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**Boston College Center for Work & Family Releases
Executive Briefing on Women's Career Advancement**

New executive briefing sponsored by PwC underscores the challenges for women in the workplace, including the impact of COVID-19 on women's advancement, and offers a new framework for employers to help support and advance women

CHESTNUT HILL, MA (February 22, 2021) – With women at increased risk for stepping back or dropping out of the workforce altogether due to COVID-19, employers must redouble their efforts to attract, retain and engage women in their workforce. A [new executive briefing](#) from the Boston College Center for Work & Family (the Center) provides a strategic framework for employers to re-evaluate and re-design their women's career advancement efforts in response to this gendered pandemic - and includes best practices from four global organizations: **Eli Lilly, Intel Corporation, Morgan Stanley, and PwC**. The framework and best practices will be presented in a panel discussion on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 with lead author Keila Viñas, Ed.D., Charlotte Hawthorne, Advisor for Global Diversity & Inclusion from Eli Lilly, and Pia Wilson-Body, President of the Intel Foundation and Director of Global Women's Programs at Intel Corporation.

"The disproportionate impact that the current crisis is having on women's careers - particularly for women of color - and the increasing attention to the way in which companies are reacting to issues of social justice have heightened the importance of this topic. Having a tepid or disjointed approach to women's advancement is not an option for progressive employers," notes Viñas.

The new executive briefing entitled [Women's Career Advancement Programs: Optimizing Efforts for Better Results](#) represents the latest in a series of executive briefings from the Center, which address topical and strategic issues of particular relevance to the current business climate. The briefing explores women's career advancement in light of the increasing body of research on work and gender and specifically addresses the following:

- the latest data and trends on women in the workplace;
- the negative impact of COVID-19 on women's workforce representation, disproportionate share of unpaid work, and productivity and well-being;
- gender bias, the importance of the intersectionality lens, and the case for diverse leadership; and
- strategic framework for women's career advancement programs.

The strategic framework lays out four pillars of a cohesive women’s advancement strategy along with objectives and key success factors for each: **Setting the Foundation, Preparing the Path, Navigating the Path, and Supporting the Path**. The authors argue that employers must develop a comprehensive strategy that incorporates each pillar, utilizes objective metrics to track their pipeline, and attends to issues of culture and bias at all levels of the organization. The briefing also addresses implications for employers as a result of COVID-19, including the need to adjust performance and productivity expectations and prioritize flexibility and well-being, particularly among at risk groups.

The best practices underscore the importance of a holistic approach and profile a wide array of innovative initiatives that employers can use to support and advance women - from executive sponsorship to robust women’s-only networks, mandatory unconscious bias training, and dedicated staffing for new parents.

“Women continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles across the technology industry — and in much of corporate America. COVID-19 has exacerbated these disparities, and the effects have been alarming. However, there is an opportunity for companies to take bold action and reimagine their women’s career advancement efforts to ensure we don’t lose ground towards gender equity,” says Wilson-Body of Intel. “As part of Intel’s [2030 RISE goals](#), we are committed to doubling the number of women and underrepresented minorities in senior leadership and to reaching 40% representation of women in technical roles by the end of the decade.”

About The Boston College Center for Work & Family and BC Workforce Roundtable

The Boston College Center for Work & Family is the country’s leading university-based center focused on helping organizations enhance the employee experience. The Boston College Workforce Roundtable is the premier learning and networking community for progressive employers, providing access to contemporary research and thought leadership on innovative human resource practices and workplace cultures. For more information, please visit www.bc.edu/cwf.

About the Executive Briefing Series

The [Executive Briefing Series](#) addresses topical and strategic issues of particular relevance to the current business climate. The series highlights research findings, data trends, and best practices in a concise format, aiming to foster action-oriented dialogue among executives within organizations.

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