



# FOUR PILLAR

QUALITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VISION | INTEGRITY



COUNCIL  
for QUALITY  
GROWTH

**Media Contact:**

Kathryn Jones

Director, Membership & Marketing

[kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

770-813-3381

## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:**

Friday, October 13, 2023

### **Ed Bastian Receives Council for Quality Growth's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Four Pillar Award**

*Atlanta Celebrates Delta Air Lines CEO for Leadership and Commitment to Service*

ATLANTA, GA – On October 12, 2023, the [Council for Quality Growth](#) held its 34<sup>th</sup> annual [Four Pillar Tribute](#) in honor of Ed Bastian, Chief Executive Officer of Delta Air Lines, for his leadership and commitment to serving the Atlanta region, state of Georgia, and far beyond. Bastian's chosen theme for the evening was *Leading with Purpose*, something that's characterized his 25-year career at Delta. The 2023 Four Pillar Tribute was presented by American Express, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Chick-fil-A, Delta Air Lines, Georgia Power, the New York Stock Exchange – An ICE Exchange, and UPS. Bastian received this award among friends, family, and 1,300 other guests in the Georgia Ballroom of the Georgia World Congress Center.

As the 34<sup>th</sup> recipient of the Council's Four Pillar Award, Bastian joins an extraordinary list of leaders that have made significant economic and philanthropic contributions toward improving the quality of life here in our region and state. In his time at Delta, he has guided his team through its greatest challenges, including bankruptcy and a pandemic that crippled the airline industry. Through it all, he remained a thoughtful and resolved leader for the 100,000 people of Delta, displaying Quality, Responsibility, Vision, and Integrity – the Council's 'Four Pillars' of leadership.

Rob Ross, 2023 Chairman of the Council for Quality Growth and Senior Vice President of Kimley-Horn, presented Bastian with the Four Pillar Award. In his acceptance, Ed focused on his commitment to leading with purpose and his love for Atlanta. Since stepping into the CEO role in 2016, Bastian has been a champion of true servant leadership, continually putting Delta people and their customers first. This dedication to his people is infectious. He's created a team of 100,000 that serve with his same level of pride and commitment. "Wherever service is required," said Bastian, "you're going to find Delta people. We have a unity of purpose, and it is to serve."

Bastian announced he was not only celebrating 25 years with Delta this week, but also 25 years living in the City of Atlanta. Ed recognizes Delta's critical role in driving economic value to Atlanta, being the anchor of the world's busiest airport. He sees the airport as the "front door" to the city and is continually inspired by the culture of Atlanta to "keep climbing." "I love the ambition and the energy that this city displays. I love the heart and the diversity of our town, which always seeks better," he said. "I love how this Atlanta community pulls together the private and the public sectors, working side by side to create a more inclusive city and create opportunities for all. That's the Atlanta I know, and that's the Atlanta I love."

Michael E. Paris, President & CEO of the Council for Quality Growth, added, "Atlanta is fortunate to be both Ed's and Delta's home. Ed Bastian and Delta Air Lines fully embody the heart of Atlanta. I can think of no better airline, and no better team, to represent our hometown across this state and across the globe."

The Four Pillar Tribute is about leadership and how the recipient displays the 'Four Pillars' of leadership – Quality, Responsibility, Vision, and Integrity – through their work and in their everyday lives. A distinguished group of speakers paid tribute to Bastian. On *Quality*, Ginni Rometty, Former Chairman, President & CEO of IBM, told a metaphor of a tree. "Ed believes his most important job is to water and nurture those roots, his *people*," she said, "so they can learn and grow in their own careers and so they can serve the customers, partners, and communities of Delta all around the world." Rometty referenced Bastian's high-quality leadership through

-more-



**FOUR PILLAR**

QUALITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VISION | INTEGRITY



**COUNCIL  
for QUALITY  
GROWTH**

**Media Contact:**

Kathryn Jones

Director, Membership & Marketing

[kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

770-813-3381

difficult times, and praised his commitment to creating opportunity, ensuring safety, and elevating the customer experience, all for his Delta people.

On *Responsibility*, John Hope Bryant, Founder, Chairman & CEO of Operation HOPE, reflected on his friendship with Ed and how that level of responsibility to others translates to his role as CEO. “When you climb in a foxhole, you want Ed Bastian with you,” said Bryant. “Thanks to his responsible leadership, Delta employees genuinely believe their employer cares about them.”

On *Vision*, Ambassador Andrew Young, Founder & Chairman of the Andrew Young Foundation, spoke about family, and Ed’s vision to create that sense of family, even among 100,000 people. “Vision is not a single thing. Vision is a lot of crazy, talented people sharing life together, and every so often you come up with a wonderful idea. And Ed, I believe you’ve done that. I think Delta is a wonderful idea, and you are a wonderful man.”

On *Integrity*, Daniel H. Bastian, Vice-President & Co-Founder of Progressive O&P, Inc., reflected on his brother’s support of him through a terminal illness as a young child. “Even in the smallest moments, when you have nothing to gain, your actions show your truest integrity,” said Daniel. “Ed has the ability to create a culture of integrity that permeates everyone around him.”

Frank Blake, Former Chairman and CEO of The Home Depot, served as the Master of Ceremonies. He highlighted his experience as Delta’s Board Chair when the pandemic struck, and how privileged he is to have witnessed Ed’s leadership in Delta’s darkest days. “Ed’s leadership during that time will be studied for decades as an example of thoughtful, principled leadership under the most difficult of circumstances,” said Blake.

The evening also featured remarks from Georgia’s 83<sup>rd</sup> Governor, Brian Kemp, and Atlanta’s 61<sup>st</sup> Mayor, Andre Dickens, welcomed guests to the City of Atlanta. Dan T. Cathy, Chairman of Chick-fil-A, Lynn Martin, President of the New York Stock Exchange, and Deisha Barnett, President of Global Communications also spoke on behalf of their companies. Pastor Kevin Myers of 12Stone Church, a close friend of Bastian, delivered the invocation.

Bastian’s Four Pillar Tribute featured an outstanding performance by a fifty-eight-piece ensemble of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and tenor vocalist, Mr. Timothy Miller. Together they performed a very intentional selection of compositions to pay tribute to Bastian. An esteemed group of Tribute Chairs were selected to pay tribute to Bastian for his impactful leadership among Atlanta and beyond, including:

David Abney	Larry Gellerstedt III	John Maxwell	Pam Shipley
Leona Barr-Davenport	James Hannan	Terry McGuirk	Alex Taylor
Daniel H. Bastian	Virginia Hepner	William Pate	Carol B. Tomé
Frank Blake	Doug Hertz	Billy Payne	Kathy Waller
Arthur M. Blank	Tommy Holder	James Quincey	Chris Womack
Paul Bowers	Donna Hyland	Tony Ressler	Ambassador
John Hope Bryant	Katie Kirkpatrick	Bill Rogers	Andrew Young
Dan T. Cathy	Milton Little	Ginni Rometty	
Walt Ehmer	Ryan Marshall	Michael Russell	

The prestigious Four Pillar Tribute annually recognizes an outstanding individual who demonstrates the ‘Four Pillars’ of leadership – Quality, Responsibility, Vision, and Integrity – and exemplifies the Council’s mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth. The Council is proud to add Ed Bastian to its list of Four Pillar Award recipients.



# FOUR PILLAR

QUALITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VISION | INTEGRITY



COUNCIL  
for QUALITY  
GROWTH

**Media Contact:**

Kathryn Jones

Director, Membership & Marketing

[kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

770-813-3381



*[From left to right: Rob Ross, Kevin Myers, John Hope Bryant, Daniel Bastian, Ed Bastian, Ginni Rometty, Frank Blake, Ambassador Andrew Young, and Michael Paris]*



*[Council for Quality Growth's 2023 Chairman Rob Ross presented Ed Bastian with the Council's 34th Four Pillar Award]*

-more-



# FOUR PILLAR

QUALITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VISION | INTEGRITY



## COUNCIL for QUALITY GROWTH

**Media Contact:**

Kathryn Jones

Director, Membership & Marketing

[kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:kj@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

770-813-3381

The event was recorded and will be made available for playback in the coming days at [www.FourPillarTribute.com](http://www.FourPillarTribute.com).

The full photo gallery from the event will also be posted to this site as soon as it is available.

A digital program from the event can be downloaded here: <https://www.fourpillartribute.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023-Tribute-Program-FINAL.pdf>

### **About the Council's Four Pillar Tribute:**

For 34 years, the Council for Quality Growth has paid tribute to an outstanding individual in the metro Atlanta region who exemplifies the Council's mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth through an annual leadership tribute gala that recognizes the 'Four Pillars' of leadership – Quality, Responsibility, Vision, and Integrity.

The Four Pillar Award and Tribute is an unparalleled honor that allows the opportunity for the metro Atlanta region and State of Georgia to celebrate the recipient's significant contributions to quality of life, community leadership, and economic development. The gala and award have come to be known as the highest honor bestowed for the contributions. The event provides a platform to align the honorees' impacts on the region and the state with the Council's ambitions and serves as a beacon of inspiration to perpetuate our economic prosperity. More information about the annual Four Pillar Tribute can be found at [www.FourPillarTribute.com](http://www.FourPillarTribute.com).

Past recipients of the Council's Four Pillar Award include:

1990	Steve Reynolds	2002	George Busbee	2014	Steve Selig
1991	Wayne Shackelford	2003	F. Wayne Hill	2015	Dan Cathy
1992	J.W. Benefield	2004	Charlie Brown	2016	Jenny Pruitt
1993	D. Scott Hudgens	2005	Senator Johnny Isakson	2017	Governor Nathan Deal
1994	Wayne H. Mason	2006	John Wieland	2018	Paul Bowers
1995	Virgil R. Williams	2007	John A. Williams	2019	Larry Gellerstedt
1996	Paul A. Duke	2008	Tom Cousins	2020	Doug Hertz
1997	Jim Cowart	2009	Mayor Shirley Franklin	2021	Amb. Andrew J. Young
1998	J.D. Caswell	2010	Arthur M. Blank	2022	Carol B. Tomé
1999	A. Ray Weeks	2011	R. Charles Loudermilk, Sr.	2023	Ed Bastian
2000	Richard L. Tucker	2012	Sam Massell		
2001	Louise Radloff	2013	John Portman		

### **About the Council for Quality Growth:**

The Council for Quality Growth is a trade organization that works to ensure continued growth and economic success for generations to come by providing advocacy, information, and education to its members. For 37 years, the Council has been committed to the mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth and is proactively involved in the formulation of policy and legislation critical to the growth and development industry. The Council addresses, head-on, strategic economic planning, infrastructure needs, and tough quality-of-life issues throughout the metro Atlanta region and state. Visit [www.councilforqualitygrowth.org](http://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org) for more.

###