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## **Association Executives Embark on Historic Journey at ASAE**

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) & The Center for Association Leadership hosted the first-ever Global Summit on Social Responsibility: Leveraging the Power of Associations for a New Magnitude of Leadership, April 30 to May 2, at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center on the outskirts of Washington, DC. More than 400 association executives and industry partners convened at the host site, joined by an equal number of attendees who participated at one of the 19 connected sites around the world and online.

"Today we are here to fulfill our vision," said ASAE President & CEO John H. Graham IV, CAE. "Associations and nonprofit organizations represent nearly 300 million people around the world, from every profession, industry and cause imaginable. Think about the energy, the power we can harness by working together to do good for our communities and at the same time creating healthy organizations committed to social responsibility."

Attendees embarked on a historic journey to craft an agenda for the association community and to make a commitment to social responsibility initiative commenced by ASAE & The Center, contributing to what might become largest global initiative undertaken by the association and nonprofit community.

"This Global Summit on Social Responsibility surpassed all expectations," said Susan Sarfati, CAE, president and CEO of The Center for Association Leadership and executive vice president of ASAE. "The collaboration and global connection between attendees at the Gaylord National Resort, across the United States and the world is truly extraordinary. We have launched a movement in social responsibility and I think this is only the beginning of a grand initiative."

The former prime minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, welcomed Summit participants by video, followed by welcoming remarks from Graham; Sarfati; Thomas C. Dolan, Ph.D., FACHE, CAE, president and chief executive officer of the American College of Healthcare Executives and chairman of ASAE Board of Directors; and Mark J. Golden, CAE, executive director and chief executive officer of the National Court Reporters Association and chairman of the Center for Association Leadership Board of Directors.

"It's time to step up our efforts," said Dolan. "Think of the impact that we could have on society if all of our members get more engaged and more involved in social responsibility. Together, we can leverage our members and stakeholders to make a difference in the world."

This unprecedented three-day gathering of top professionals from widely diverse professional societies, trade associations and philanthropic organizations was guided by David Cooperrider, Ph.D., who developed the "appreciative inquiry" methodology that has been embraced successfully by the United Nations and many major companies.

The Summit began as a process of discovery of strengths and unique assets of the association community. World-renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs, Ph.D. who serves as special advisor to the United Nations shared his ideas on how associations can play a positive world change agent. "You have reach, scale and expertise, and you already make a huge difference in our economy and economies around the world," said Sachs. "And the purpose of this Summit is for you to make a difference, even beyond what you are doing right now, and taking on some of the gravest challenges that we face."

"Associations have always existed to serve the interest of a group, profession, industry and a cause, and have always aligned their interest with a larger, public good," said Golden. "We need to extend that tradition and identify the unique competencies that associations can and should bring to social responsibility and take things to a new level."

In addition to the attendees at the Gaylord National outside Washington, DC, more than 400 attendees joined the Summit from one of the connected sites in the U.S. and around the world, including Charlotte, NC; Cleveland, OH; Lakewood, OH; Tallahassee, FL; Atlanta, GA; Dublin, OH; Chicago, IL; Milwaukee, WI; St. Paul, MN; Austin, TX; Seattle, WA; Los Angeles, CA; Sacramento, CA; Albuquerque, NM; Brussels, Belgium; Shanghai, China; Singapore, Singapore; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and Melbourne, Australia.

Participants at the host site, connected sites, as well as online, overwhelmingly responded to their role at the Summit and their commitment to social responsibility. A number of different projects emerged during the event with commitments to further explore each idea online following the Summit and at future ASAE & The Center gatherings. The most popular projects included designing an organizational alliance to carry the social responsibility movement forward, individual local action, branding initiative, technology for knowledge sharing and guiding principles for social responsibility.

The Global Summit and ASAE & The Center's social responsibility initiative are supported by The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation and The Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau, committed to helping associations incorporate social responsibility into their mission and daily operation. ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership are two organizations linked together by the common belief that associations have the power to transform society for the better. Their passion is to help associations and association professionals achieve previously unimaginable levels of performance and

reach even higher goals. They are working to accomplish this by fostering a learning community of association professionals, industry partners, outside thought leaders, and other stakeholders who embrace this vision.

The American Society of Association Executives is an individual membership organization of more than 22,000 association executives and industry partners representing more than 11,000 organizations. Its members manage leading trade associations, individual membership societies, and voluntary organizations across the United States and in 50 countries around the globe. Our members' organizations represent such essential industries and professions as health care, manufacturing, banking, law, energy, insurance, and the list goes on. We are also a leading voice for the nonprofit sector, advocating for voluntary organizations so that they may continue to improve the quality of life in the United States.

The Center for Association Leadership is the premier provider of learning, knowledge, and future-oriented research for the association profession. The Center delivers innovative learning experiences, performance-enhancing resources, new thinking and models for the profession, opportunities for peer-to-peer collaboration, and strategic tools and data designed to advance the association profession. Offerings include nearly 100 professional development programs through Center University, environmental scanning and other future focused research, a peer-reviewed journal, and more than 5,000 online articles, models, and case studies. Together, ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership provide resources, education, ideas and advocacy to enhance the power and performance of the association community.