



THE MASSACHUSETTS
CONFERENCE
FOR WOMEN

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Amal Clooney, Jesmyn Ward and Elizabeth Gilbert Address Key Women's Issues

Nation's Largest Professional Women's Conference Returns to Boston—Attracting a Record 17,000 Women

BOSTON – During a pivotal time for women in the workplace and just one month after women played a key role in the 2018 midterm elections, a record 17,000 women gathered in Boston for the 14th annual Massachusetts Conference for Women, a two-day event headlined by Amal Clooney, Jesmyn Ward and Elizabeth Gilbert.

Human rights attorney **Amal Clooney** addressed the need for more accountability through our legal systems to prevent abuse of women.

“It is true that the #MeToo movement has changed the rules at work,” said Clooney. “We are living through a moment of reckoning – and a rebalancing of power. But there’s a long way from ‘me too’ to ‘never again’. So #MeToo should...mean not only that women can come forward and talk, but also that those in power are listening; and that where there has been a crime there will be accountability.”

Jesmyn Ward, a MacArthur “Genius” and two-time National Book Award winner, emphasized the value of persistence for obtaining success. “Hold on to your dream tightly and do everything you can to realize it, within reason, even if it appears there is no promise on the horizon,” she said.

Elizabeth Gilbert, author of the international bestseller *Eat Pray Love*, discussed the importance of working well and living well. “As women, we can be so hard on ourselves. We need to recognize all the amazing things we do accomplish, and understand that the other things will be there the next day. Self-forgiveness is huge,” she said.

Other keynote speakers included Massachusetts Governor **Charlie Baker**; Boston Mayor **Martin J. Walsh**; **Shawn Achor**, bestselling author and one of world’s leading experts on the relationship between happiness and success; and **Maysoon Zayid**, an actress, comedienne and disability advocate.

The nonpartisan, nonprofit event is part of the largest network of women’s conferences in the country. The events attract an estimated 40,000 women a year in Texas, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and California. Themed “The Power of Us: Amplify Your Voice,” they offer access to some of the most successful women in America and more than 100 experts who share practical skills and strategies related to business, philanthropy, health, finance, media and professional development.

The Conference’s fourth annual Workplace Summit, designed to promote effective gender partnerships and advance equity within workplaces, featured Shawn Achor; former editor of *USA Today*, **Joanne**

Lipman; and author and former public radio host **Celeste Headlee**. The fourth annual Opening Night featured Elizabeth Gilbert; gold medal-winning gymnast and activist **Aly Raisman**; and comedian, activist and YouTube star **Franchesca “Chescaleigh” Ramsey** of MTV.

This year’s conference also featured a new initiative called the Viola Davis Challenge—inspired by Viola Davis’s 2017 observation that she sees fewer women of color than she would expect to at women’s conferences nationwide. As part of this effort, Massachusetts Conference for Women has been and will continue to work toward increasing its diversity numbers through sponsor engagement, target audience outreach and various year-round communication and education initiatives.

“Women’s workplace issues are getting more attention than ever, and the Massachusetts Conference for Women is one of the pre-eminent places addressing them—and advancing women’s professional development and personal growth,” said **Gloria Cordes Larson**, President of the Massachusetts Conference for Women Board of Directors. “We are incredibly proud to host the country’s largest gathering of women in Boston, and to continue supporting this dynamic community through our year-round resources.”

The Massachusetts Conference for Women is presented by State Street Corporation and generously sponsored by [Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany](#); [Target](#); [Cisco](#); [Bose Corporation](#); [Boston Scientific](#); [Dell](#); [Ernst & Young](#); [Fidelity Investments](#); [Fresenius Medical Care](#); [General Electric](#); [Hologic, Inc.](#); [Johnson & Johnson](#); [Johnson Controls International](#); [Juniper Networks](#); [Liberty Mutual Insurance](#); [Oracle](#); [Raytheon](#); [The TJX Companies, Inc.](#); [Wayfair](#); [Wells Fargo](#); [Akamai Technologies](#); [AMAG Pharmaceuticals](#); [Bentley University](#); [BJ’s](#); [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts](#); [Converse](#); [Harvard Business School Executive Education](#); [MFS Investment Management](#); [National Grid](#); [Ocean Spray](#); [Pfizer](#); [Rapid7](#); [Reebok](#); [Salesforce](#); [ThermoFisher Scientific](#); [TripAdvisor](#); [Keds](#); [Bain Capital Community Partnership](#) and [Crimson Lion Lavine Family Foundation](#); [Applied Materials](#); [Bank of America](#); [Bristol-Myers Squibb](#); [Koya Leadership Partners](#); [Merck & Company](#); [OSRAM](#); [Sanofi](#); [Suffolk Construction](#); [United Airlines](#); [Vertex](#); [Weber Shandwick](#); and media sponsors [AMP Radio 103.3](#); [Magic 106.7](#); [Mix 104.1](#); [The Boston Globe](#) and [WCVB-TV Boston](#).

“We’re proud to once again be supporting this important event that provides women the opportunity to make new connections, and debate how meaningful and lasting change for women in the workforce can be achieved,” said Kathy Horgan, executive vice president, chief human resources and citizenship officer for State Street Corporation. “The mission of the Massachusetts Conference for Women to support and strengthen the influence of all women is very much in line with State Street’s broader principles.”

To learn more about the Massachusetts Conference for Women, visit our [website](#). Photos of each event are available from Getty images:

[Workplace Summit](#)
[Opening Night](#)
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