

Cynthia R. Bigelow

Abstract:

Cindi Bigelow is the 3rd generation President and CEO of family-owned Bigelow Tea, the US market leader of specialty teas that produces over 1.7 billion tea bags annually. She holds a BS degree from Boston College, an MBA from Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management, and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of New Haven and Fairfield University. Socially- and community-minded, she frequently makes appearances speaking to students and industry leaders, sharing insights on business ethics and career development, and has received numerous awards for her years of community service. Favorite pastimes include being with her children, skiing, tennis, yoga and drinking lots of tea.

Full Bio



Cindi Bigelow is the 3rd generation President & CEO of family-owned Bigelow Tea.

Before assuming this key role in 2005, Cindi Bigelow spent nearly 20 years in all areas of the company her grandmother founded in 1945. Headquartered in Fairfield, Conn., with additional manufacturing plants in Idaho and Kentucky, Bigelow Tea is the national market leader of specialty teas and maker of “Constant Comment”® tea. The company remains a family-owned business and employs 350 people across three manufacturing facilities, producing over 1.7 billion tea bags annually.

In her passion to ensure that only the finest teas and ingredients continue to be used in her family tea recipes, and that gardens practice fair and equitable treatment of employees, Cindi travels all over the world -- from the Assam regions and Himalayas in Darjeeling, India, to Sri Lanka, Calabria’s bergamot orchards and the lemon orchards of Central Valley California.

At home, she encourages and continues to champion sustainable practices that have included the installation of 880 photovoltaic solar panels that provide 15% of the electricity at the company headquarters in Fairfield, the conservation of water and natural gas across all three Bigelow plants and practices that earned Bigelow Tea the designation in 2012 of being a “Zero Waste to Landfill” company.

Cindi initiated the Annual Bigelow Tea Community Challenge in 1988 that has donated nearly \$1.2 million to local charities since inception and Bigelow's Tea for the Troops Project that to date has donated 4 million tea bags to US service men and women. She spearheaded the creation of Sandcastle Playground in 1996, a landmark wooden village playground in Fairfield. Annually recurring volunteer projects include Habitat for Humanity, Adopt-a-Home through the Kennedy Center and Appalachian projects.

A passionate advocate for education, Cindi makes frequent classroom appearances speaking to students about business, business ethics and career development and has been the keynote speaker at the Greenbrier Women in Leadership Conference, Network of Executive Women's Conference, Powerful Women in Business Conference, 2013 Fairfield University Awards Dinner, Boston College Alumni Career Day, UConn's Connecticut Celebrates Women Entrepreneurs, University of Bridgeport Executive Speaker Series, the 2014 Conversations with Extraordinary Women Conference and The Thomas Merton Center's Celebrity Breakfast. She has also made several appearances on the Imus in the Morning program and Fox Business Network's After the Bell. She served on Bridgeport and Fairfield Boards of Directors, Boston College Board of Alumni, Bridgeport Regional Council, Bank of America Neighborhood Excellence Initiative Committee and is the "Champion" for Connecticut's first Center for Family Justice that will provide one-stop crisis management services to victims of domestic violence.

Cindi holds a bachelor's degree from Boston College, MBA from Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management and Honorary Doctorates from the University of New Haven and Fairfield University. She was the 2015 Fairfield University Graduate Commencement speaker in 2015, and through the years has been widely recognized for her community service. Her numerous awards include the 2016 Moffly Media Light a Fire Good Corporate Neighbor Award, 2014 Walter Wheeler Jr. Leadership Award, 2014 Best in the State Connecticut Philanthropy Award, 2014 John Winthrop Wright Ethics in Action Award, 2013 WEDC Award for Entrepreneurial Excellence, 2012 Woman of Influence in the Food Industry, 2010 Notable Women in Business Award, Mass Mutual and UCONN Family Business of the Year, Ernst & Young Socially Responsible Entrepreneur of the Year and the Girl Scouts' Woman of Distinction. The Cardinal Sheehan Center, Operation Hope and Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo's Red Ribbon Ball have honored her for her community service, and Channel 12 News featured her as a "Hometown Hero."

When she's not working, Cindi enjoys being with her children, skiing, tennis, yoga and, of course, drinking lot and lots of tea.

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