



News Release

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Sun Valley Institute Founder & Executive Director Named *Idaho Business Review* “Woman of the Year”

- Aimée Christensen was named a 2020 “Woman of the Year” by Idaho Business Review.
- Christensen is founder and executive director of Sun Valley Institute (SVI), founder and co-organizer of TEDxSunValley and founder and chief executive officer of Christensen Global Strategies.
- IBR received more than 220 nominations and a record number of completed applications from women around the state.
- Christensen is one of two area women named to the 2019 list of 50 Idaho women (the other is Muffy Davis, TEDxSV speaker, Paralympian and state legislator)

Ketchum, Idaho -- Visionary leader Aimée Christensen has been named a 2020 Woman of the Year by the *Idaho Business Review*. Christensen is known as a thought leader who delivers results. She is founder and executive director of the Sun Valley Institute, a Center for Resilience, and chief executive officer of Christensen Global Strategies, developing solutions for a resilient world. She also is the founder and curator of TEDxSunValley. She has over 25 years of experience in policy, law, investment, philanthropy and business including with Google, World Bank, Baker & McKenzie, and the U.S. Department of Energy. Her full bio is available on the Sun Valley Institute [website](#).

In the [announcement](#), Idaho Business Review (IBR) wrote, “The panel scored applicants based on four criteria:

1. Excellence in leadership;
2. Professional accomplishment;
3. Mentorship;
4. Community involvement.

“Not only the caliber of the nominees but their breadth of experience and depth of professionalism was exemplary,” said Cherie Buckner-Webb, a member of the panel and the 2019 Woman of the Year. IBR stated, “Competition was fierce, and the panel noted great difficulty in choosing just 50 women to recognize. The honorees come from all industries and professions, from education and health care to science, government and fine arts.”

“I am honored to have been named an *Idaho Business Review* ‘Woman of the Year,’ with gratitude to Shelley Cohen and Julie Ann Wrigley, who wrote recommendations; to my Sun Valley Institute colleagues, who help create a powerful and ever-growing platform; and, finally, to my inspiring mom, who is the 2019 *Idaho Mountain Express* Woman of the Year, and my

compassionate and hardworking father,” said Christensen. “I am grateful to be able to work each day to progress a better future here in Blaine County, across Idaho, and around the world. The Sun Valley Institute, my advisory firm and my board memberships all provide opportunities to directly make a difference as we seek to build a more equitable, secure and thriving community and world.”

“This is so well deserved,” stated Julie Ann Wrigley, president and chief executive officer of Wrigley Investments, president of the Julie Ann Wrigley Foundation and a board member of the Sun Valley Institute. She offered this in her letter of recommendation: “Rarely in my life have I run into a person who leads in all walks of life Aimee Christensen is truly one of those rare people who excels in leadership, volunteerism, business accomplishments and mentorship. Aimee is one of the world’s most significant leaders in a number of environmental businesses, entities and organizations. After graduating from Stanford Law School, she went on to work in green leadership positions at Google.org, the U.S. Department of Energy, World Bank, and Baker & McKenzie as an early leader in their emerging Climate Change and Clean Energy Practice. She has been a special advisor to the United Nations and now is curator of the Sun Valley Forum, a unique gathering of the most influential and important individuals working on climate change, resilience and sustainability held every summer in Sun Valley, Idaho. She is tirelessly committed to creating a better place for future generations.”

In her letter of recommendation, Shelley Cohen shared, “Aimee founded the Sun Valley Institute to find replicable ways that communities can become more resilient and self-sustaining. Each year, SVI hosts the Sun Valley Forum, which is now widely recognized as the place where thought leaders, financiers, and deal-makers go to turn sustainable ideas into action. Aimee is always innovating, researching, and developing ideas and concepts that help businesses and communities grow and be more sustainable, just as she did while working with organizations such as Google and Virgin. As a thought leader, she is always ahead of the trend.” Cohen worked with Christensen at the White House and is currently Director of Solar Programs at District of Columbia Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU).

Regarding next steps, IBR stated, “Each year, the Idaho Business Review announces the Woman of the Year at the awards gala, naming her the overall top winner based on scores from the judges and staff. The 2020 gala will take place on March 11 and celebrate women leaders from Salmon to Idaho Falls and Coeur d’Alene to Pocatello who have made their mark as healers, warriors, storytellers, trailblazers and connectors.”

About the Sun Valley Institute

The Sun Valley Institute builds lasting quality of place through resilience, making our region a model, catalyzing action here and far beyond. SVI supports our community in assessing our resilience and prioritizing action to turn our greatest risks into opportunities. SVI’s programs fill critical gaps. Our Food & Farm Program (Local Food Alliance) supports the growth of a community-based food system; our Energy Program creates and supports local energy resilience solutions. Our annual Sun Valley Forum convenes global leaders and innovators to accelerate change around the world.