

**For Immediate Release**

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## **USF's Women in Leadership & Philanthropy Set to Host 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Symposium Featuring National Best Seller, Jean Case**

TAMPA, Fla. (Aug. 9, 2019)– The 14<sup>th</sup> annual USF Women in Leadership & Philanthropy Fall Symposium, presented by Florida Blue, will take place Friday, Oct. 4, at the Hilton Tampa Downtown. Themed “Be Fearless,” this inspirational event features keynote speaker Jean Case, Chairman of the National Geographic Society, CEO of the Case Foundation, and author of national bestseller, *Be Fearless: 5 Principles for a Life of Breakthroughs and Purpose*.

A passionate believer in all things digital and the amazing potential of technology to change the world for the better, Jean has been profiled in a wide number of publications including the New York Times, CNN and CNBC for her work as a leader in the impact investing movement and focuses her efforts and those of the organizations she leads around many of the same entrepreneurial approaches she cultivated through her extensive private sector career. Under her leadership, the Case Foundation has been recognized for its innovative efforts to address significant social challenges, harnessing the best impulses of entrepreneurship, innovation, technology and collaboration to drive exponential impact. Out of this work, the Case Foundation has identified five principles that individuals and organizations can take to Be Fearless and bring about transformational change and Jean has spoken at hundreds of convenings inspiring leaders worldwide to incorporate the principles into their work.

Her appearance will highlight a half-day of compelling moderated sessions on an array of topics related to living a life of purpose, leadership, and civic engagement, as well as the presentation of WLP's most prestigious awards: The Lifetime Achievement Award to Doretha Edgecomb '73 and the Community Leadership Award to Linda Simmons '75. These awards celebrate women who have exhibited transformational leadership through their volunteer, professional and philanthropic contributions.

Edgecomb, who received a Master's degree in Reading Education from USF in 1973, is a former Hillsborough County School Board member and lifelong educator, and served as a trainer for the Educational Testing Service in schools around the state of Florida, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. She taught in the College of Education at the University of South Florida and was elected to the Hillsborough County School Board in 2004, where she served until 2016. Edgecomb is a member of the Tampa Metropolitan chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the NAACP, Rivergrove Civic Association, the East Tampa Revitalization Committee, and is a longtime member and past president of the Athena Society. In recognition of her outstanding leadership and service, she was conferred the USF's President's Distinguished Citizen Award in May 2019.

A 1975 graduate of the USF College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Simmons is a lifelong Bull and has been an avid supporter of USF through many volunteer, leadership, and philanthropic contributions. After a pioneering career as a banker in the late '70's and early '80's, Simmons entered the construction industry where she continues to thrive today. She was the first woman elected President of a chapter of the Associated General Contractors in Florida, served as chair of the American Heart Association of Tampa Bay, and aided in the organization of the West Coast International Women's Forum. A past chair of the USF Foundation Board of Directors, Simmons has also played a leadership role on the USF Alumni Association Board of Directors, the Advisory Board of the Gus Stavros Center, and is a founding member and past chair of USF Women in Leadership & Philanthropy.

The Symposium begins with an 8 a.m. networking breakfast sponsored by the Tampa Bay Rays, followed by a series of concurrent sessions from 9:00-11:30 a.m.  
The lunch program and keynote address begins at noon.

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