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Sheryl Sandberg, Madeleine K. Albright, Condoleezza Rice and Viola Davis Among Speakers at Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley Hosts Thousands at the State's Largest Gathering for Women

San Jose, CA – In a rare and candid conversation before a sold-out audience of 6500 at the largest conference for women in California, former U.S. Secretaries of State Madeleine K. Albright and Condoleezza Rice discussed the Trump administration's recent executive order banning immigration from certain Muslim-majority countries. Rice, who served in the administration of President George W. Bush, and was National Security Advisor on September 11, 2001, called the Trump administration's policy "ill-considered and badly delivered," while still urging the audience to give American political leaders "a chance to work." Albright, who came to the United States as a refugee when she was a child, and made history as the first female Secretary of State, serving President Bill Clinton, said the new policy "has hurt us and made us less safe."

Coming days after the historic Women's March, the nonpartisan, nonprofit Conference gave attendees the opportunity to hear from two history makers of different political backgrounds and longtime friends who agreed on many issues – including America's role in the world and the need for women to support each other.

Themed "The Power of Us: Amplify Your Voice," this year's conference also featured a discussion between Facebook Chief Operating Officer and "Lean In" author Sheryl Sandberg and Swisher, and a keynote address from award-winning actress Viola Davis. Davis, nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe Award this year for her appearance in "Fences," along with numerous awards for her appearance on the hit ABC drama "How to Get Away with Murder," shared lessons with attendees about her rise from an impoverished childhood to stardom on film, television and stage. "Nothing in life will do you any good if you don't own your own story," she told attendees.

Annie Clark, co-founder of End Rape on Campus and subject of the documentary film "The Hunting Ground," and Shawn Achor, best-selling author of "The Happiness Advantage" and record-setting TED speaker, also delivered keynotes.

In only three years, The Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley has become the

largest personal and professional networking event for women on the West Coast, with more than 100 industry and thought leader speakers from across the country. Breakout session topics included leadership, career advancement, workplace equity, personal branding, finance, and more. Conference attendees participated in the popular Career Pavilion, presented by Gilead Sciences, with in-person resume reviews by human resource experts, and career coaching with coaches from the International Coach Federation San Francisco Bay Area.

"We know that incredible things happen when women – and the men who believe in them— come together to increase opportunities for women to lead, grow and build community," said Marlene Williamson, Watermark CEO. "The energy and ideas shared today will make a difference not only in Silicon Valley, but throughout California and the country."

The Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley is generously underwritten by co-chair partners [Gilead Sciences](#) and [Juniper Networks](#) along with the following sponsors: [Cisco](#); [Dell](#); [Ericsson](#); [Genentech](#); [Silicon Valley Bank](#); [Akamai Technologies](#); [Boston Scientific](#); [Johnson & Johnson](#); [Mastercard](#); [QVC](#); [State Street Corporation](#); [Yahoo!](#); [Actelion](#); [Applied Materials](#); [ARM](#); [Inc.](#); [Bonterra](#); [BMW Dealer Careers](#); [Cuyana](#); [Kate Spade & Company](#); [Oracle](#); [Poo-Pourri](#); [State Farm](#); [Thermo Fisher Scientific](#); [United Airlines](#); [Varian Medical Systems](#); [Visa](#); [VMware](#) and media sponsors [94.5 Bay FM](#); [KFOG 104.5 San Francisco/97.7 San Jose](#); [KGO 810](#); [KSFO 560](#); [Mix 106](#) and [NBC Bay Area](#).

"Juniper Networks believes in the power of diversity to drive critical change in the workplace and we are dedicated to empowering our employees and providing equity, professional growth and opportunity for women," said Rami Rahim, chief executive officer, Juniper Networks. "Juniper is proud to co-chair The Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley and to share this day with our employees in attendance and the thousands of remarkable women and men here today."

The Watermark Conference also hosted the QVC + zulily Product Search, as part of its commitment to deliver unique programming for entrepreneurs and innovators. Participants had the opportunity to showcase their new idea to a panel of experts and buyers from QVC and zulily.

"The connections formed here will be lasting ones, and will have an impact far beyond Silicon Valley," said Amy Flood, Vice President, Public Affairs of co-chair sponsor Gilead Sciences. "It is an honor to support the Watermark Conference for Women and to be part of this exciting day and the movement it represents."

To learn more about the 3rd annual Watermark Conference for Women, please visit <https://www.watermarkconferenceforwomen.org>, follow us on [Twitter](#) and visit our [Facebook](#) page.

Photos of the event may be accessed via [Getty Images](#).

Further information about the Conference and Watermark can also be found at www.wearewatermark.org.

ABOUT WATERMARK

Watermark is the leading community of top women executives, entrepreneurs and emerging executives in the San Francisco Bay Area whose mission is to increase the representation of women in leadership positions. The membership organization connects, develops and advocates for the advancement of women in the workplace by offering regular leadership development programs and networking opportunities and promoting gender diversity and equality initiatives. Watermark supports girls' leadership programs, as well, to help build a well-qualified workforce for the future.

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