

Press Release
For Immediate Release
Miami, FL- March 4, 2018
Education@ConfectionLink.org
Page 1 of 3



Robert A. Nelson, CEO of Elmer Chocolate and Katherine Clark, Vice President of Sales for Capol LLC have been elected Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of The Confectionery Foundation by the National Confectioners Association's Board of Trustees during the 2018 State of the Industry conference in Miami, FL.

Additionally, two new members elected to the Foundation Board are Elizabeth Clair, National Confectionery Sales Manager of Barry Callebaut and Anthony Trani, Vice President of Marketing, Global Brands, The Topps Company. Both Clair and Trani are graduates of NCA's Future Leaders Program.

Nelson succeeds founding Chairman Sara Clair, Director of Product Development for Brown & Haley, who transitions after 6 years of leadership to the role of Chairman Ex-Officio.

"Since our Taskforce meeting in 2011, The Confectionery Foundation has created the Next Generation career education program, ConfectionLink.org website, Next Generation program video, Rockaway Disaster Relief Fund (2012) and ConfectionLink.org/plan-trip the online factory tour map," explains Clair. "Each is designed to address the skills gap and encourage Americans to build their own experiences and relationships with our industry's manufacturing companies, brands, products and people."

"The Confectionery Foundation began the Next Generation program as step one to deal with talent sustainability which is just as critical as cocoa sustainability for our industry," says Nelson. "Preconceptions about manufacturing careers, lack of STEM courses, and a decline of technical programs have contributed to this problem."

"The Foundation provides an opportunity for member companies to benefit from the time and effort we invest in identifying and recruiting these students," says Clark. "We make a difference by building positive influencers one student and professor at a time." Students of industry families are encouraged to apply online at ConfectionLink.org/students by April 20, 2018.

The NextGen program has introduced more than 600 students to the fine careers, companies, brands and leaders of our confectionery industry. More than 80 industry professionals volunteer with the NextGen program. The full day at Sweets & Snacks Expo includes Mentor Guided tours, Booth Host presentations, Young Professionals Network panel and HR presentations at lunch, Career Fair interviews, plus an evening Networking reception. 100 students aged 20-30 and

Press Release
For Immediate Release
Miami, FL- March 4, 2018
Education@ConfectionLink.org
Page 2 of 3

faculty are accepted into the NextGen program. Students representing 23 colleges across 10 states participated in 2017.

The vision of The Confectionery Foundation is to promote and protect the confectionery industry by opening a wider path into our industry for young talent who share our common values, whether interested family members or independent students.

With 1.5 million Baby Boomers retiring in the next 10 years and “taking knowledge gained over their lifetimes, the ramifications of these positions going unfilled is critical. Skills Gap studies predict a 2 million person shortfall by 2025 between available manufacturing jobs and talent to fill those jobs,” Nelson adds. “If we are able to develop talent more effectively than other industries, we will survive and we will create a lasting legacy.” Elmer Chocolate is leading Louisiana manufacturing companies in developing an apprenticeship training program similar to the traditional German model.

The Confectionery Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and strengthen the American confectionery industry through education, philanthropy and research.

Students interested in participating this year for the Wednesday May 23, 2018 NextGen Program at Sweets & Snacks Expo should apply at ConfectionLink.org/Students by April 20th.

The Confectionery Foundation Board of Directors 2018-2019

Robert A. Nelson, Chairman	Elmer Chocolate
Katherine Clark, Vice Chairman	Capol LLC
David Fleischer, Secretary/Treasurer	The Promotion in Motion Companies, Inc.
Elizabeth Clair	Barry Callebaut
William Kelley	Jelly Belly Candy Company
Matt Pye	Just Born
Linda Sahagian	Sahagian & Associates
Anthony Trani	The Topps Company
Sara Clair, Chairman Ex-Officio	Brown & Haley

NCA representation: John H. Downs, Jr., Elise Fennig and Tracy Thompson

Confectionery Foundation Education Committee

Sarah Atkinson	Atkinson Candy, NCA's Future Leaders Program 2016
Laura Bergan	Barry Callebaut
Jen Burke	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Lisa Shapiro	LM Shapiro Strategies

Press Release
For Immediate Release
Miami, FL- March 4, 2018
Education@ConfectionLink.org
Page 3 of 3

Industry recognition received by The Confectionery Foundation Board of Directors

Candy Hall of Fame inductees

Bill Kelley 2005
Dave Fleischer 2009
Linda Sahagian 2011
Sara Clair 2017
Rob Nelson 2017

Kettle Award recognition

Bill Kelley, Recipient 2006
Rob Nelson, Nominee 2015
Sara Clair, Recipient 2017

NCA's Supplier Member of the Year

Katherine Clark 2014

NCA's Future Leaders Program

Elizabeth Clair - 2016 (inaugural class)
Anthony Trani - 2017

-----end-----