

AmCHAM
SLOVAKIA



**Candidates
for the AmCham
Board of Directors
2019/2020**

PERSONAL STATEMENTS



The American Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic will hold the **2019 General Assembly on Tuesday, April 16, 2019**, at 6.00 p.m. at the Primaciálny palác in Bratislava.

At the General Assembly, the American Chamber of Commerce will announce the outcome of this year's elections for the Board of Directors. To ensure that you are able to make an informed decision when casting your ballot, AmCham Slovakia has prepared special brochure with detailed information about each candidate for the Board of Directors.

As part of the candidacy of each nominee, we asked the candidates to provide a personal statement addressing the following questions:

- What is your vision for AmCham Slovakia within the two year term of office?
- What would be your contribution to the Board of Directors?
- Which changes would you like to implement in AmCham Slovakia if you were elected to the Board of Directors?

We do encourage each of our member companies to cast their ballots to ensure that your voice is heard, as it is the membership that makes the very important decisions as to who will serve during the upcoming year.

Official ballots have been sent by registered mail from the AmCham office.

On the following pages, you will find all candidates for elections of the AmCham Board of Directors 2019 and their personal statements.



BENEDIGOVÁ, Michaela *
Managing Director
Seesame

It is my personal honor to present my candidacy for the seventh election period at the AmCham Board of Directors, where I currently serve as the 3rd Vice President. For more than 20 years, AmCham is making a difference in the business environment in Slovakia. It has been my pleasure to serve as an active and dedicated board member and contribute to AmCham's leading position in business community in Slovakia.

As a member of AmCham's Policy/Advocacy Standing Committee, I am offering my year-long personal experience in leading a very successful public affairs and PR company, my skills and my connections, as well as my profound knowledge of the Slovak business, social and political environment. Over the years I have used these to help AmCham in fulfilling its important mission of shaping the Slovak business environment.

Undoubtedly, we are experiencing a profound level of distrust between all actors in our society. I very much believe that business community through courageous initiatives and authentic leaders can partially fulfil the gap and bring more common ground, mutual confidence and hope in positive changes in our society. One of the most important initiative has been the Rule of Law initiative, which united employers' associations, and almost the entire business community to improve transparency and predictability of the legislative process, and address corruption and inefficient judiciary system. I am very proud and honored to be part of it as it really made a difference in perception of importance of rule of law principles.

Building on this initiative, which emphasizes important values and business needs, I would like to continue in contributing to very successful policy and advocacy initiatives lead by AmCham. These initiatives are extremely needed, especially as we face a dynamic change in social and political environment

It would be my pleasure to continue to serve as a member of the AmCham Board of Directors and Vice-President, building and strengthening the capacity of AmCham talented and dedicated staff in public affairs and communication, and thereby making new things happen.



BUDKE, Branislav *
Country Manager Slovakia
Pfizer

VISION

American Chamber of Commerce plays a critical role in communication and interaction with Slovak Government and other important bodies in many areas.

I see our vision very much related to transparency of business environment, Rule of Law and fight against corruption.

AmCham will be visible as a leader in shaping the environment, legislation and should have higher impact on critical issues.

My vision is to establish AmCham as a partner of choice for the Government of Slovak Republic and other important stakeholders in offering workable and long term focused solutions.

CONTRIBUTION

I would be honored by the opportunity to give my time and experience gained from 17 years of doing business in pharmaceutical industry to the Board. My 7 years in the position of Pfizer Country Manager Slovakia, Baltics and Romania has helped me to develop deep environment knowledge and brought me a good network. I believe that this, combined with my energy and values, can contribute to the overall output and success of AmCham.

Pfizer is the world`s leading biopharmaceutical company and one of top ethical pharmaceutical companies in Slovakia. Worldwide we collaborate with healthcare professionals, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care. These attributes, experience and capabilities could be used and utilised for successful fulfillment of AmCham vision and strengthen AmCham position as a leading chamber of commerce in Slovakia.

CHANGES

There are more and more critical areas in health care system which would benefit from greater engagement between AmCham, the US Embassy and the Government of Slovakia, in order to create more favorable environment for US multinational business interests operating in this country. As a board member I will strive to help and motivate our members to restart HC committee and find the right strategy.

On the Board, I also will work to continue to stress the importance of intellectual property rights protection, continue to develop a more positive environment in Slovakia for research & development-based companies and start-ups.

* - Nominee standing for reelection to the Board



FISCHER, Peter
Vice President Human Resources;
Executive Board Member
T-Systems Slovakia

VISION

The AmCham should become a well known organisation and influencer in the upcoming period of two years. We are able to strengthen our position and gain political influence due to upcoming election and create a better business environment in Slovakia.

CONTRIBUTION

My expertise allows me to focus on the labour code and education.

In the labour code I would like to focus on the aspect of change, to create a future business and improvement of employment conditions. Current labour code is not covering all industries in Slovakia, main focus is on the blue collar employees. There is a need to prepare the future industries, focus on higher value added positions. I believe that labour code should create conditions attractive for employers and employees of the future. I would like to be the link between government, employers and other social partners. Also, I have knowledge of the labour codes of different EU countries.

In education this means the simple business case consolidation of costs, finding out what employers are spending on education to provide expected levels of graduates in different industries. We need to use this analysis to gain influence on the side of regional structure, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economics. There is also a need to connect the demand of the future targeted positions in Slovak industry and current educational system. Employers need to influence the future education demand. In T-Systems we have an experience with running of the dual education system in cooperation with Universities and acting as a trusted partner. I would like to use this experience in AmCham.

CHANGES

My aim is to become the best centre of future high value added jobs in new sectors like Telco business, manufacturing R&D sector and IT sector in Slovakia. From my perspective Slovakia has already proven a great potential. Just looking at the automotive figures where Slovakia became the biggest producer of cars per citizen in the world. I think that direction of having high ambition to achieve the same success in other industries can enable us to move to Slovakia to higher value added jobs. This will open new potential investments, increase current standard of life in Slovakia and help us provide better service from our current companies to our customers. There is also a need to use AmCham as a marketing platform on the global scale.



GALGÓCI, Gabriel *

Country General Manager for Slovakia & Director Client Network Operations

AT&T Global Network Services Slovakia

VISION

AT&T is actively involved with AmCham across Europe and we have seen first-hand AmCham Slovakia's commitment to be a leading voice for business. AmCham Slovakia is one of most active and respected chamber in Slovakia. In order to maintain this position, it's important for AmCham remain visible by being actively involved in areas which are important

for business community and support sustainability and growth.

Over past 6 years, I've been personally engaged in several AmCham initiatives which helped cultivate business environment and ethics, address areas for improvement and future growth in Slovakia. Leading Business Service Center Forum, we were able establish trusted body for 30 companies operating Shared Service Centers or Business Process Organization in Slovakia and representing nearly 32.000 employees representing 95% of all employees working in this sector in Slovakia. Joined effort lead into formal recognition of the newly evolving and fast growing industry and position Business Service Centers as important pillar of Slovak economy.

Besides policy and advocacy active development involvement, I've supported talent and leadership development across university students by being involved in Meet the Mentor program and Cross Company Mentoring program established by AmCham. AmCham Slovakia's efforts to support public policies that encourage investment and new opportunities in the region are important to global organizations, such as AT&T. I hope to continue to strengthen AmCham Slovakia's role as a leading representative of international businesses during the next two years in office.

CONTRIBUTION

As we look to the future, the impact of a connected digital world, on our economy and our quality of life, will be immense. As a representative of a company that is leading the way in this technology transformation, I believe I can bring a valuable perspective to AmCham Slovakia. During my professional career with AT&T, I has held multiple leadership positions building and leading local, regional and global teams. Experience and professional network are main attributes I can leverage while serving as member of Board of Directors.

CHANGES

Today, AmCham Slovakia continues to be one of the most active foreign Chambers of Commerce in the country. I would hope to further evolve AmCham Slovakia's role as an advocate for the business community. My commitment for next 2 years in position is to continue actively support activities contributing to key pillars of AmCham strategy Rule of law, Human Capital, Innovation and Business Development. We are most effective when strong voices band together and speak as one. AmCham provides us the opportunity to have one voice in Slovakia.

* - Nominee standing for reelection to the Board



GAŽÍK, Peter
Chief Executive Officer
O2 Slovakia

As the CEO of O2 Slovakia, it is my honor to present my candidacy to the AmCham SR Board of Directors and I hereby sincerely ask for your support for myself and O2 in becoming part of the group of professionals that assist AmCham in growing and strengthening its impact on the local business environment.

Since its entry into the market in 2007, O2 has grown to become not only one of the top mobile operators in Slovakia with over 2 million customers, but one of the most respected investors in the ICT sector. O2 has joined AmCham since the beginning of its courageous journey on this market as we have always recognized its position as the leading business advocacy organization and a continuous fighter for better business environment. O2 has revolutionized mobile communication in Slovakia by bringing fairness, simplicity, and transparency to the market as its main principles. I sincerely believe that most of the AmCham community shares these values and therefore it would be my pleasure to share our experience in turning these values into business success and a general social impact that we have accomplished in O2.

VISION

The election year is around the corner and I'm sure AmCham will once again demonstrate to be an effective communicator of business positions to the political parties prior to, as well as after the elections. The Board must prove to be a consistent, open and constructive partner to its members and to the Slovak government.

CONTRIBUTION

As the longest serving CEO of O2 in Slovakia and a long-term public affairs specialist, I would very much like to contribute to enhancing AmCham's communication potential and advocacy performance. O2 has built a reputation of the local innovator and a fair partner who continues to grow in a very challenging environment of the ICT sector. Now I would like to offer this experience to AmCham.

CHANGES

I would like to assist AmCham in foreseeing the changes that need to be done in order to remain an effective organization that provides added value to its members. AmCham has a talented team and rather than changing anything I would be looking forward to the cooperation.



KOLESÁR, Peter **
Chairman and Partner
CIVITTA (Neulogy)

Over the past 12 years of its existence, Neulogy has become the central and in many ways unifying element of the Slovak innovation ecosystem. We have now joined forces with an Estonia-based management advisory group CIVITTA, but our mission remains the same – inspiring entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses, nurturing industry-academia cooperation and showcasing top Slovak technology companies and excellent research with commercial potential. And these are some of the elements that I would like to bring on board if re-elected to the AmCham Board of Directors.

The three priorities I would like to focus on while continuing serving on the Board are: first, AmCham should remain a strong voice in shaping public discourse with regards to the business environment, formulating policies and advocating for sensible regulations. Second, AmCham should support tighter cooperation between corporations and young technology companies – corporates can scout for innovations among startups, test new technologies with less risk and costs and startups can benefit from corporates' distribution networks, knowledge and economies of scale. All of this can have a significant and positive impact on the Slovak economy and AmCham can play a critical role in this facilitation. And third, AmCham should play a role in articulating and advocating for the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises. SMEs are the backbone of the Slovak economy as they employ over 70% of the total workforce, but are greatly underrepresented in preparation of legislation affecting businesses.

I spent part of my career working at the Slovak Embassy in Washington, DC as a Trade and Innovation Counselor helping Slovak companies in the US and supporting innovation collaboration between the United States and Slovakia. I would like to use this experience in the AmCham Board and continue to build bridges between businesses on both sides of the Atlantic.

I would like to contribute to AmCham's mission with my own career background as well as with expertise and experience of the terrific team of people we have at CIVITTA.

* - Nominee standing for reelection to the Board

- Nominee standing for the SME sector



MAGÁL, Martin
Managing Partner
Allen & Overy

If elected to the AmCham Board, I would like to focus on three key areas of interest:

- Rule of Law initiative,
- Educating the Slovak business community about the efficient use of alternative dispute prevention and resolution methods,
- Promoting gender and other forms of diversity in the business sector.

RULE OF LAW

Over the years, AmCham has proven to be an important and highly respected channel for the international and domestic business community to monitor, influence and improve the legislative framework in Slovakia. With the benefit of my legal and managerial background, I would work towards continuing in AmCham's Rule of Law initiative with renewed strength and urgency. The fight for a business-friendly, predictable and transparent legislative framework is one that can perhaps not be won, but it can be easily lost if the business community does not take an active role. AmCham, as the voice of international business in Slovakia, needs to continue making itself heard on these issues, loudly, clearly and with a high degree of professionalism. I believe I can contribute towards these goals.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Business often complain that the Slovak justice system is inefficient, slow and often unpredictable. Yet a vast majority of business does not even consider using alternative methods of dispute resolution (ADR), such as mediation or arbitration. This attitude seems to stem from a lack of awareness and trust in these alternative methods. With no or little positive practical experiences to draw upon, it is difficult to break the circle of distrust and ignorance.

If elected to the AmCham Board, I would work towards making information about alternative dispute resolution methods more widely available to the membership of AmCham and organise seminars and clinics aimed at showing how they can be used safely and efficiently in practice. Having been a practicing litigator, arbitrator and member of managerial boards of various ADR institutions and interest groups for over a decade, I believe I can bring relevant views and experience to the table.

DIVERSITY

Despite positive trends, the Slovak business community remains largely patriarchal, Bratislava-centric and, with the exception of multinational companies and Czech managers, closed to managerial talent from abroad. This leads to many companies not being able to realise their full potential and losing out in the war for talent. I would like to use the experience with diversity efforts in my own firm to identify the underlying causes and propose solutions towards achieving a higher rate of diversity in the Slovak business community, in particular in smaller and family businesses.



MOTAZED, Nima
Managing Director
Swiss Re Slovakia

VISION

AmCham is a unique story in the Slovak business environment. I have great respect for all those who grew this independent organization into the biggest international Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia. Its members represent a very important pillar of society, bringing a lot of financial, cultural and knowledge-related assets to the country.

It would be an honor to join your ranks and challenge myself to think how we can contribute perhaps even more in crucial societal topics like education, diversity and inclusion, or sustainability including environmental protection. The chamber could help us leverage our collective voice, resources and experience to be good corporate citizens who go even beyond what is expected by legislation, and who lead by example.

CONTRIBUTION

In my close to 30 years of work experience, I developed myself into a change agent. I defined my purpose as a guide through ambiguity, a trusted pathfinder and the builder of bridges between people, businesses and ideas. Therefore, I use my energy and experience to create new solutions for a better future where we overcome the fear of unknown. The principle of life-long learning became one of my major strengths. I hope I would be able to share some of my learnings with others, but also learn from others on how we can help Slovakia to further develop and shape it's future in a fast-changing world.

It is all about people. I learned how important it is to empower flexibility and freedom and what upsides this approach brings when companies sponsor these values in their own self-interest, rather than a "benefit". In Swiss Re Slovakia we have more than 84% millennials and we managed to remove administrative barriers like fixed working hours or fixed desks. I would love to share our learnings to inspire others to consider this first step. The future will probably require us to remove our mental barriers as well, and this will be much harder for all of us.

CHANGES

I can offer my idea sponsorship to topics connected to education, future of work, inter-generational dialog and sustainability. Both externally in terms of activities and events, as well as internally in terms of developmental best practice sharing among us in AmCham. I would like to help organize international forums, where top management could share experience (both successes and failures) on given topics that the others could benefit from ... a concept like Braintrust, but on a larger scale.



RUBIN, David F. #
Managing Director
Elite Language Center

VISION

Almost a decade ago, we opened the doors to Elite Language Center. We sought to offer our clients all the language skills required to live, work, and succeed globally. More than this, we wanted to deliver something out of the ordinary: a school focused on bespoke quality training for students and a supportive environment for teachers.

As an American, and Slovak SME founder, my connection to AmCham Slovakia is deep. I recognize its unifying and promotional force within the international business community and the need to keep it as the most active and respected chamber in Slovakia. To do so, AmCham must remain fully invested in helping the business community by emphasizing the rule of law, the need for education reform, and the importance of regional development.

AmCham Slovakia provides a powerful voice for making Slovakia a strong E.U. member and a fertile nursery for SMEs. As an educator and owner of a small business, I wish, over the next two years, to continue these efforts in making the business playing field level and attractive to international investment and domestic start-ups.

CONTRIBUTION

Slovakia and the world are ever more interconnected, and business and society face both opportunities and challenges. I believe I have much to offer to AmCham Slovakia in both regards. As a lawyer in New York, I saw what was possible in a stable business environment. As an American founder of a Slovak SME, I have personally experienced many challenges doing business in Slovakia. As an educator, I have seen, and worked passionately to address, the needs and shortcomings in the educational system here. Since joining AmCham Slovakia, I and my Elite team have striven, through active committee participation and sponsorship, to strengthen and refine AmCham Slovakia's effort and vision.

CHANGES

In my decade in Slovakia, I have witnessed remarkable progress in the business environment. While much has been due to large businesses, many of which make up the strong backbone of AmCham Slovakia, the most dynamic, the most compelling, the most forward thinking have been Slovak SMEs. I would use AmCham Slovakia's influence to greater emphasize assisting start-ups and smaller enterprises, especially in regions in significant need of development. Similarly, AmCham Slovakia has the influence to champion national education reform. Both are essential for maintaining the progress that has been achieved since the Velvet Revolution and keeping Slovakia a progressive, productive, accessible EU member.

- Nominee standing for the SME sector



SKRAK, Šimon *

Director of Digital Accenture Slovakia

VISION

Continue being the leading and the most active foreign Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia. Strengthen Amcham's position as a relevant partner for the Government and other appropriate authorities to foster the continuous development of the business environment in Slovakia.

CONTRIBUTION

I am passionate to further extend Accenture's long-term involvement and commitment to the AmCham Slovakia and use all my skills and capabilities to help AmCham fully embrace the power of new technologies and digital, thus allowing it to raise the bar once again. On the other hand, I'd like to focus on hot topics, such as education and lack of relevant talent, gender equality and diversity, to support the shift of Slovakia towards economy based on new technologies and innovations. At the same time, I am committed to utilize my strong sense of business ethics, leadership skills and close relationships with local business community to turn the ambitious AmCham vision into reality.

CHANGES

I would like to continue actively supporting AmCham's committees, Task forces and other advocacy efforts. I would like to also continue fostering closer cooperation and coordination with other professional associations in Slovakia to align in major advocacy efforts. I strongly believe this is the right approach to draw the Government's and other appropriate authorities' attention to issues described above that are limiting development in Slovakia towards the standard business environment based on highly skilled and educated human capital and innovations.

On top of this, I would like to continue driving AmCham to become more digital, to make sure that its employees and board members can work and get connected from anywhere and on any device, while we exploit the power of social networks for the benefit of our members.

* - Nominee standing for reelection to the Board



ŠPAŇÁROVÁ, Veronika *
Director, Country Officer for Slovakia
Citi

VISION

- Continue supporting strong business communication and networking platform for members all across Slovakia.
- Promote and advocate fair business practices, strong corporate governance and social responsibility.
- Provide the best support to investors entering Slovakia and manage effective communication between its members and incoming investors. Support Slovak companies in their regional and global expansion.
- Provide effective information channel between business and authorities, become an even more respected voice representing member's interests at various decision-making levels.
- Focus on education, as well as culture of diversity and inclusion as strong driving forces for the future.
- Be the most respected chamber of commerce platform in the country.

CONTRIBUTION

- Citi, USA based company, is one of the world's leading global financial institution with the largest geographical presence, serving clients in 160 countries and jurisdictions. In Slovakia, Citi has 24 years history of successful operations and has been recognised as a provider of top quality financial services to its core group of customers. We co-operate with many AmCham members and are significant supporter of their growth in Slovakia and overseas.
- Citi as an institution and myself personally will continue to promote Slovakia as a country with attractive investment opportunities and hold discussions with potential investors to assist in their investment decision making process, as well as providing expertise and market knowledge for Slovak companies considering regional or global expansion.
- Citizenship is core to Citi and is deeply embedded in its mission of enabling growth and progress. For many years, Citi is actively involved in development of entrepreneurship education not only in Slovakia, but also worldwide, as we realize the need for investing in young people practical education and the need for successful transition from school to work.
- As the world's global bank, Citi has unique strength of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. I will utilize the Citi knowledge and expertise to continue promoting culture of diversity and inclusion as important driving forces for future progress.
- Citi supports over 1,200 Shared Service Centers globally, and is the Trusted advisor in the SSC space. I will be actively involved in SSC agenda for AmCham members and offer expertise and best practices where needed and helpful.

CHANGES

- Clear specification of the key topics AmCham and their strong communication among the members and outside.
- Encourage AmCham Board and members to partner in common topics (eg. Education)
- Continuous dialogue with AmCham members all across Slovakia to refine priority topics based on their feedback

* - Nominee standing for reelection to the Board



ŠVALEK, Dušan
Chief Country Officer for Slovakia
Slovak Telekom

VISION

Firstly, I value AmCham as the leader in the space of chambers of commerce and business associations in Slovakia and across Europe. Leading positions may tend to be difficult to sustain. Enhancing this leadership would therefore be my clear priority.

Secondly, I think that both business and society are facing a period of major changes. “Adapt or die.” Adaptation, staying relevant and actively generating impulses for business and social change is a key condition to keep the leadership and impact radiant.

And thirdly, my wish would be making the most of our diversity. Reaching into potential of various sources of our ever-evolving great membership base is vital in securing both aspirations described above.

CONTRIBUTION

I feel I can basically offer two types of assets that might be useful – my experience and my time. In terms of experience, I am ready to provide and share more than 20 years of business know-how gathered in various capacities, including 15 years of serving as a CxO in telco industry, strategy consulting intelligence as well as a passionate citizenship standpoint with clear view of business and social development in the Slovak Republic.

As for my time, I believe this to be the most valuable and scarce resource that we have in the fast-paced modern life.

In my view, the combination of both can help to move the AmCham`s agenda forward even further.

CHANGES

I firmly believe in constant systematic learning and development, both personally and organizationally. Changes to existing status-quo are perhaps best implemented through a clear definition of an ambition and of an agenda definition consequently. Therefore I would focus on actively shaping the agenda of AmCham, be it in terms of its ambition or in terms of its execution.

In my opinion, when it comes to any changes, this is the best place to start.

VOTING PROCEDURES

for the 2019 Elections of the AmCham Board of Directors

Outlined below are the procedures for the 2019 Elections of AmCham Board of Directors. Please note that procedures differ slightly depending on a particular company's membership level.

PATRON Member

1. AmCham PATRON members are entitled to vote for each vacancy on the Board on each of the FOUR (4) ballots received.
2. Follow the instructions on the ballot and select eight (8) candidates for Board positions on each of the FOUR (4) ballots received

CORPORATE Member

1. AmCham CORPORATE members are entitled to vote for each vacancy on the Board on each of the THREE (3) ballots received.
2. Follow the instructions on the ballot and select eight (8) candidates for Board positions on each of the THREE (3) ballots received

GENERAL Member

1. AmCham GENERAL members are entitled to vote for each vacancy on the Board on each of the TWO (2) ballots received.
2. Follow the instructions on the ballot and select eight (8) candidates for Board positions on each of the TWO (2) ballots received

Individual or Non-profit Institution

1. AmCham INDIVIDUAL or NON-PROFIT INSTITUTION members are entitled to vote for each vacancy on the Board on the ONE (1) ballot received.
2. Follow the instructions on the ballot and select eight (8) candidates for Board positions on the ONE (1) ballot received

All members must then mail their ballots using the addressed envelope sent with the ballot(s) or bring the completed ballots to the General Assembly by 18:45 SHARP.

The secretariat will collect and count all ballots received at the General Assembly on April 16, 2019. The new Board will be announced shortly after.

DO NOT mail ballots after April 10, as they may not arrive in time. Ballots received after April 16 will be invalid.

All votes are confidential!



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