

Silicon Valley Luminaries Gather to Honor Philanthropic Leadership of Microsoft Co-Founder Bill Gates at David Packard Award Dinner 2018



Microsoft co-founder and philanthropic innovator Bill Gates (center) with Monterey Bay Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard (right) and Meg Whitman (left) at the aquarium's 2018 David Packard Award Dinner on October 1, where Gates was honored and Whitman led a "fireside chat" with him following the award presentation. The event raised \$3.7 million to support the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute.

Festive event raises \$3.7 million for the science, conservation and education programs of the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. Highlights included fireside chat between Event Chair Meg Whitman and Bill Gates; award presentation and remarks by Monterey Bay Aquarium Director Julie Packard.

(Menlo Park, CA) -- Monday, October 1, 2018, guests representing Silicon Valley's most iconic technology companies and titans of industry joined global ocean conservationists and science leaders to honor visionary [Microsoft](#) co-founder and philanthropic innovator [Bill Gates](#) at the [Monterey Bay Aquarium's David Packard Award Dinner](#). [Rosewood Sand Hill](#) in Menlo Park was the venue for an ocean-themed evening that raised \$3.7 million to support the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the [Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute](#).

[Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard](#) lauded Bill Gates for his commitment to improving the human condition by harnessing technology to advance social good, and for launching bold philanthropic initiatives to make lives better around the world so that everyone has an opportunity to live a healthy, productive life.

"We pay tribute to the scope and the focus of Bill's thinking and his commitment to using science and technology to improve the future for the people on our planet, including for all of us here tonight," Packard told attendees. "My father shared this conviction. Because of the extraordinary success of Microsoft, the [Gates Foundation](#) has had the resources to tackle some of the largest problems confronting the world, and Bill and Melinda's vision and strategic approach are yielding extraordinary results."

More than 300 guests mingled and dined in a temporary pavilion designed in collaboration with [B Line Events](#) of San Francisco to accentuate the nonprofit aquarium's mission - to inspire conservation of the ocean. After presentation of the award, a Dale Chihuly glass sculpture, [Event Chair Meg Whitman](#) and Bill Gates enthralled the audience during a 45-minute "fireside chat" that spanned issues from the role technology can play in environmental conservation, to new approaches philanthropy can bring to pressing global challenges, and the importance of optimism.

"For anyone who loves science, this is a fun time to be alive," Gates said. "We have to make sure the best scientists are working on the problems."

And, he underscored, there's tremendous public support for tackling the big issues.

"The ocean, health, education - people really do care about these things," he said. To make progress, "we need to take risks, but also to be patient" when trying to solve complex global issues.

That's more challenging when it comes to climate change, Gates said, because, "We have a deadline to do good work quickly. We have to innovate across large parts of the economy."

And, he added, "Studying the oceans is key to climate change" - an area where the work of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, in developing sensors and other tools to understand ocean conditions, is playing a critical role.

It's a point to which Julie Packard returned later in the evening.

"This is a momentous time in the life of our planet," she said. "The fate and future of seven and a half billion people hinge on decisions we make in the next few years. My message tonight is this: Our decisions about how we use or abuse the ocean are absolutely central to our future."

"For over 30 years, Monterey Bay Aquarium has been a voice for the ocean - inspiring tens of millions of people from around the world both at the Aquarium and through our growing social media constituency," Packard said. "We've been preparing the next generation of diverse ocean conservation leaders who are science-literate and ready to act. And, we've been forging solutions to the problems of today; leading the way to create a sustainable global seafood supply; mobilizing public and business action on problems like ocean plastic pollution; and generating the science and technology needed to inform decisions about the future of the ocean."

"Thanks to the support of so many of you here tonight, the Aquarium and MBARI have global influence," she added. "And finally, all sectors of society are beginning to realize that the ocean is central to our lives."

Along with Event Chair Meg Whitman, co-chairs in attendance included:

Tegan and Brian Acton (WhatsApp, Sunlight Giving), Peter Bing, Catherine and John Debs, Ann Doerr, Joanne and Art Hall, Andrea and John Hennessy (Alphabet), Lori and Jen-Hsun Huang (Nvidia), Jeanne and Bill Landreth, Steve Luczo (Seagate), DeeDee McMurtry, Audra and Sean McNicholas (SSA), Christine and Michael Morgan, Rebecca and James Morgan, Susan Orr, Cindi and Curtis Priem (Nvidia), Michelle Rhyu and Steve Neal (Cooley LLP), Karen and Jim Tyler, Lisa and Mark Wan.

Co-chairs not able to attend included:

Lynne and Marc Benioff (Salesforce, Benioff Ocean Initiative), Scott Corwon, Barbara and Ray Dalio (Bridgewater Associates), Susan and Michael Dell (Dell), John Doerr (Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers), Lyda Hill, Betty and Gordon Moore (Intel), Sally and Bill Neukom, Delanie and Peter Read, Mary and Steven Read, Shelley and Dion Weisler (HP), and Susie and Gideon Yu.

Other notable guests included:

Ned and Jimi Barnholt, Chip and Juliet Bergh, Sergey Brin and Nicole Shanahan, Larry Cohen, Laurie and Alan Dachs, Tim and Melissa Draper, John H. N. Fisher and Jennifer Caldwell, Pat and Linda Gelsinger, Ann and Gordon Getty, Caroline Getty, Jonah Goldman, John Gunn, Drew Houston, Pitch and Cathie Johnson, Charlene Kabcanell, Samir and Puja Kaul, Mike Klag, Carol Larson, Dan'I Lewin, Steve Lockhart and Karen Bals, Bob and Connie Lurie, David Marquardt, Alan and Hope May, Molly and Mike Nefkens, Judy and Dick Otter, Barbara Hibino Page and Carl Page, Larry and Lucy Page, Claire and Noel Perry, Sally-Christine Rodgers and Randy Repass, George and Charlotte Shultz, Radhika and Bipal Sinha, Boryana and JB Straubel, Mark and Mary Stevens, Gene Sykes, Mary and Marc Tessier-Lavigne, Buzz and Holly Thompson, Jeff Weiner and Lisette Derouaux, Anne Wojcicki, and Nick and Jill Woodman.

About the David Packard Award / Monterey Bay Aquarium

With a mission to inspire conversation of the ocean, the nonprofit Monterey Bay Aquarium is the most admired aquarium in the United States, a leader in science education, and a voice for ocean conservation through comprehensive programs in marine science and public policy. Everything the aquarium does works in concert to protect the future of our blue planet. Since opening in 1984, the Aquarium has welcomed more than 63 million visitors, and hosted more than 2.5 million students and teachers for free education programs. Its global research work contributes to the recovery of ocean ecosystems and key wildlife species like sea otters, white sharks and bluefin tuna. The Aquarium's global seafood and aquaculture program works with businesses, governments and NGOs to lead a markets-based transformation of fishing and aquaculture practices around the world. The Aquarium champions legislation to improve ocean health, from banning the shark fin trade in California, to phasing out single-use plastic products nationwide, and to address the greatest challenge to ocean health and human survival: climate change. All of its work is supported by the largest member and donor base of any public aquarium: nearly 80,000 households representing 276,844 individuals on six continents. Learn more at montereybayaquarium.org.

The David Packard Award

The Aquarium Board of Trustees established the David Packard Award to honor leaders whose scope of activities and achievements embody the qualities of thought and action that David Packard held dear, and who have effectively worked to make the future of our planet surer and more sustainable.

Previous Award Recipients

- George P. Shultz, 2014
- Gordon E. Moore, 2016