

## **Generational Disruption: The Impact of Generational Dynamics on Leadership**

NACD Southern California hosted a lunch program at The California Club on Tuesday, March 22, 2016. There were 40 members and guests present to listen to and learn from Mr. Chuck Underwood, the nation's leading presenter and renowned thought provocateur on the impact of generational dynamics on board director and executive performance.

This engaging 90-minute presentation, which will be featured in a PBS series later this year, provided a history of the discipline, defining characteristics of a generation within a global context, a detailed overview of the interconnectedness of the five existing U.S. generations, and the unique leadership attributes of each generation. After taking thoughtful questions from the audience, Mr. Underwood gave three lucky attendees gifts, which included copies of his latest book. NACD Full Board Members, Board Leadership Fellows, and Board Governance Fellows had the privilege of a stimulating post-presentation fireside chat with Mr. Underwood on ways a keen lens and deeper insight on generational dynamics can increase the overall effectiveness of board members and business enterprises.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Generational dynamics are nation-specific. America's major problems have been influenced by generational dynamics. It is expected that the approach to solving America's problems has been and will be generational in nature.
- There are five U.S. living generations today:
  - G.I.: Ages 90+
  - Silent: Ages 71 – 90
  - Boomers: Ages 52 – 70
  - GenX: Ages 35 – 51
  - Millennials: Ages 18 – 34
- Values are a key defining characteristic of a generation.
  - It is the formative years that shape values.
  - Each generation has its own life-long core values that are created by the teachings each generation receives and shaped by the time in which a generation comes of age – all of which is beyond its control.
- Each generation will have its turn at the top to lead America.
- While they lead, that generation's core values will drive and define America's direction and culture. This has yielded defined yet varying impacts, per generation, on business ethics, public service, religion, marriage, parenting, communication style, relationship with technology and social media, etc.
- Each generation's ability to deliver good leadership has been mixed. Some generations have led well while others have not.
- Currently, America is beginning its leadership transition from Boomers to GenXers who are entering the C-Suite, board service, and other leadership positions.

- Board members and executives are encouraged to understand generational dynamics to better relate to and understand their peers, teams, and families. Everyone has a role to play, and generational understanding can ensure core values, perspective, tendencies and talents are appropriately acknowledged and leveraged.
- An era of corporate scandal and the weakening of political discourse have led to distrust of leadership and national unrest about the future. The discipline of generational leadership needs champions, particularly from the Boomer generation, to step up and amplify these insights for the edification of America.