DLA Piper Global Women's Leadership Summit

Suzanne Rich Folsom

Senior Vice President
General Counsel
Phillip Morris International

Suzanne Rich Folsom is an accomplished board member and results-oriented C-Suite leader with broad global experience and a successful track record of driving transformation at public and private companies of all sizes and across diverse industries, especially during periods of heightened regulatory attention and intense public scrutiny.

Ms. Folsom is known for her integrity, innovative thinking, crisis management leadership, and the critical ability to build consensus around challenging decisions. She is an internationally recognized corporate governance expert, who has created and implemented award-winning legal, regulatory, and compliance programs, which, as a result, have driven improved stability and reputations for myriad corporations. She is a unique lawyer-leader with direct P&L experience as well as operational responsibility accountability. Her expertise spans business strategy, enterprise risk management, mergers and acquisitions, SEC reporting, executive compensation, succession planning, trade, labor, cyber security, government affairs and global public policy, as well as environmental, safety, and social responsibility issues. Additionally, her leadership experience includes CEO and board transitions, and the deft handling of shareholder activists. Ms. Folsom has been recognized by The National Law Journal, as a cyber/privacy trailblazer for her strategic leadership in the aftermath of a cyber breach and bold partnership with the US government to combat the ongoing threat. Her commitment to diversity in the workplace directly translates into top performing diverse teams for which she has also been recognized.

Throughout her career, she has been a change agent and catalyst for organizational growth at multiple companies and organizations. Ms. Folsom currently serves as Senior Vice President and General Counsel, at Philip Morris International (and a key leader of the company's continuing proactive transformation and progress toward a better, smoke-free future), a Fortune 100 company. She was previously the General Counsel, Chief Compliance Officer, and SVP-Government Affairs, at United States Steel Corporation. While there, she played a key leadership role in reinvigorating U.S. Steel's business growth and was responsible for legal, regulatory and compliance, the corporate secretary function, environmental affairs, labor relations, security, aircraft, trade, global public policy, and joint ventures worldwide. Simultaneously, Ms. Folsom oversaw the operational performance of the company's real estate division and was one of the primary architects of a successful international fair trade campaign for the steel industry. Ms. Folsom, who grew up in the military, proudly served as U.S. Steel's executive sponsor of the Veterans' Business Resource Group, dedicated to supporting the employment of veterans. Prior to joining U.S. Steel, Ms. Folsom helped drive the turnaround at ACADEMI, a private paramilitary security firm (and successor to Blackwater), post-scandal. She served as the EVP, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, and established an effective legal, regulatory and compliance framework to help the company recover from its legacy crises. Ms. Folsom also played an instrumental role in stabilizing the American International Group (AIG), a Fortune 100 company, during the global financial crisis. She was recruited as VP, Chief Regulatory and Compliance Officer, and Deputy General Counsel, and helped establish a global governance system across AIG. Earlier, Ms. Folsom served as the Counselor to the President and Director of the Department of Institutional Integrity at the World Bank, where she was responsible for the multilateral organization's anti-corruption program. She served under three Bank presidents during a period of unprecedented examination.

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Importantly, Ms. Folsom's career includes service as: Private Secretary to H.M. Queen Noor of Jordan; First Family Liaison to the U.S. Presidential Inaugural Committee; Special Assistant to First Lady Barbara Bush; Advisor to the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. World Women's Conference in Kenya; Chief of Staff to the Co-Chair of a national political party; and she has practiced law with three global law firms. She has worked across Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and North/South America, and lived around the world, enabling her to develop a global business, regulatory, and political network. A graduate of Duke University and Georgetown University Law Center (cum laude), Ms. Folsom has served on non-profit and for-profit boards. She is a former Director of the Advanced Metallurgical Group, a Dutch critical materials public company, and VELUXE, a Washington, DC-based e-commerce beauty and wellness start-up, which was sold in 2018.

A frequent lecturer and thought leadership contributor, Ms. Folsom is currently on the Advisory Board of EqualFuture, a FinTech start-up focused on innovative retirement solutions and on the Advisory Board of ClearForce, a technology start-up focused on combating insider threats.

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