



**MARKLE**  
ADVANCING AMERICA'S FUTURE

Contact Lisa MacSpadden or  
Chris Valens at 212-713-7632 or  
[communications@markle.org](mailto:communications@markle.org)

**DENIS MCDONOUGH JOINS THE MARKLE FOUNDATION**  
***Former White House Chief of Staff Will Work with Foundation***  
***on Strategy for American Workforce in the Digital Economy***

**New York, February 15, 2017** – Markle CEO and President Zoë Baird today announced the appointment of Denis McDonough as Senior Principal at the Markle Foundation. McDonough will engage in Markle's work to scale a skills-based labor market that enables all Americans to succeed in a dramatically changed workforce that requires new skills for the digital economy.

McDonough served as White House Chief of Staff for President Obama's second term. Prior to being named Chief of Staff, he served as the White House Deputy National Security Advisor. McDonough's distinguished career includes working as a senior foreign policy advisor to Senator Tom Daschle and as legislative director to Senator Ken Salazar.

"In his role as Chief of Staff to the President of the United States, and during his years of work in Congress, Denis gained unparalleled insights into the profound changes the digital economy has ushered in," said Markle CEO and President Zoë Baird. "He understands that while there has been enormous growth and prosperity for many, millions of others have experienced years of flat wages, or worse, they've seen their jobs disappear as automation has transformed sector after sector. Most vulnerable are the almost 70% of Americans who do not have a college degree. Denis is a highly regarded leader who has managed complex problems and diverse partnerships. His contribution will be invaluable as we work to provide access to opportunities for all Americans, and to create impact at a national scale."

A central part of Markle's economic work is [Skillful](#), a partnership with Markle, LinkedIn, the state of Colorado, Arizona State University, and others. Skillful aims to transform America's outdated labor market to reflect the needs of the digital economy that puts a new emphasis on skills, which can come from many sources including certificate programs, boot camps, on-line training, community college and college courses. Skillful is providing transparency for workers around the skills they have or the skills they need, and where they can find the training and support to be competitive. It is helping employers find the talent they need to grow, and providing insights to educators to help them train people in the skills required to compete in today's economy.

McDonough will work with Markle's team to design and develop a strategy to scale Skillful and develop partnerships with others who are leading efforts to expand opportunities for Americans to learn and train for the work of the future. McDonough will look at critical national and local policy supports needed to enable workers to thrive in the digital economy, including in Colorado, where Skillful launched last year, and in other states as Skillful grows. He also will help Markle with its national search for a CEO to lead Skillful.

"If more Americans are to succeed in today's economy, we need new ideas," said Denis McDonough. "Traditional categories of employment, ways of getting training, and the relationship between employers and workers are continually evolving, and we need to connect Americans to the jobs where trained workers are in demand. I am honored to join with Zoë Baird and the Markle team in their effort to ensure that models such as Skillful can help U.S. workers across the country."

Survey results from a national study by The Pew Research Center, in collaboration with Markle, found the economy and jobs to be top of mind with Americans, with 65% of respondents saying they think good jobs are difficult to find where they live and 87% of respondents saying it is essential or important to continually train and learn new skills to keep up with changes in the workplace.

“Americans recognize the importance of skills and training,” said Baird. “But they can’t do it alone. They need pathways to demonstrate their skills and to learn new skills. The challenge of our time is to make sure all Americans can benefit from the wave of digital revolutions that have upended modern life.”

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### **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](http://markle.org), [Skillful.com](http://Skillful.com) and follow [@MarkleFdn](https://twitter.com/MarkleFdn) and [@JoinSkillful](https://twitter.com/JoinSkillful) on Twitter.*