



# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Alana Aldag Ackerson and John Hart Join Opportunity International U.S. Board of Directors**

*Business and investment leaders will help empower more people to  
work their way out of poverty in 24 developing nations*

**CHICAGO –May 19, 2016** – Alana Aldag Ackerson and John R. Hart have joined the Opportunity International U.S. Board of Directors to help guide the organization and ensure it achieves its goal of empowering clients to create 20 million jobs by 2020.

Ackerson, who is Managing Partner and President of Signum Investments, a quantitative and fundamental equity investment firm based in San Francisco, has been a strong supporter of Opportunity International for nearly 15 years. During that time she has worked at Opportunity's branch offices in India, served on the national board of Young Ambassadors for Opportunity, been an active member of the Board of Governors and its committee on Colombia, and led Opportunity's Technology and Innovation roundtable.

Previously, Ackerson served as CEO of The Thiel Foundation and as President and Founding Partner of Cabezon Investment Group. She has also served as Vice President of Social Engagement for SoFi Inc. and as a Director of Clarium Capital Management. In addition to serving on the Board of Directors for Opportunity International, she is on the Board for the Association of Women in Alternative Investing and has been a board member of Stanford Student Enterprises, the Executive Committee of Breakout Labs and the San Francisco Committee for the International Justice Mission.

Ackerson earned a B.A. with Honors in Science, Technology and Society from Stanford University and an M.A. in Philosophical and Systematic Theology from the Graduate Theological Union. She also earned a Diploma in the Art of Spiritual Direction from San Francisco Theological Seminary, where she is currently a candidate for a Doctorate of Ministry degree. She serves as a Senior Fellow at the Newbigin House of Studies.

Hart is Vice Chairman of Emigrant Bank and the Senior Executive for New York Private Bank & Trust Company, a division of Emigrant Bank. He has been an Ambassador and supporter of Opportunity International for more than 10 years, including the sponsorship of Young Ambassadors for Opportunity, a dynamic network of young professionals committed to supporting the work of Opportunity and moving us forward with renewed energy, new approaches to philanthropy and true entrepreneurial social innovation.

Hart has more than 35 years of experience in the banking sector, primarily in investments and private wealth management. He is responsible for the Private Banking Division and the Capital Markets Division of Emigrant Bank, which oversee investments in private equity funds, hedge funds, common stocks,

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municipal and corporate bonds and other fixed income instruments. He also oversees New York Private Finance, which provides credit to finance strategic investments for private investors. In addition, he oversees Aperture Media Partners, a specialty finance business in the film and television industry. Hart is a National Advisor to Rev Tim Keller, the author, theologian and pastor, and serves on the boards of the Tanenbaum Center. He earned an M.B.A from Saint Joseph's University and a B.A. in Accounting from Pennsylvania State University.

“We are extremely grateful for Alana and John's support over the years and are excited they have joined our U.S. board to help clients break the cycle of poverty, transform their lives and strengthen their families and communities,” said Vicki Escarra, Global CEO, Opportunity International. “Their vast experience and expertise in the business world will be key to helping us create and sustain 20 million jobs by 2020, impacting 100 million lives worldwide.”

#### **ABOUT OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL**

Opportunity International is a next generation microfinance organization that invests philanthropic and social impact capital to spark and scale innovative solutions to global poverty. Founded in 1971, the organization has provided more than \$9 billion in loans to help clients launch and expand businesses, provide for their children and create jobs in their communities. Through our long history in developing microfinance and complementary products and services in health, education and agriculture, we have helped 14 million people in 24 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe to build sustainable businesses, care for their families and grow their communities. The organization has set a goal of helping clients create and sustain 20 million jobs by 2020, impacting 100 million lives. As of the end of 2015, 15.8 million have already been reached. More than 95 percent of Opportunity's loan clients are women who would otherwise likely not have access to financial services because of legal and cultural gender inequities in most developing nations. The global headquarters of Opportunity International are in Chicago, with other key offices in Australia, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The organization serves clients through a network of more than 20,000 people worldwide. Discover more at [opportunity.org](http://opportunity.org).

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