortune of those of us in the Travel & Tourism (T&T)/hospitality industries to have the opportunity to make a positive difference in the quality of life for so many, in so many ways—some not immediately apparent to society and some that may not be revealed for decades to come.

What *is* apparent is that, since ancient times, the T&T industry has contributed immensely to the human experience. Even before the Silk Road connected people from China to the Mediterranean, Travel & Tourism facilitated commerce in every corner of the globe. Well before modern student-exchange programs, Travel & Tourism provided first-hand educational experiences for youth. Long before any international summit of world leaders was convened, Travel & Tourism brought visionaries together to reach accords. And well before the first theme park or all-inclusive resort were imagined, Travel & Tourism made possible countless opportunities for people to relax, explore, and appreciate the world around them.

The T&T industry is not unique only in that it grew out of a very human desire to traverse the globe and come together in real time, but it remains unique today in that it is one of the world's greatest economic drivers. It provides employment opportunities at every experience level, from entry-level jobs to life-long careers, and it does this at a staggering rate: *one in every 10 workers worldwide is employed because of Travel & Tourism*. In fact, Travel & Tourism is often cited as the most important industry for emerging nation economies—it is “mission critical” to the continuing development of those countries.

Travel & Tourism accounts for 10 percent of world GDP, 8 percent of jobs, and 12 percent of global investment annually. It also has the highest potential for growth of any industry—currently running at more than 4 percent per year.¹

The resilience of Travel & Tourism—with demand repeatedly bouncing back despite successive high-profile challenges, ranging from terrorism to disease—shows

how much it has become a necessary and vital element to the world. It is a force that can be slowed, but it simply cannot be stopped.

Travel & Tourism is becoming more and more appreciated by its host countries and communities—so much so that they actively compete for it, knowing the economic and social benefits it is yielding worldwide. It is helping build economies emerging from poverty, conflict, and confusion while stimulating infrastructure development and secondary economic activity.²

Indeed, Travel & Tourism fills a need and invigorates economies. Fulfilling market need and wealth creation is basic to any industry's survivability. *How* it fills this need is today the focus of enlightened societies, governments, and companies.

As World Economic Forum Chairman, Klaus Schwab correctly points out that “As state power has shrunk, the sphere of influence of business has widened. Companies get involved in the health of workers, the education of employees and their children, and the pensions that sustain them in retirement.”³ Companies within the travel and hospitality industries have long recognized their potential impact on society. It is the enlightened leaders who have stretched beyond traditional day-to-day trade, however, who have become integral to the betterment of individual lives and freedoms by partnering with governments and the civil sector to address national and global issues.

Business engagement: An evolving scorecard

In the early 1990s, the perceived value of—and actual activity around—global engagement on the business stage was limited. Since the 1990s, individual stakeholders, media, nongovernmental organizations, and others have increasingly called for companies to act in a socially responsible way. Companies are no longer assessed solely on the financial gains achieved, but now also on the contributions they make to stakeholders, partners, and society as a whole.⁴

Though lagging a bit behind other parts of the world, Americans' expectations of their corporations' social responsibility practices are shifting. A recent study by Fleishman-Hillard-USA and the National Consumers League shows the impact that business engagement efforts have in the mind of Americans today.⁵

Among the findings is the fact that Americans expect corporations to be engaged in their communities in ways that go beyond just making financial contributions. It is obvious that the demand goes much deeper to include employees, quality products and services, and an overall understanding of improving the world in our own communities. Defining exactly what that means to the various stakeholders and where corporate responsibility stops and government or civil society's responsibility starts is challenging (Figure 1).

Being acknowledged as “socially responsible” has become a goal of global corporations. Many find themselves searching for a consistent and sustainable framework for global engagement—one that adds value for both the company and the global space in which they engage. It is clear that global citizenship can reinforce the positive role of business in society and enhance profitability in the long term.⁶

Investors, too, have a growing interest in this trend. In recent years, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, for example, has provided its users with a socially responsible investment index.⁷

One of the greatest philanthropic efforts to further economic development is, quite simply, to provide a job. For Carlson, an American-founded company today operating global brands, providing jobs and economic growth to nearly 200,000 people all around the world and business operations in more than 150 countries, the development of social entrepreneurship and global corporate citizenship is a fundamental part of everyday activity. The ability to create such economic growth—through direct employment or partnerships with socially responsible companies—results in an improved economy for both the company and the world in which it does business.

Even outside the T&T industry we find examples of a new approach to business partnerships. A case in point: Woolworths' CEO Michael Luscombe has made it clear that the retail giant will “positively discriminate” toward suppliers and business partners with a responsible business practice in place.⁸ We see evidence that the media and the general public are demanding the same.⁹

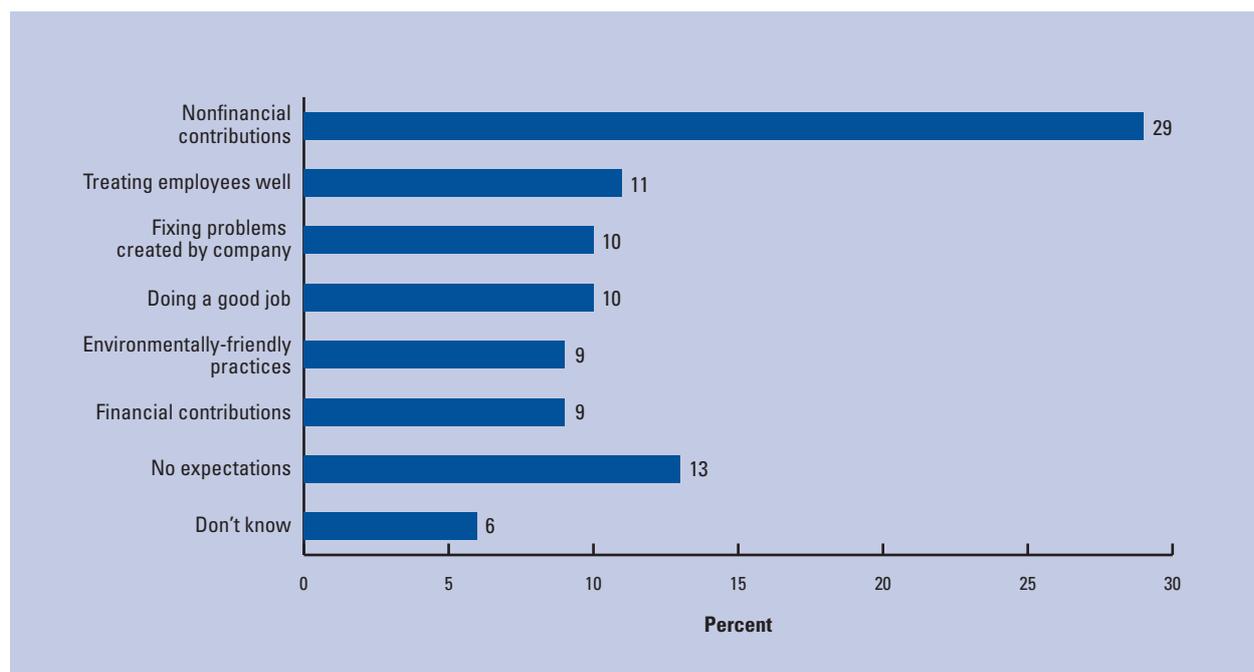
Today, one would be hard pressed to find a global T&T company that is not engaged in socially responsible activities beyond job creation. From corporate philanthropy and social investment to proper corporate governance and transparency, these have become *de rigueur* for companies that desire to carry their brands into the future. There is no turning back on these issues.

Integrative global citizenship: The model for the future

The great French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville observed that “In democratic countries knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others.”¹⁰

We need new models that combine the best of society to improve society as a whole—models in which business, governments, and civil societies understand and respect each others' roles and unique capabilities and boundaries. But business isn't alone in its responsibility to social investment. Thoughtful leaders need to find the beneficial intersection of business, government, and the social society.

In a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Klaus Schwab has taken an interesting look at the issues around global

Figure 1: Expectations of companies' community contributions

Source: Fleishman-Hillard.

Note: The responses shown in the figure are only a truncated list of the complete set of responses offered by respondents.

corporate social responsibility and has suggested the way in which corporations—and the world—need to address this new age of integrative thinking. He breaks down the issue of business engagement into five key areas: corporate governance, corporate philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, corporate social entrepreneurship, and global corporate citizenship.¹¹

By looking beyond the board room in order to contribute to global solutions, Carlson has discovered that it is the integration of all five of these factors that yields the greatest opportunity for impact and results for employees, customers, partners, and the communities in which business operations flourish. For its part, the company has found a particularly unique mix of initiatives to make a meaningful contribution to business engagement in what it calls *integrative global citizenship*. Integrative global citizenship suggests that companies must not only be engaged with their stakeholders, but that they must also see themselves as stakeholders alongside governments and civil society.

With corporate leaders thinking across broad business sectors and developing public-private partnerships to solve social problems, the T&T industry can help provide for the stable development of democratic societies. A stable economy—with employment opportunities and financial stability—decreases the risk of negative choices such as gang activity, terrorism, and sex trafficking.

In looking at corporate social responsibility, Michael Porter, a Harvard Business School professor, and Mark Kramer, managing director of FSG Social Impact

Advisors, wrote in the *Harvard Business Review* that corporations must engage in global issues while understanding that the business community cannot on its own solve global problems such as poverty, poor education, and inadequate health care. Governments and multilateral organizations cannot be discharged from their responsibilities to deliver such public goods.¹² The key is to find the proper niche for each entity to do what it does best to support corporate social responsibility.

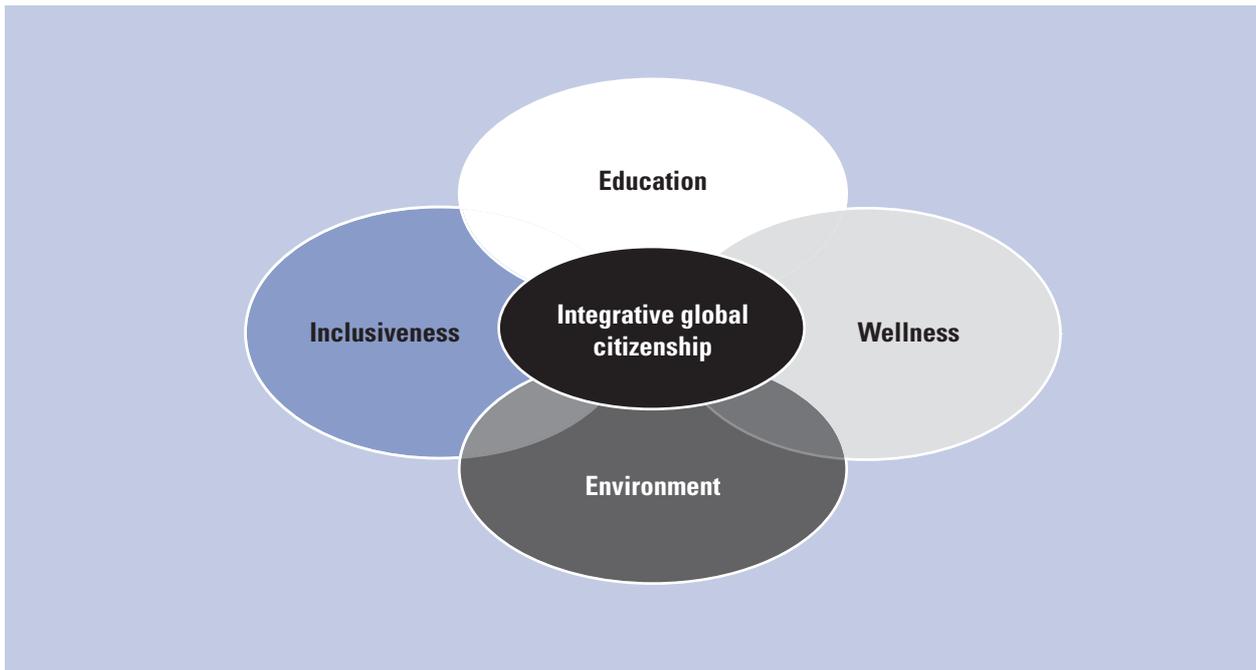
The model explained

On an enterprise-wide context, an innovative way to work the issues of social responsibility into an integrative global citizenship model can be illustrated through the diagram shown in Figure 2.¹³

Education

At the earliest stages, philanthropic and volunteer efforts should be aimed at youth at risk. With financial support to organizations such as the US Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP),¹⁴ companies are addressing the need for quality early education and safety nets for our future generations.¹⁵

The impact of educational social responsibility at the post-secondary level is worthy of note, as well. Financial support to universities and training institutions helps to build that pipeline for men and women who will find new prosperity within the T&T industry.¹⁶

Figure 2: Integrated global citizenship model

Source: Carlson.

For example, supporting industry-focused training programs at the high school level such as that offered by the United States-based Academy of Hospitality & Tourism enables students to gain an understanding of the connections that exist between their education and the workplace. Academy teachers and industry mentors provide students with the curriculum and guidance necessary for rewarding careers. With more than 500 travel-related companies participating as business partners, the academy fosters the personal, analytical, technical, and communications skills needed for a career path in hospitality and tourism.¹⁷

Inclusiveness and social issues

As part of this new integrative model, the advancement of women and the protection of children from sexual exploitation in the T&T industry should be the hallmarks of Travel & Tourism-related companies' social responsibility programs.¹⁸

Women

Social entrepreneurship and engagement for women is part of a best practices effort within global companies to expand roles for women. Carlson Women's Advisory Board, for example, pulls leading women from the local community into the Carlson culture for a best practices sharing of ideas and inspiration.¹⁹

Within the T&T industry, the past 20 years have seen a significant increase in the participation of women. The industry has also been a major factor in the war on

poverty in the lives of women, in particular. For most developing countries it is the largest single export and major driver of jobs, investment, and economic transformation.²⁰ However, it is clear across the industry that at the executive level there continues to be a dearth of women in top roles. Outside the industry—for example, with the International Business Council at the World Economic Forum—the number of women members is still small in contrast to the number of men.

The *Global Gender Gap Report 2007*, developed by the World Economic Forum's Women Leaders Programme and supported by corporate partners, including Carlson, intends to provide a guide for assessing successful policies that help improve conditions for women around the globe both within the industry and beyond. The areas of economic empowerment, political participation, and educational attainment are the key indexes in determining the gap between men and women.²¹

The latest scores of the *Gender Gap Report* reveal that, globally, progress has been made on narrowing the gap between men and women in these key areas, but more work is to be done to create truly inclusive societies. The continued engagement of women in the T&T industry will only help close this gap long term and provide for greater prosperity for women and their families.

From a purely financial perspective, efforts to support organizations such as Athena International help to support and celebrate women leaders from all sectors of society.²²

Children

In pursuit of helping young people at risk, nonprofit organizations such as the World Childhood Foundation are dedicated to serving the most vulnerable children in the world: street children, sexually abused and exploited children, children trafficked for sexual purposes, and institutionalized children, with a particular focus on girls and young mothers.²³ The World Childhood Foundation supports more than 100 programs in 14 countries. Prevention, intervention, and education are hallmarks of these programs, which are found in urban, suburban, and rural areas over the world.²⁴

The growing clout of the ECPAT International (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) program to combat child sex tourism is a testament to the impact that industry-related social responsibility programs can have on the lives of children around the world. Global efforts to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children began more than a decade ago and continue to focus the world's attention on the problem. As a result, there is greater awareness about the root causes of the problem and work is being done to decrease the risk of trafficking and child sex tourism involving the most vulnerable among us.

The ECPAT Code of Conduct was initiated by ECPAT Sweden in 1998 in cooperation with Scandinavian tour operators and the UN World Tourism Organization. Carlson was among the first and very largest North American travel company to sign the ECPAT Code, demonstrating its increasing awareness and commitment to banning the exploitation of children within the company, the industry, and the communities in which Carlson operates.²⁵

The Code encourages companies adopting it to commit themselves to:

1. establish an ethical corporate policy against sexual exploitation of children;
2. educate and train personnel to create awareness of the problem and be more aware of possible signs of the exploitation in both the country of origin and travel destinations;
3. introduce a clause that repudiates sexual exploitation of children in common contracts with suppliers;
4. develop information and awareness-raising materials such as catalogues, brochures, posters, in-flight films, ticket slips, and home pages;
5. provide information to local "key persons" at the destinations; and
6. report annually on the implementation of these criteria.

The protection of women and children, along with efforts at creating greater self-esteem and social power, must continue to be an aim—and by-product—of the T&T industry.

Wellness

Health care and wellness issues are at the forefront of policy dialogues around the globe. Discussions at the local, state, federal, and international levels are guiding business and providing opportunities for integrative solutions to one of society's greatest challenges.

In 1988, leading Minnesota business leaders developed the Buyers Health Care Action Group. This group is recognized throughout the United States for its innovative, leading-edge approach to health-care purchasing. The group's newest initiative, Bridges to Excellence, is a revolutionary pay-for-performance program providing bonuses to doctors meeting high standards of care.

The introduction of innovative wellness programs into the workplace demonstrates a company's commitment to employees and their lives.²⁶ This might be deemed social entrepreneurship by creating product offerings that drive increased traffic while addressing a public health issue. Innovative leaders should continue to find ways to approach and affect these kinds of social and economic challenges facing the world today.

Environment

The T&T industry is not immune from the growing focus on global warming and the environmental impact of human actions and development. In fact, innovative leaders in the industry have long promoted socially responsible development practices, particularly in emerging markets.

Destinations around the world are under pressure to create carbon-neutral experiences. Tourism is not shrinking from its responsibilities, but rather is actually responding through proactive behavior changes, technology, and policy development.

Discussions at the 2008 annual meeting of the World Economic Forum spotlighted the efforts of the industry thus far on the issue of climate change. A set of proposed recommendations will be developed and shared within the Gleneagles Dialogue at the 34th G8 Summit in Tōyako, Japan, in July of 2008.²⁷ The goal of the industry is to put forth a business statement on how the G8 governments can work with business to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, thereby improving the global environment.

Travel companies are helping clients to address environmental issues by enabling travelers to make well-informed decisions concerning their carbon footprint.²⁸ A "carbon calculator" used at the time of booking allows business travelers to calculate and compare the carbon cost of transportation options. Post-trip reporting enables travel managers to track carbon dioxide emissions

and ultimately neutralize their impact through carbon offsetting.

Other examples of integrative thinking around the environment are reflected in Rezidor™'s Responsible Business Program.²⁹ In the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) hotel market, Rezidor has pioneered solutions to the issues around responsible water consumption, decreased non-recyclable waste output, and reduced CO₂ emissions. In addition, companies such as Carlson and Rezidor are focusing on environmentally sound building practices when it comes to hotel construction.³⁰

The next integrated leaders

To move forward in an accelerated fashion, we must teach our future leaders how to think and act effectively across sectors. How can this be accomplished when, in fact, most educational systems around the world are separated by discipline? One may study business, public affairs, political science, nonprofit management, or social sciences. But, by and large, these are separate educational tracks with little exposure to each other, even though the problems with which they are concerned require an interdisciplinary solution. Think of it: poverty, climate change, terrorism, disease, and corruption cannot be neatly “ascribed” to any one discipline for study, nor can they be wholly “assigned” to government, business, or society to solve on its own.

As pointed out in a Booz Allen Hamilton study, “Leaders everywhere no longer express as much confidence about the future as they once did. . . . The methods and tools that helped them succeed in the past no longer work. The challenges they face—such as global competitiveness, health and environmental risks, or inadequate infrastructure—can no longer be solved by their organizations alone. And when they try to reach beyond the boundaries of their own corporation, government agency, or nongovernmental organization, there is no clear pathway to success.” The authors conclude that “the root cause of the challenges confronting these leaders is complexity: the growing density of linkages among people, organization and issues all across the world . . . the winners are those who understand how to intervene and influence others in a larger system they do not control. We call this type of larger system a ‘mega community’.”³¹

Those who are schooled and eventually employed in a particular sector, such as travel or hotel management, are often sorely unaware of the drivers, roles, and leverage of the other sectors within this mega community. Each graduate of these tracks emerges with his or her own model of thinking, interpretation, and problem solving; this model is not by nature aware or inclusive of other sectors—in fact, it might even be combative. The result is “model clash,” which is not helpful to new, innovative, collaborative solutions.

In his book, *The Opposable Mind: How Successful Leaders Win Through Integrative Thinking*, Roger Martin, dean at the Toronto School of Business, points out that “We often don’t know what to do with fundamentally opposing models. Our first impulse is to determine which is ‘right’ and by the process of elimination, which is ‘wrong.’ . . . by forcing a choice between the two, we disengage the opposable mind before it can seek a creative resolution.”³²

Carlson has chosen to contribute to the development of a new kind of leader who can better affect these solutions through the Center for Integrative Leadership, a joint initiative between the Carlson School of Management and the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in the United States. The Center is dedicated to examining and advancing a new vision for cross-sector leadership so that it can be understood, taught, and deployed to help solve some of the most challenging issues of our time.

To accomplish this, the Center convenes thought leaders and practitioners from diverse disciplines to consider and propose new models and methods for dealing with such complex issues as economic development, health care, social issues, and international terrorism.³³ The Center for Integrative Leadership seeks to develop a new model—one focused on the cross-boundary, coalition-building, and global approach to make a great contribution to the university, business and society at large.

In addition, a grant has been made to the innovative and integrated leadership training for the World Economic Program’s Young Global Leaders at the Harvard Kennedy School in the United States.

Conclusion

In this increasingly complex and interrelated world, one must find a way to develop and engage the “opposable mind” in the problem solving of these challenges that demands intense and thoughtful cross-sector collaboration. As Rajat Gupta, former senior managing director of the global consulting firm McKinsey & Company and now a member of the Foundation Board at the World Economic Forum, has observed, “The very best solutions come when business, governments and civil society work together.”³⁴

In the 21st century, a new vision of leadership is needed more than ever. Leaders from every sector must integrate knowledge and talent from individuals in the private, not-for-profit, and government sectors to advance the common good.

The importance of value-based leadership from the boardroom on down, and from the farthest reaches “in the field” and back up, is critical. The T&T industry has the great opportunity to enter communities once unknown and unappreciated and share them with the

world; at the same time it can improve the lives of those working in the industry. That is a privilege afforded few other industries and an opportunity that must not be wasted.

There are actions that the industry can take right now that are relevant to the challenges of today and will have an immediate effect; there are also actions that can be taken to ensure that the T&T industry remains effective and relevant for generations to come. The industry—and innovative global leaders—must take responsibility for what can be controlled and resolve to work intelligently across sectors to create new solutions to improve the common good.

Above all, integrative global citizenship in travel, tourism, and hospitality asks organizations to be mindful that actions today provide a window through which to glimpse the world of tomorrow. Certainly, the future always comes from the past and it will be here sooner than anyone dreamed possible.

Notes

- 1 WTTC 2007.
- 2 WTTC 2007.
- 3 Schwab 2008.
- 4 Schafer 2005.
- 5 NCL 2006.
- 6 Schwab 2008.
- 7 De Cleene and Sonnenberg 2004.
- 8 Quoted in *B&T Magazine/Australia* 2007.
- 9 *B&T Magazine/Australia* 2007.
- 10 Alexis de Tocqueville, quoted in *Democracy in America*, 1835. Available at http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/toc_indx.html.
- 11 Schwab 2008.
- 12 Porter and Kramer 2006.
- 13 This model has been developed by Carlson and is the basis of the company's daily operations.
- 14 Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest youth mentoring program in the United States; KIPP is a nonprofit foundation with the mission of building a network of public schools that prepares students to succeed throughout their education and in the wider world.
- 15 Carlson is preparing young people for life, as well as preparing young people for jobs in the hospitality industry. The company also shares a commitment to teach the business leaders of tomorrow how to effectively collaborate across sectors with government and civil society for the common good.
- 16 Carlson, in this spirit, supports the following universities and institutions: Johnson & Wales University (US), Cornell University (US), the Conrad Hilton College and the University of Houston (US), Niagara University's College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and the Tourism Center at the University of Minnesota. And in India, for example, Carlson is a major supporter of RHW Schools, a training university for hospitality in Delhi and Calcutta. The program—in its sixth year—is operated in conjunction with Brooks University in Oxford, United Kingdom, and has been named one of the top five programs in India. The nearly 300 students have a 100 percent placement record in the industry, 70 percent of which expands outside of India.
- 17 Carlson financially supports the US-based Academy of Hospitality & Tourism.

18 In Carlson's case, this has meant visible and active leadership in industry organizations from the firm's Chairman and CEO, Marilyn Carlson Nelson. Examples of her recent industry leadership roles include:

- Millennium Chair, Travel Industry Association of America;
- Chair, National Women's Business Council (advisory group to the US congress and president);
- Vice-Chair, Travel and Tourism Advisory Board to the US Department of Commerce;
- US presidential advisory panel concerning health care; and
- Co-founder of the World Childhood Foundation.

19 Attention to recruitment and retention has resulted in Carlson being named to the *Working Mother* magazine's (USA) 100 Best Companies annual list, with Marilyn Carlson Nelson being named "Family Champion." In a socially responsible company, a commitment to family and to caring is paramount.

20 UN Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia, December 2007.

21 Women Leaders Programme, World Economic Forum; <http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders/index.htm>.

22 This group's mission is to support, develop, and honor women leaders; inspire women to achieve their full potential, and create balance in leadership worldwide (see www.athenafoundation.org).

23 The World Childhood Foundation was established in 1999 as a joint effort of Carlson and Her Majesty the Queen of Sweden.

24 See the World Childhood Foundation, available at www.childhood.org.

25 The ECPAT Code of Conduct is available at www.thecode.org.

26 Even within individual hospitality brands, one can see the impact of an innovative perspective on wellness. Carlson Restaurants Worldwide, for example, has found a way to be a part of the wellness/consumer choice discussion with the introduction of "Right Portion/Right Price." Through smaller portions with a value-added price cut for customers, restaurants such as T.G.I. Friday's can meet the needs of diners wishing to select healthier choices while not limiting those who want a more traditional, casual dining experience. Expanding menu items to include healthier items and smaller portions is part of a socially responsible and creative business approach to restaurant dining and consumer health.

27 See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan) G8 Tōyako Summit, available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/index.html>.

28 Carlson Wagonlit Tours (CWT) introduced a carbon calculator in 2007.

29 See Rezidor, available at www.rezidor.com.

30 See International Tourism Partnership, available at www.tourismpartnership.org.

31 Booz Allen Hamilton 2007.

32 Martin 2007.

33 See the Center for Integrative Leadership, University of Minnesota, available at www.umn.edu.

34 Rajat Gupta in a speech to the UN General Assembly, September 14, 2005.

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