



## **Catalyst Honors Initiatives at Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Sodexo with the 2012 Catalyst Award**

Catalyst to celebrate 50 years of advancing women in the workplace!

**NEW YORK (January 24, 2012)**—Catalyst announces that initiatives from Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Sodexo are the recipients of the 2012 Catalyst Award. Catalyst will honor these groundbreaking initiatives at its 50th anniversary celebration, beginning with a special two-day conference on Wednesday, March 28, 2012, and Thursday, March 29, 2012, and culminating with the gala Catalyst Awards Dinner on the evening of March 29. This anniversary represents a significant milestone: Catalyst's 50 years of leadership to expand opportunities for women and business. "This year's 50th anniversary celebration recognizes Catalyst's unique contribution to women's progress in the workplace over the last five decades and anticipates the positive impact women's leadership will have on the world in decades to come," said Ilene H. Lang, President and Chief Executive Officer of Catalyst. "The pioneering initiatives we honor with the Catalyst Award affect businesses and employees' lives, but their influence also extends beyond corporate walls to families, communities, and economies worldwide. Clearly, what's good for women is good for men, business, and society."

James S. Turley, Chairman and CEO of Ernst & Young LLP and Chairman of the Catalyst Board of Directors, will chair the Dinner. The CEOs of many leading global organizations and more than 2,000 corporate leaders will be in attendance. The festivities will take place at The Waldorf=Astoria in New York.

Since 1987, Catalyst has honored exceptional business initiatives that advance women in the workplace with the Catalyst Award, which embodies Catalyst's vision of "Changing workplaces. Changing lives." This year's Award-winning initiatives share a laser-like focus on the business case for women's advancement and include:

- A cutting-edge initiative from one of Australia's largest financial services organizations, which has transformed its culture and provides many opportunities for its women and diverse employees to excel.
- A strategic initiative from a food and facilities management services company that advances employees, including women, and clients through multi-pronged diversity and inclusion strategies.

Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA)'s initiative, Opening the Door for Gender Diversity, seeks to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions through a variety of strategies and programs aimed at breaking down barriers women and diverse populations often face in the workplace. Unique programs include mandatory and in-depth unconscious bias training for all senior leaders, a rigorous talent review process, and a progressive approach to building a flexible workplace. Because of CBA's strong support for flexibility, the proportion of

employees who state they work flexibly (formally and informally) has increased from 35 percent in 2008 to 41 percent in 2011. Strong metrics and results reinforce the power of this initiative; women's representation in executive manager and above roles has increased from 21 percent in 2005 to 29 percent in 2011, and the percentage of women on the board of directors also increased from 20 percent to 27 percent.

Sodexo's initiative, Making Every Day Count: Driving Business Success Through the Employee Experience, is a systemic strategy to provide the tools, resources, and support necessary to ensure success of all employees, including women. A host of professional development programs present opportunities to share diversity lessons with staff and clients, provide training to different employee populations, and develop connections through strategic networking and robust mentoring. For example, Sodexo's IMPACT mentoring program, which connects employees across client sites, has resulted in a demonstrable improvement in women's careers: 30 percent of women who participated in IMPACT received a promotion. The strategic nature of this initiative has led to strong results; from 2003 to 2010, women's share of positions in the executive pipeline increased from 23 percent to 33 percent, with racially/ethnically diverse women's share increasing from 6 percent to 9 percent.

The prestige of winning the Catalyst Award, rooted in its rigorous criteria and year-long evaluation process, continues to grow. The Award-winning initiatives are assessed against a robust set of criteria, including business rationale, senior leadership support, accountability, communication, employee engagement, innovation, and measurable results.

Catalyst believes that showcasing best-in-class initiatives is vital to women's progress in the corporate world. This year's Award-winning initiatives provide valuable models for companies wishing to transform society, increase sustainability, and potentially improve their bottom lines by creating opportunities for women to advance.

This year's Catalyst Awards Conference is sponsored by The Coca-Cola Company and Walmart; this year's Dinner is sponsored by PepsiCo, Inc. and Shell Oil Company.

To learn more about Catalyst's 50th anniversary celebration events, please visit [www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org). For media inquiries, please contact Susan Nierenberg at 646-388-7744 or [snierenberg@catalyst.org](mailto:snierenberg@catalyst.org) or Margo Mendez-Penate at 646-388-7778 or [mmendez-penate@catalyst.org](mailto:mmendez-penate@catalyst.org). To purchase a table for the Conference or Dinner, please contact Liana Wolkenbreit at (646) 388-7729 or [lwolkenbreit@catalyst.org](mailto:lwolkenbreit@catalyst.org).