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America's Moment: Creating Opportunity in the Connected Age
New book redefines ways Americans can thrive in the digital economy

"In a time of deep polarization, *America's Moment* provides an important service by developing a tangible and workable way forward for America's most pressing policy problems."

—Arthur C. Brooks, president of the American Enterprise Institute

"For anyone looking for insights and inspiration on navigating the 21st century economy, this is essential reading." —Reid Hoffman, co-founder and chairman of LinkedIn

"*America's Moment* redefines the biggest economic transformation this country has seen in a century."

—Arianna Huffington, cofounder and editor-in-chief of the Huffington Post

"This wise book is a roadmap for restoring the American Dream."

—Walter Isaacson, president and CEO of Aspen Institute, *The Aspen Journal of Ideas*

New York, June 16, 2015 – In the midst of the biggest economic transformation in 100 years—one that has left millions of Americans uncertain of their future—technology and globalization are not a threat, but an opportunity to reshape the future, write a diverse group of leaders across America in the collectively authored book ***America's Moment: Creating Opportunity in the Connected Age***.

Released this week, [*America's Moment*](#) is a call to action at a critical moment in history as a wave of digital, technological, and marketplace transformations have fundamentally altered the very nature of work. Through a compelling lens that looks at examples of innovative entrepreneurs, small businesses, and Americans across the country, *America's Moment* demonstrates how our lives have been impacted by the country's economic transformation, and how we can rework America for the 21st century economy.

The book calls on leaders from all sectors to use technology to create new paths for good and meaningful work, offers an agenda for action, and outlines recommendations to navigate the changing economic landscape of the connected age. It is part of a major commitment from the Markle Foundation's Rework America initiative, whose 56 leaders are driving actions to expand opportunities for employment and learning. The Markle Foundation pledged \$50 million over three years to advance Rework America, offering a vision, as well as partnerships to connect Americans to opportunity.

"America's Moment is a call to participate in the most vital undertaking for America in the 21st Century," said **Zoë Baird**, CEO and president of Markle who leads Rework America and who wrote the book's preface. "It is unacceptable in our nation for economic well-being to be out of reach for so many hard working Americans. Everyone must once again feel their efforts can lead to endless possibilities. The forces of globalization and technological change can also be the tools we use to make sure all Americans are included in this transformation. We need leaders to share and build on this agenda to secure meaningful work for all Americans."

America's Moment is not just another book describing the problem. It is a call to action at a critical juncture in our nation's life to create more good work, prepare Americans for 21st century careers and connect job seekers with opportunities. The book offers solutions on a broad front and proposes dozens of recommendations for action to accomplish these goals. Among them:

- Preparing Americans for the lives they want through new affordable, flexible, and personalized higher education options beyond high school to supplement the college path. There need to be many ways to learn and train for the work of the future over the course of a lifetime;
- Better matching Americans to opportunities through new credential systems that recognize an individual's abilities, and by providing transparent and accessible information on skills required by employers;
- Creating more jobs in America by linking American small businesses and entrepreneurs to the world of buyers for goods and services;
- Creating growth potential for job-creating small businesses by expanding access to capital and credit that is currently parked on the sidelines; and
- Enabling many more career paths to well-compensated work by using technology to deliver information to workers when they need it.

"The daunting challenges of the new economy demand new ideas, new types of leadership and new partnerships—both public and private," said co-author and California Lieutenant Governor **Gavin Newsom**. "Business, education, and government leaders can work collaboratively to grow our economy, invest in education, and create good jobs. We have to step up and take responsibility if we want to prepare the workforce of tomorrow. "

"America's Moment shows us the steps that America must take to turn today's challenges into opportunities," said co-author **Geoffrey Canada**, president of the non-profit Harlem Children's Zone. "The digital technology revolution has given us incredible new tools for learning and ways to turn the corner on the financial anxiety and job insecurity that are haunting so many Americans."

"We now have the ability to expand the number of pathways to learning and to rethink how every individual can be ensured of a pathway to opportunity and employment," explained ASU President and co-author **Michael Crow**. "With the technological tools available to us today, we can advance flexible and personalized learning systems and generate new market-ready credentials based on an individual's demonstrated knowledge."

"America's Moment serves as an important reminder that we are stronger as a nation when everyone gets an equal chance to achieve success," said co-author **Howard Schultz**, chief executive officer and chairman, Starbucks. "With millions of Americans completely disconnected from the economy, we need the leadership, creativity and courage of the private sector, working with communities and everyday citizens, to create meaningful lifelong opportunities for all. Technology and globalization are not our biggest challenge - they are our greatest opportunity."

"The world economy is set to more than triple in size in the next 15 years, said **Robert K. Steel**, co-author of *America's Moment* and CEO, Perella Weinberg Partners. "Looking at the Internet alone, there were a billion users in 2006, now there are three billion and growing. American small businesses can use openings created by the Internet for much more digitized commerce. They can produce goods and services that are valued around the world, and connect directly to millions of potential new international customers."

“Technology and platforms have created the opportunity for small and medium size businesses to connect with and sell to customers anywhere in the world, something which was completely unheard of 20 or 30 years ago,” said co-author **James Manyika**, Director, McKinsey Global Institute. “They will be the engine that powers America’s future growth.”

“The exponentially expanding capabilities of information technology have precipitated the greatest economic transformation since the Industrial Revolution,” said **Craig Mundie**, president of Mundie & Associates, former Chief Research and Strategy Officer for Microsoft and co-author of the book. “We need to rethink how we optimally invest going forward to innovate in education, training and credentialing. And leaders need to shine a light on the ideas and policies that will secure our economic future, and – most importantly – recognize the very real dangers to our economy and national security that will come from continued inaction.”

“We must ensure that all Americans, especially Americans in underserved communities, have full access to the tools of the digital revolution,” said co-author **Antonia Hernandez**, President and CEO, California Community Foundation. “Leaders across sectors must prioritize investing in these communities by expanding programs that make the Internet widely available, that provide caring mentors, and that help at-risk young people develop their untapped potential, and learn valued skills.”

“America has come through profound economic transformations before and we can successfully do it again,” said co-author and Markle Visiting Director **Philip Zelikow**. “We reworked American institutions when we transitioned from an agrarian society to the industrial age. This is what is needed today.”

A number of programs will be forthcoming from Rework America and its partners to help create scalable actions. A program expected to be unveiled later this month will provide cutting edge technology tools and resources to benefit middle skill job seekers, employers and educational providers in partnership with local governments. And in the coming months, Rework America will focus on driving actions across the country and injecting the unique opportunities of the digital economy into the 2016 presidential election conversation.

“How can there be so many paths to opportunity with so few people travelling them?” asked **Ms. Baird**. “Imagine the America we want to live in: with good jobs and ways to prepare for them, opportunities to build businesses, the excitement and not fear of innovation, and a chance to create a better life for oneself. This is the America we want our children to inherit. Rework America will promote ideas and actions to enable all Americans to dream again.”

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Markle Foundation works to realize the potential of information technology to address previously intractable public problems for the economic security, health, and national security of all Americans. Markle’s current initiative, Rework America, is focused on accelerating innovations that use the forces of technology and globalization to return opportunities to Americans in today’s rapidly changing networked economy. For more information, visit [markle.org](http://www.ReworkAmerica.org) and follow us on Twitter @MarkleFdn and visit <http://www.ReworkAmerica.org>.