

Mellody Hobson

As Co-CEO, Mellody is responsible for management, strategic planning and growth for all areas of Ariel. Additionally, she chairs the board of Ariel Investments' publicly traded mutual funds. Prior to being named Co-CEO, Mellody spent nearly two decades as Ariel's President. In 2025, she founded Project Level® to change the game in women's sports. Mellody co-founded Ariel Alternatives, LLC in 2021 and its inaugural private equity fund, Project Black® to scale minority-owned businesses. Beyond Ariel, she is the former chairman of Starbucks Corporation and its current lead independent director. Mellody also serves as a director of JPMorgan Chase. She was a long-standing board member of the Estée Lauder Companies and chairman of the board of DreamWorks Animation until the company's sale in 2016.

Mellody is a well-recognized financial literacy advocate. She wrote a New York Times bestselling children's book, *Priceless Facts about Money*, to demystify money for young readers. Her community outreach includes her role as chairman of After School Matters, a Chicago non-profit that provides area teens with high-quality after-school and summer programs. Mellody is also co-chair of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and a board member of Bloomberg Philanthropies, the George Lucas Educational Foundation, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Center for Strategic & International Studies. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Investment Company Institute, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the LA28 Olympic Games and past chair of the Economic Club of Chicago.

Mellody earned her AB from Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs. In 2019, she was awarded the Woodrow Wilson Award, the university's highest honor presented annually to a Princeton graduate whose career embodies a commitment to national service. Mellody has also received honorary doctorate degrees from Howard University, Johns Hopkins University, St. Mary's College and the University of Southern California. In 2015, Time Magazine named her one of the "100 Most Influential People" in the world.