



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Accion Opportunity Fund Welcomes Female Tech Pioneers to its Board of Directors

*Lata Krishnan, Juanita Lott, and Caretha Coleman – all pioneering women of color in the tech industry – have been elected to serve on Accion Opportunity Fund’s Board of Directors*

**San Jose, CA, Sept. 30, 2020** – Accion Opportunity Fund, the nation’s leading nonprofit microlender to small businesses, announced the addition of three new board members to its board of directors today – all of them pioneering women of color in the technology industry.

Lata Krishnan was the CFO of Smart Global Holdings since co-founding it in 1989 and leading it through its IPO in 1995 and is the co-founder of the American India Foundation; Juanita Lott is the founder & former CEO of Bridgestream Software and an investment partner and educational advisory board member with Portfolia Investments; and Caretha Coleman is a respected professional in Silicon Valley whose experience spans 35 years in the technology industry and is the former chair of the board of Dignity Health.

“We are thrilled to have such talented and dedicated individuals join Accion Opportunity Fund’s leadership team” said Accion Opportunity Fund CEO Luz Urrutia. “Lata, Juanita and Caretha bring deep organizational experience from their professional careers along with extensive philanthropic leadership – important assets for Accion Opportunity Fund as we continue our work to help entrepreneurs survive the economic fallout of the Covid crisis and, eventually, recover from it. These pioneering women’s experience, perspectives and philanthropic vision will be key to achieving our goals and helping our entrepreneurs and communities build back better.”

### Lata Krishnan

[Lata Krishnan](#) is the Founder, former President, and current co-chair of the American India Foundation. Philanthropy being a passion, Lata also serves on the boards of The Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, the Asian Art Museum and is a Fellow with the American Leadership



Forum. Lata is also a Senior Advisory Board Member of the London School of Economics, South Asia Centre.

Lata was the Chief Financial Officer of Smart Global Holdings (Nasdaq: SGH) from the company's founding in 1989 and led it through its initial public offering in 1995. As a private investor and original co-founder in the Krishnan-Shah Family Office, Lata helped start Shah Capital Partners. She takes an active role in identifying and investing in high-growth opportunities and inspiring founders from the technology, medical device, energy, real estate, and social impact worlds.

“I believe financial self-reliance is key to achieving economic stability and mobility. I'm excited to use my financial and non-profit background to serve the Opportunity Fund's goals toward scaling and empowering underprivileged individuals.”

### **Juanita Lott**

[Juanita Lott](#) is an investment partner with Portfolia Investments, where she focuses on enterprise software and women and minority-led early stage ventures (Portfolia was named one of Fast Company's ten most innovative companies in 2020). She also serves as Director and Chair of the Governance Committee on the National Board of CollegeSpring. College Spring equips schools and their educators with test prep and college curriculum to prepare underserved students to succeed on the SAT/ACT exams, enter college, receive better financial aid and achieve higher graduation rates.

Juanita founded and served on the Board of Directors of Bridgestream Software, a market leader in role management, and was one of the early African American women to found and lead an enterprise software company. Gartner recognized Bridgestream (later acquired by Oracle) as a leader in role-based security and Juanita was described as a pioneer in role-based technology by the Burton Group.

“As economic disparities continue to grow across our country, providing affordable financing and the tools that enable small business entrepreneurs to succeed is an important priority. Opportunity Fund is at the forefront of this effort, and I am honored to join the board as we work to bring economic independence to underserved communities.”

### **Caretha Coleman**



Having most recently served as Chairman of the Board of Dignity Health, a \$16 billion healthcare system headquartered in San Francisco, [Caretha Coleman](#) has significant early stage investment, organizational development, and operational experience. As a principal of Coleman Consulting, Caretha focused her practice on working with start-ups and early stage ventures in the areas of strategy development, executive coaching and organizational effectiveness – *‘making organizations work’* as she puts it.

A respected professional in Silicon Valley, Caretha’s experience spans 35 years in the technology industry in companies such as Interval Research, a Silicon Valley Research lab and incubator, where she was Chief Administrative Officer with responsibility for Finance, Human Resources and Facilities. Prior to Interval, Caretha was EVP with global responsibility for Human Resources at Software Publishing Corporation, where her leadership was instrumental in pioneering one of the first successful desktop computer software businesses for 10 years. Caretha began her career in the Silicon Valley companies of Hewlett Packard and Spectra Physics.

“Accion Opportunity Fund has a long-standing commitment to working with and lifting up small business owners, many of whom are women and people of color. The work of identifying Black business owners in the distribution of the Paycheck Protection Program spoke volumes to me. It’s another way of creating equity and hopefully closing the vast economic gap in our country.”

To see a full list of Accion Opportunity Fund’s Board of Directors, please visit <https://www.opportunityfund.org/boards/>

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### **About Accion Opportunity Fund**

In March, 2020, Opportunity Fund and Accion, The US Network, joined forces to establish [Accion Opportunity Fund](#), the first organization focused on a national microlending strategy to meet the credit needs of small businesses – developing new products, establishing new partnerships, promoting research and financial education, and leveraging digital technologies to support mission-driven lending.

### **About Opportunity Fund**

Opportunity Fund, the nation’s leading nonprofit small business lender, believes small dollar loans help hard-working entrepreneurs make lasting change in their own lives and build stronger communities by growing businesses and creating jobs. Opportunity Fund’s community of donors and investors is creating an inclusive financial system that empowers women, immigrant, and minority small business owners. Our strategy combines microloans for small business owners and New Markets Tax Credit investments in high-impact community infrastructure projects. Since 1994, Opportunity Fund has deployed more than \$900 million and helped thousands of

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entrepreneurs invest in their families' futures. The organization has committed to lending an additional \$1.2 billion to small business owners across the country and investing \$174 million in community real estate projects by 2023. Opportunity Fund has [earned the highest 4-star rating](#) by Charity Navigator for trust and transparency. [www.opportunityfund.com](http://www.opportunityfund.com)