



MARKLE
ADVANCING AMERICA'S FUTURE

Contact Lisa MacSpadden or
Chris Valens at 212-713-7632 or
communications@markle.org

BETH COBERT NAMED CEO OF SKILLFUL

Former Head of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Will Oversee the Markle Foundation's Work to Create a National Skills-based Labor Market

New York, April 24, 2017 – Markle Foundation CEO and President Zoë Baird today announced the appointment of Beth Cobert, former Acting Director of the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and a long-time leader at McKinsey & Company, as Chief Executive Officer of Skillful. Cobert will lead the Foundation's work to enable all Americans to keep up with the transformations automation is bringing to jobs in the digital economy. Her appointment follows a nation-wide search for a strategic leader to oversee Skillful's state-based efforts to create a labor market that values each individual's skillset and provides them with opportunity for a meaningful career path.

"Beth is an extraordinary leader for our effort to enable anyone with a smart phone to have a smart career," said Markle CEO and President Zoë Baird. "Beth has a proven track record, both in the public and private sectors, managing large, complex, and transformational initiatives. She knows how to bring together diverse stakeholders to create systemic change. She offers unparalleled business acumen, and expertise in recruitment, hiring practices and information technology. I am delighted Beth has agreed to join us to take on this critical challenge of our time."

Skillful, now in its second year of operation in Colorado, is a central part of Markle's economic work to connect American workers to good paying middle-skill jobs. Skillful is particularly focused on empowering the nearly seven out of ten Americans who don't have a four-year college degree but have great skills needed in today's job market. There are millions of available jobs across America going unfilled, many of which call for skills that can be demonstrated or developed through apprenticeships, coding camps, and online training courses.

Along with partners Markle, LinkedIn, the state of Colorado, and many others, Skillful is giving Americans access to opportunity by prioritizing skills and removing barriers that keep many talented people from applying for in-demand jobs. It is leveraging data and technology tools to ensure workers can find training and support to prepare them for the growth jobs in their community; supporting employers in implementing skills-based hiring practices that can open up their talent pool; and aligning employers and educators so that training programs teach to the skills that are in demand.

"In an economy where automation, artificial intelligence, and other technological developments are transforming jobs at an incredibly rapid pace, we need new pathways to opportunity and we need them now," said Beth Cobert. "Too many Americans have been shut out as traditional categories of employment and ways of getting training have evolved. I cannot think of a more pressing challenge than helping Americans acquire the skills they need to compete in today's workplace. I look forward to building on the impressive work already undertaken by the Markle Foundation and the Skillful team."

Cobert will work with senior Markle leadership, including Skillful's Colorado Executive Director Andi Rugg, to lead the effort to help many more job seekers and employers in the state, as well as to expand Skillful beyond Colorado. She will develop and manage new locations that adopt the Skillful model and identify the

infrastructure needed to achieve sustainability. Cobert also will work closely with Denis McDonough, President Obama's former White House Chief of Staff who joined Markle in February to pursue the federal and state policy changes required to enable workers and employers to thrive in the digital economy.

Beth's private sector business expertise, particularly in the technology sector, will be an asset to Skillful as the team works closely with employers in Colorado and beyond to adopt skills-based hiring practices that take advantage of our nation's best asset: our skilled and talented workforce.

Cobert has extensive experience in workforce issues. As Acting Director of OPM she oversaw efforts to recruit and retain a talented and diverse federal workforce. She was brought into OPM to respond to a major cyber intrusion that compromised the personal information of more than 20 million people. Prior to OPM, she served as Deputy Director for Management and U.S. Chief Performance Officer in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). At OMB, she led efforts to modernize IT systems, improve public-facing services, strengthen cybersecurity across federal systems, and improve employee engagement.

Her distinguished public sector career followed nearly thirty years at McKinsey & Company where she led the firm's Global Marketing and Sales practice and served as a co-leader of the Global Social Sector practice. Cobert managed organizational strategies for corporate, not-for-profit and government entities across a range of sectors including financial, health care, real estate and philanthropy. Over the course of her career at McKinsey she led initiatives on staff recruitment, training and development and championed efforts to support the advancement of women into leadership positions.

Cobert previously served as a board member and chair of the United Way of the San Francisco Bay Area and as a member of the Stanford Graduate School of Business Advisory Council. She received a bachelor's degree in economics from Princeton University and a master's degree in business administration from Stanford University.

#

About Markle

The Markle Foundation works to realize the potential of information technology as a breakthrough tool for some of the nation's most challenging problems. It leads a broad collaboration to Rework America to create good jobs and prepare people for today's rapidly changing digital economy. Markle's Skillful initiative is returning economic opportunities to Americans without a college diploma. For more information, visit markle.org, Skillful.com and follow [@MarkleFdn](https://twitter.com/MarkleFdn) and [@JoinSkillful](https://twitter.com/JoinSkillful) on Twitter.