

## LESSONS FROM LEADERS SPEAKERS WINTER 2018

Lessons from Leaders is a unique 10-week course that brings some of the nation's most significant political, business, education and nonprofit leaders to the campus to share their experiences and perspectives on leadership with upperclassmen at PDC. Class meetings are open to the public and are held each Monday from 4-5 p.m., with a reception with students and speakers immediately following.

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### Speaker Biographies

**January 8, 2018 – Col. Jack Brennan, Ret.-USMC  
Chief of Staff to President Richard M. Nixon**



**John Vincent “Jack” Brennan** is a retired United States Marine Corps officer and former political aide. He is best known as being U.S. President Richard Nixon's post-resignation chief of staff. He attended Providence College, a Catholic college in Providence, Rhode Island. He served with the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, where he earned a Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal at the Battle of Khe Sanh. Following the war, Brennan became a Marine Corps Aide and accompanied Nixon on his historic trip to China in 1972, which opened up the country to the United States; he was the first Marine to set foot in the People's Republic of China. Brennan remained attached to Nixon during his resignation after

the Watergate scandal in 1974. Brennan negotiated the details of the now-famous Frost-Nixon interviews, an event that drew the largest television audience for a political interview in history. Those interviews became the basis for a 2006 Tony Award-winning play, entitled *Frost/Nixon*, which itself was turned into a 2008 Academy Award-nominated movie of the same name.

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**January 15 – No Class; MLK Holiday**

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**January 22, 2018 – Tracy Hitchcock  
CEO, Create Common Good**



**Tracy Hitchcock** has spent her 20-year career exploring the world of food. The bulk of that time she was working in the Food Division of the J.R. Simplot Company, the largest privately held food and agribusiness companies in the nation. In various roles, she developed expertise in everything from food safety and production, to new product innovation and marketing. She served as a leader in the international products division of the company working with McDonald's Corporation worldwide to develop Simplot-sourced food products for Asia, Europe and the Americas. With a B.S. in Biology from Boise State University, and a broad-spectrum of professional expertise, Tracy was appointed to the role of CEO of the food-based nonprofit social enterprise, Create Common Good, in 2015. In addition to providing foodservice job-training and placement services to refugees, women escaping domestic violence, and other populations with barriers to employment, CCG utilizes its large commercial kitchen to offer volume food production products and services to local businesses.

**January 29, 2018 – Ms. Hilda Solis**

**Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, former Secretary of Labor**



**Hilda L. Solis** is a lifelong resident of the San Gabriel Valley. A graduate of Cal Poly Pomona and USC, Supervisor Solis has served on the Rio Honda Community College Board, in the State Assembly and State Senate, and in the House of Representatives. Prior to becoming Supervisor, Hilda L. Solis served as Secretary of Labor under President Barack Obama, the first Latina to ever serve in the Presidential Cabinet. She authored the Green Jobs Act which provided funding for “green” collar job training for veterans, displaced workers, at risk youth, and individuals in families under 200 percent of the federal poverty line. Solis became the first woman to receive the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award in 2000 for her pioneering work on environmental justice issues. Today, Supervisor Solis represents the San Gabriel Valley, Northeast, and East L.A. as the Los Angeles County Supervisor for the First District.

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**February 5 – Mr. Carl Westcott**

**Communications and Real Estate Developer**



**Carl H. Westcott** is Chairman of Westcott LLC and General Partner of Commodore Partners, Ltd., a real estate holding and development company. In 1986, Mr. Westcott founded Westcott Communications. The company delivered education, training and information to various markets via interactive classrooms, private satellite television, and videotape. The company was sold in 1996 to KIII. He founded First Extended Service Corporation in 1978, a processing firm for auto dealerships. FESC merged with AON Insurance Company in 2002. He was a majority shareholder in Digital Witness which was formed in 2001 to develop and market video software solutions. The company was acquired by Westec Interactive Security, Inc. in November 2007. Westcott was also the owner of 17 automobile dealerships. He devotes much of his time to the Westcott Foundation. In 2003 Mr. Westcott received the Horatio Alger Award and was inducted as a Lifetime member of the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.

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**February 12 – JoAnn Wellner**

**Attorney and Philanthropist**



With an early career in banking, **JoAnn Wellner** found her lifelong career after serving as a volunteer attorney at The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), an environmental law firm. In early 1972 she became a staff attorney in the Corporate Law Department of TIAA-CREF (Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equity Fund), the largest private pension fund in the United States and the predominant pension program designed for and used by American colleges and Universities. In that role she was responsible for cutting edge Title VII (of the Civil Rights Act of 1974) litigation in Federal Courts, working as liaison attorney with outside counsel. She served as the leader in Washington to maintain TIAA-CREF's Tax Exempt status during the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and ultimately served as Vice-President for External Affairs and Executive Officer of TIAA-CREF. Since 1988, she has been a principal of Merit Operating Corporation, a management firm handling her family's extensive estate portfolio. In addition to her professional work, she has made a commitment to service, serving on boards in

education and the arts. She is a Trustee Emerita of Tufts University, where she earned her undergraduate degree, and a member of the Advisory Board of Tufts University School of Medicine. She also is the Founding and continuing Chair of the Friends of the Tufts Libraries. She is the Treasurer of the Board of The Pastel Society of America, headquartered in New York City. Locally, she serves a member of the Board of the Waring International Piano Competition. She is a graduate of Fordham University School of Law, and remains a

member of the Bar of the State of New York and a retired member of The Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

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**February 19 – Diane Vines, Ph.D., M.S., R.N.**  
**Healthcare Professional, Educator and Administrator**



A registered nurse by training, **Dr. Diane Vines** has been a specialist and certified in adult psychiatric mental health clinical nursing, rapid resolution and is a SMART Recovery Facilitator. She was active in the healthcare profession for over three decades and has become a regional and national leader in medicine and education. In healthcare she moved from being a provider to becoming a professor of nursing and later a department chairperson and Dean. She moved into policy work as a White House fellow and became Director of the National Adult Literacy Initiative in the U.S. Department of Education. She was then appointed the Vice President for Academic Development in the CSU system and later served as the Vice Chancellor for External Relations and Economic Development for the Oregon University System. She has also served on the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education As alumnae of Vanderbilt University, she was selected as one of 100 distinguished alumni in 100 years, and has received the President's Award of Distinction.

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**February 26 – Bridget Bilinski**  
**Western Region Area Vice President, Marriott Corporation**



**Bridget Bilinski** is Area Vice President for the Full Service Marriott managed hotels in the Southwest. She is responsible for key performance measures for 36 hotels to include several full service brands - Marriott, Renaissance, Sheraton, Sheraton Grand, Westin and JW Marriott Hotels. She is responsible for producing over \$1.5 billion in topline sales, executing brand strategies and initiatives, setting strategic direction, supporting owner relations, developing talent, maximizing guest/ associate satisfaction and coordinating resources to drive key metrics. Her outstanding career started when she joined Marriott as a Desk Manager Trainee at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott, leading ultimately to a variety of leadership positions including Vice President Operations - Marriott Western Region, Vice President - Marriott Select Service Hotels (Western

Region), and Vice President, Marriott Courtyard Franchising, North America. An active member of the hospitality community, Ms. Bilinski received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Collins College of Hospitality Management at CA State Polytechnic University, Pomona where she earned a BS degree in Hotel Restaurant Management. Ms. Bilinski also serves on the Board of Advisors for the Collins College at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, where she is Chair Elect and also Chair of the very successful Hospitality Uncorked fundraising event for the Collins College.

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**March 5 – Ann Rhoades**  
**CEO, PeopleInk**



**Ann Rhoades** is a dynamic and visionary corporate executive with over 25 years of experience in a variety of service-based industries. She is the president of PeopleInk, her consulting company that helps organizations create unique workplace cultures based on values and performance. She held the position of vice president of the people department for Southwest Airlines, executive vice president of team services for Promus Hotel Corporation and most recently, the executive vice president of people for JetBlue Airways. Rhoades currently serves on the board at the Regis Corporation, NexPhase Capital, the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, president of the University of New Mexico Alumni Association Board, chairman for Safer New Mexico Now, and board member of New Mexico Appleseed. Rhoades' former boards include JetBlue Airways, P.F. Chang's China Bistro, HireVue, Inc., Restoration

Hardware, Executive Council, Brigham & Women's Hospital Harvard Medical School Board the University of New Mexico-Robert O Anderson School of Business National Advisory Board, Accion New Mexico and Albuquerque Community Foundation. Rhoades' book *Built on Values* was released in January 2011 and has been used as a model for how to positively change business and corporate cultures nationwide.

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**March 12 – Eddy Hartenstein**  
**Publisher and CEO, LA Times, and Satellite Television Innovator**



**Eddy W. Hartenstein** has served as a director of Tribune Publishing since August 2014 and was Non-Executive Chairman until February 2016. Previously, Hartenstein served as Publisher and Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles Times Media Group. Hartenstein joined the Company in 2008 and was responsible for all aspects of print, digital, and mobile operations of the country's largest metropolitan daily news organization, as well as those of the Los Angeles Times Media Group's portfolio. Prior to the company's January 2013 change of ownership, he was also President and Chief Executive Officer of Tribune Media Company. Previously, Hartenstein presided over the birth and growth of the satellite television industry. As a Vice President of Hughes Communications in 1981, he expanded Hughes' acquisition and deployment of commercial communications satellites which served the broadcast and cable programming industries. In 1990, he was named President of a Hughes-owned subsidiary founded to develop direct-to-home satellite TV service. Hartenstein then

transformed the concept into one of the most successful new product launches in consumer electronics history – DirecTV, serving as Chairman and CEO through 2004, when the company was sold to News Corp. Currently Hartenstein is a board member at Sirius XM Holdings Inc., Broadcom Limited, TiVo Corporation, and City of Hope. In 2008 he was inducted into the Consumer Electronics Association Hall of Fame and in 2007 he received an Emmy® from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for Lifetime Achievement. He was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame in 2002 and the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) in 2001.

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**March 19 – Mr. Albert T. Annexstad**  
**Former CEO, Federated Insurance Companies**



**Al Annexstad** is Chairman Emeritus of the Federated Insurance Companies, one of our nation's largest mutual multi-line insurers based in Owatonna, Minnesota. Mr. Annexstad joined Federated in 1965 as a Marketing Representative in his hometown of St. Peter, Minnesota. He served with distinction in several management capacities in the marketing function of the organization, culminating in being named the company's Director of Marketing in 1986. In 1999, Mr. Annexstad was elected President and appointed Chief Executive Officer. A year later the Board of Directors of the Federated Insurance Companies elected Al Annexstad to the position of Chairman. His leadership during a remarkable 48-year career was primarily responsible for the Companies' meteoric rise to national prominence to become one of America's most successful and respected insurance enterprises.

Mr. Annexstad is a member of the Minnesota Business Hall of Fame and Ernst & Young's National Business Hall of Fame. He is also the recipient of the Horatio Alger Award, one of America's highest civilian honors, given in recognition of his inspiring life story of achieving personal and professional success despite humble and challenging beginnings. In 2000, he and his wife of 50 years, Cathy, established the Annexstad Family Foundation, funding the *Leaders for Tomorrow* national scholarship program. This program partners with 65 of the nation's most prestigious colleges and universities and has helped more than 750 promising students from extraordinarily challenging backgrounds lay the foundation for careers of remarkable achievement in their chosen fields. Among the participating institutions are the University of Minnesota, Harvard University, Yale University, the University of Notre Dame, Stanford University, the University of California Berkeley, Duke University, Northwestern University, the University of Georgia and the University of Michigan. The Annexstad's are proud to add California State University San Bernardino, Palm Desert Campus, to this special list of Foundation partners.