

115TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Passing the baton



 AmCham
GERMANY
115. Annual Membership Meeting

The venue of the 115th Annual Membership Meeting, Stuttgart, could not have matched this year's theme better: "Hidden champions – the driving force for transatlantic innovation trends". Baden-Württemberg hosts around 800 branches of American companies and combines US-German expertise in engineering, automation and education with a transatlantic commitment to constant innovation and an open exchange of ideas.



Bernhard Mattes hands over the reigns to AmCham Germany's new president, Frank Sportolari.

AmCham Germany's diverse network is fueled by enthusiastic ideas, a broad platform supporting an open business climate and the intercultural exchange of ideas.



Photo credit: Ina Strohbücker/AmCham Germany



"Small players can suddenly become competitive through digitalization," explained Insa Klasing, CEO & Co-Founder of TheNextWe.



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In compelling, thought-provoking panels and speeches, various business and political leaders expounded upon how entrepreneurs actively shape and need to cope with global trends. Dr. Samit Ghosh, a German start-up founder who expanded his business, the P3 group, into the US, encouraged businesses to embrace the ongoing transformations and to adopt a flexible, adaptable strategy. Still, as Martin Herrenknecht of the globally successful German family business Herrenknecht AG made clear, this calls for a non-bureaucratic, confident business environment. Cem Özdemir warned against mistaking the entire US with the political viewpoint of the current American administration. He reminded us "that the US is not Washington, DC, and Washington, DC, is not the White House." In the view of our keynote speaker, Peter Altmaier, businesses face similar issues on both sides of the Atlantic. The US-German partnership can provide a solid framework for addressing challenges and opportunities associated with global trends.

At the meeting, Frank Sportolari was elected as the new President of AmCham Germany. Convinced of the value a US-German economic and business partnership can bring to American and German companies, Sportolari stressed his commitment to AmCham Germany's already widespread membership base. In order for the transatlantic relationship to thrive further, Frank Sportolari pointed to the next generation of transatlanticists: "The instrumental pillar of a strong German-American partnership can only be strengthened and sustained if AmCham Germany's diverse network is fueled by enthusiastic ideas, a diverse platform supporting an open business climate and the intercultural exchange of ideas."

Every year, AmCham Germany honors its long-standing members with membership certificates at the Annual Membership Meeting.

This year, it even honored a company, Internationale Spedition H. & C. Fermont, which has been a member for 90 years.