

## FFWPU USA: Is God a woman? I often think about what that means

Jennifer Pierce  
March 13, 2023



As a Unificationist woman, I often think about what that means.

Since 2012, the global Unificationist movement has been led by a woman, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, also known as Mother Moon. In the Unificationist community, this has been a huge change from her husband's leadership. She applies a more feminine touch to our larger movement.

### Heavenly Parent

Most notably, Mother Moon has shifted our language on God from "Heavenly Father" to "Heavenly Parent."

"We must change the names we use. When we pray to God, from now on, please change what you say to 'Heavenly Parent'...The first words you say when you pray should be 'Heavenly Parent.'"

- Mother Moon, 2013

By naming God as Heavenly Parent, it includes both feminine and masculine aspects of God. To Unificationists, Heavenly Parent is the encapsulation of fatherly and motherly affection, because it is from God that all people, both man and woman, were created. [We're not the only religious group wondering the same thing.](#)

**This inclusion is shifting our entire understanding of God and of women.**

Not to break any new ground here, but being a woman is hard. I feel like there's so much we come up against as women. There are unnecessary challenges to our identity. Things like menstruation are taboo even though it happens to half of the world's population. As most of history and society were shaped by men, it feels like we're still struggling to find a place to fit in.

Growing up, I rejected traditionally feminine things because I felt like they took away from who I was and made me less than. But there is something divine in being a woman regardless of how feminine you are, and Heavenly Parent was my ticket to understanding that.

I embrace a lot more of the feminine things about myself now because it's more real and fun. Because I have realized that being feminine isn't less - it's just different.

### **God is the Sum Total**

I think that's the value of having God be both masculine and feminine. It's not like I, as a woman, don't have masculine traits. And men aren't shut out from being feminine. God is the sum total of all traits, and that makes both divine.

I think society as a whole is missing so much by denying women and feminine expressions of life into public spaces and places of influence. To use an insular example, having Mother Moon lead the Unificationist movement has highlighted these differences and what, I felt, was missing from our movement.

"It's not a men vs. women problem. It's a men and women problem. "

### **We Need Women's Leadership**

In her Forbes article, "[Why the World Needs More Women in Leadership](#)," Raisa Ghazi, Award-Winning Global Public Speaker on Women's Leadership and Inclusive Leadership and SER TopWoman and Columnist, says women tend to be risk-averse, community-driven, and are more likely to make ethical decisions in leadership.

Ghazi states, "But we also need more women because they account for half of the world's population... In the end, women's leadership is not just about anticipating trends... It's about leaving untapped potential behind simply because we used to believe women were incapable of making sound decisions."

### **It's a Men and Women Problem**

Where should we go from here? I think we've made a lot of strides, but I think there is more to do to give women the platform to express themselves and share what they have to offer. It's not a men vs. women problem. It's a men and women problem.

In Unificationist teaching, the feminine and masculine aspects of God are inseparable and unable to be removed from Heavenly Parent's heart. I think we, as a society, would do better if we followed that example.

Britain | Our Mother who art in heaven

# God's pronouns are causing conniptions in Britain

Anglicans are debating whether He should be He/Him or She/Her or something else. Rightly



Mar 2nd 2023

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**G**OD WAS very clear on many things. He said: "I am the LORD." He said: "I am...the Almighty." He said: "I am Alpha and Omega." However perhaps because He tended to communicate by angels, divine inspiration and stone tablets, rather than by email with sign-off, He did not specify His pronouns. Now an argument is brewing among some in the Church of England (C of E) over whether He is indeed best referred to as He/Him or whether He might also be referred to as She/Her; or neither; or all of the above. Omnipotence allows the non-binary to be so much more expansive.

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Not to mention confusing. All debates over pronouns risk becoming befuddling; debates over which pronouns to use for a bodiless, sexless, omnipresent deity who exists beyond time can become more befuddling still. Naturally this does not prevent theologians from having them. While C of E traditionalists wish to keep Him as Him, some want additional liturgy to be developed to allow them to speak of God in a non-gendered way. The debate is unlikely to be resolved soon: the C of E officially began discussing this in 2014; will begin a joint project on gendered language this spring; and estimates it will be years before it is resolved. *Sub specie aeternitatis*, that is brisk: Anglicans began discussing transubstantiation 500 years ago and the issue is still not settled.

Sex and God are currently causing conniptions in other ways in Britain. When Kate Forbes, a Scottish politician and Christian, said that she would have voted against gay marriage, it resulted in the near-scuppering of her bid to be the leader of the Scottish

National Party. In February, when the C of E said it would start allowing the blessing of gay marriages in churches, that resulted in a split in the Anglican Communion (a club of churches) and—a sure sign of Anglican outrage—merciless declarations from bishops worldwide that they were praying for each other.

Both debates tend to make traditionalists chunter about woke nonsense. (Vladimir Putin is among those who disapprove.) In truth what is most striking about the debate over God's sex is its antiquity. Christians have been discussing God's sex for centuries in ways that make LGBTQI+ categories seem conservative. There are ancient texts in which the Holy Spirit is referred to as "she" and "mother" and others in which God has breasts which are milked by the Holy Spirit. Sexing a Trinity is tricky.

Both sides of these debates tend to turn to the Bible as an authority. Not without reason: the Bible is the inspired word of God. The problem is that God inspired quite a lot of words—modern editions run to 1,000-odd pages in a tiny font—and many of them disagree either with each other or with current Christian doctrine.

Anglicans today might argue that God is neither male nor female. But the Bible offers ample evidence to the contrary. In its pages, God is a "male and masculine" deity, says Francesca Stavrakopoulou, professor of Hebrew Bible at Exeter University. The Bible contains verses detailing everything from God's muscles (big); to his genitals (also large). But those verses tend to find their way into fewer C of E press releases.

In truth, Christians have long operated a pious pick'n'mix approach to their quarrels. "The issue du jour is homosexuality," says Diarmaid MacCulloch, emeritus professor of the history of the church at Oxford University. But this issue is "a new one, which seems to threaten the masculinity of a great many Anglican bishops worldwide." Such debates invoke antiquity but are often more revealing of modernity. A concept called politicomorphism argues that instead of things being done on earth as in heaven, often the reverse is true. Many of the bishops who split from the Anglican Communion come from conservative countries such as Sudan, in which homosexuality is illegal.

But all Christians have their limits. Anglicans are in mild-mannered disarray over which pronoun to use for God, yet arguably there is a word that solves their debate perfectly. The pronoun "they" is not only gender neutral but can also, much like a trinitarian God, simultaneously be both singular and plural. However its use in the singular is frowned on by the fuddy-duddy sort of grammarian and, as one Christian theologian observes, "Christian theology has probably not caught up with [its] modern use." Evidently there are some innovations that even Anglicans can't abide. ■

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This article appeared in the Britain section of the print edition under the headline "Our Mother which art in heaven"

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March 4th 2023

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FORBES &gt; LEADERSHIP

# Why The World Needs More Women In Leadership



**Raisa Ghazi** Forbes Councils Member  
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*Raisa Ghazi is a public speaker & university guest lecturer in inclusive leadership & women's leadership. Sign up for her free course [here](#).*



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Of all Fortune 500 companies, only 8.8% have women CEOs. This indicates that about 91% of Fortune 500 CEOs are male. And yet, we say that incredible progress has been made in the workplace. More women leaders are an absolute must in the world we live in today.

Women's leadership as a sub-theme in management is rising. For centuries we have talked about leadership, but we talked about men's experience in leadership while disregarding the profound differences in workplace experiences between genders. Women leaders defeat many workplace barriers caused by gender biases and are transformational role models. Their challenging journey to the top allows them to develop themselves remarkably. This leaves less room for anyone to challenge the need for more women in leadership.

But that's not the only reason women leaders should be on the rise. While the world is being launched into the fifth industrial revolution, seven global tech revolutions (AI, VR/XR, AVs, quantum computing, blockchain, IoT and 3-D printing) are taking place, all requiring characteristics women leaders naturally bring. When I presented these ideas for the first time during an online keynote called "Why women make tech more ethical" for a global recruitment company, the chat was flooded with viewers who questioned my statement before I could even explain why.

Traditionally, women being less entrepreneurial than men accounted for their natural aversion to risk and putting money, which sometimes doesn't belong to them, at stake to make a profit. As a woman who bootstrapped the development of an international brand, I can attest that nothing feels more shameful than having to borrow money. You're testing out an idea that has more potential to fail than it does to become successful. Considering the volatility of autonomous vehicles and the destruction that testing these futuristic cars has brought, being risk-averse is not that bad.

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Community-driven thinking is another skill women excel at. It's why aid organizations promote investing in women—the chances of the money flowing back into the community are higher (e.g., children's education or welfare). With the rise of artificial intelligence impacting the lives of unsuspecting citizens exponentially, a community-driven approach should be a prerequisite for being active in this specialized field. The consequences of AI products that don't consider oppressed voices are detrimental and further enhance inequality.

The need for more women in leadership also comes down to ethical decision-making, like not outsourcing environmental disasters to communities whose leaders don't protect them. Companies with more women on the board have proven to make more ethical decisions. Of the seven tech global revolutions, cloud computing, IoT and blockchain, for example, have a natural flair for being environmentally friendly (you're replacing hardware for the cloud). But many people forget the devastation these new technologies can bring in the form of excessive use of energy or mining to gather resources to build this hardware.

But we also need more women because they account for half of the world's population. And when it comes to the development of extended realities (VR, AR, MR)—which, until now, have been highly in favor of men when it comes to their usage—including the perspective of women is critical. Especially now that academic institutions are using VR at a higher rate, women being less able to use these technologies is becoming highly problematic. It's one of the reasons I have become a public speaker on the topic of diversity, equity and inclusion in technology.

In the end, women's leadership is not just about anticipating trends in technology. It's about leaving untapped potential behind simply because we used to believe women were incapable of making sound decisions.

The infrastructures of a world where women weren't welcome at the tables where decisions were being made are still alive. Those tables still don't have chairs where women can be seated. And if they do, these chairs are highly uncomfortable—to the point where the struggle women go through to be placed there causes so much mental exhaustion that they can't do it for too long. Women don't aspire to keep those seats anymore; they walk away from the table when the world needs them more than ever.


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Raisa Ghazi


Raisa Ghazi is a public speaker & university guest lecturer in inclusive leadership & women's leadership. Sign up for her free... [Read More](#)



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## Meet The Unknown Immigrant Billionaire Betting Her Fortune To Take On Musk In Space

Eren Ozmen  TIM PANNELL/FORBES

Lauren Debter Forbes Staff  
Forbes Digital Covers Contributor Group 

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Even in the bloated-budget world of aerospace, \$650 million is a lot of money. It's approximately the price of six of Boeing's workhorse 737s or, for the more militarily inclined, about the cost of seven F-35 stealth fighter jets. It's also the amount of money NASA and the Sierra Nevada Corp. spent developing the Dream Chaser, a reusable spacecraft designed to take astronauts into orbit. Sierra Nevada, which is based in Sparks, Nevada, and 100% owned by Eren Ozmen and her husband, Fatih, put in \$300 million; NASA ponied up the other \$350 million. The Dream Chaser's first free flight was in October 2013 when it was dropped 12,500 feet from a helicopter. The landing gear malfunctioned, and the vehicle skidded off the runway upon landing. A year later, NASA passed on Sierra Nevada's space plane and awarded the multibillion-dollar contracts to Boeing and SpaceX.

The original Dream Chaser, which looks like a mini space shuttle with upturned wings, now serves as an extremely expensive lobby decoration for Sierra Nevada's outpost in Louisville, Colorado. But the nine-figure failure barely put a dent in the Ozmens' dream of joining the space race. Within months of the snub, the company bid on another NASA contract, to carry cargo, including food, water and science experiments, to and from the International Space Station. This time it won. Sierra Nevada and its competitors Orbital ATK and SpaceX will split a contract worth up to \$14 billion. (The exact amount will depend on a number of factors, including successful missions.) The new unmanned cargo ship, which has yet to be built, will also be called Dream Chaser.

The Ozmens, who are worth \$1.3 billion each, are part of a growing wave of the uber-rich who are racing into space, filling the void left by NASA when it abandoned the space shuttle in the wake of the 2003 Columbia disaster. Elon Musk's SpaceX and Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic are the best-known ventures, but everyone from Larry Page (Planetary Resources) and Mark Cuban (Relativity Space) to Jeff Bezos (Blue Origin) and Paul Allen (Stratolaunch) is in the game. Most are passion projects, but the money is potentially good, too. Through 2017, NASA awarded \$17.8 billion toward private space transport: \$8.5 billion for crew and \$9.3 billion for cargo.

"We're doing it because we have the drive and innovation, and we see an opportunity--and need--for the U.S. to continue its leadership role in this important frontier," says Eren Ozmen, 59, [who ranks 19th on our annual list of America's richest self-made women.](#)



Until now, few had heard of the Ozmens or Sierra Nevada. Often confused with the California beer company with the same name, the firm even printed coasters that say #notthebeercompany. The Ozmens are Turkish immigrants who came to America for graduate school in the early 1980s and acquired Sierra Nevada, the small defense company where they both worked, for less than \$5 million in 1994, using their house as collateral. Eren got a 51% stake and Fatih 49%. Starting in 1998, they went on an acquisition binge financed with the cash flow from their military contracts, buying up 19 aerospace and defense firms. Today Sierra Nevada is the biggest female-owned government contractor in the country, with \$1.6 billion in 2017 sales and nearly 4,000 employees across 33 locations. Eighty percent of its revenue comes from the U.S. government (mostly the Air Force), to which it sells its military planes, drones, anti-IED devices and navigation technology.

Space is a big departure for Sierra Nevada--and a big risk. The company has never sent an aircraft into space, and it is largely known for upgrading existing planes. But it is spending lavishly on the Dream Chaser and working hard to overcome its underdog reputation.

"Space is more than a business for us," says Fatih, 60. "When we were children, on the other side of the world, we watched the moon landing on a black-and-white TV. It gave us goose bumps. It was so inspirational." Eren, in her heavy Turkish accent, adds: "Look at the United States and what women can do here, compared to the rest of the world. That is why we feel we have a legacy to leave behind."

**T**here are plenty of reasons that NASA gave Sierra Nevada the nod. Sure, it had never built a functioning spacecraft, but few companies have, and Sierra Nevada has already sent lots of components--like batteries, hinges and slip rings--into space on more than 450 missions. Then there's Dream Chaser's design. A quarter of the length of the space shuttle, it promises to be the only spacecraft able to land on commercial runways and then fly again (up to 15 times in total) to the space station. And its ability to glide gently down to Earth ensures that precious scientific cargo, like protein crystals, plants and mice, won't get tossed around and compromised on reentry. That's an advantage Sierra Nevada has over most other companies, whose capsules return to Earth by slamming into the ocean. Today, the only way the U.S. can bring cargo back from space is via Musk's SpaceX Dragon. "Quite frankly, that is why NASA has us in this program, because we can transport the science and nobody else can," says John Roth, a vice president in the company's space division.

Sierra Nevada has acquired its way into space. In December 2008, in the throes of the financial crisis, Sierra Nevada plunked down \$38 million for a space upstart out of San Diego called SpaceDev. The company had recently lost a huge NASA contract, its stock was trading for pennies and its founder, Jim Benson, a tech entrepreneur who became one of commercial spaceflight's earliest prophets, had just died of a brain tumor.

Sierra Nevada had its eyes on a vehicle from SpaceDev called the Dream Chaser. It had a long, storied past: In 1982, an Australian P-3 spy plane snapped photos of the Russians fishing a spacecraft out of the middle of the Indian Ocean. The Australians passed the images on to American intelligence. It turned out to be a BOR-4, a Soviet space plane in which the lift is created by the body rather than the wings, making it suitable for space travel. NASA created a copycat, the HL-20, and spent ten years testing it before pulling the plug.

Eleven months after the Columbia exploded, President George W. Bush announced that the space shuttle program would be shut down once the International Space



Space utility vehicle: Sierra Nevada's unmanned Dream Chaser is designed to haul 6 tons of cargo to and from the International Space Station. COURTESY COMPANY

Station was completed in 2010 (in fact, it took another year). In preparation NASA invited companies to help supply the station. By this point NASA's HL-20 was mostly forgotten and gathering dust in a warehouse in Langley, Virginia. SpaceDev nabbed the rights to it in 2006, hoping to finally get it into space.

**Eren Ozmen puts their acquisition strategy in rather unusual terms. "Our guys go hunting, and they bring me this giant bear, which is not fully dead, and say, 'Now you do the skinning and clean it up.' "**

But it was an expensive job, and later that year NASA declined to fund it. Enter Sierra Nevada Corp., which was always hunting for promising companies to buy. "The company had been very successful in defense but wanted to get into space and had a lot of cash," says Scott Tibbitts, who sold his space-hardware company, Starsys Research, to SpaceDev in 2006.

Soon the Ozmens were devoting an outsize amount of time and money to the Dream Chaser. "It was very clear the space side was like a favorite son," says one former employee.

**E**ren Ozmen grew up in **Diyarbakir**, Turkey, a bustling city on the banks of the Tigris River, where she was a voracious reader and serious student. Her parents, both nurses, valued education and encouraged their four girls to focus on schoolwork. As a student at Ankara University, she worked full time at a bank while studying journalism and public relations and spent her little free time studying English.

In 1980, as she was finishing her degree, she met Fatih Ozmen. A national cycling champion, he had just graduated from Ankara University with a degree in electrical engineering and planned to pursue his master's degree at the University of Nevada at Reno. In 1981, Eren also headed to America, enrolling in an English-language program at UC Berkeley. She reconnected with Fatih and, at his suggestion, applied to the M.B.A. program at UNR. After she arrived on campus, the two young Turks became best friends.



The husband-and-wife co-owners of Sierra Nevada Corp., Eren and Fatih Ozmen, and their long-haired dachshund Peanut, at their home in Reno. TIM PANNELL FOR FORBES

The pair soon struck a deal: Eren, a talented cook, would make Fatih homemade meals in exchange for some much-needed help in her statistics class. They shook hands and became roommates. They both insist they never even considered dating each other. "It was just like survival," says Eren.

More like survival of the fittest. Eren knew she had to get top grades if she wanted a job in America. She was also broke and holding down several part-time jobs on campus, selling homemade baklava at a bakery and working as a night janitor cleaning the building of a local company called Sierra Nevada Corp.

After graduating in 1985 with her M.B.A., Eren got a job as a financial reporting manager at a midsize

sprinkler company in Carson City, Nevada, just south of Reno. She arrived to find that financial reports took weeks to generate by hand. She had used personal computers in school and knew that automating the process would cut the turnaround time down to a matter of hours. She asked her boss if they could buy a

PC, but the expensive purchase was vetoed. So Eren took her first paycheck and bought an HP computer and brought it to work. She started producing financial reports in hours, as she had predicted, and was promoted on the spot.

In 1988, the sprinkler company was sold, and Eren was laid off. Fatih, who was now her husband, had been working at Sierra Nevada since 1981, first as an intern and later as an engineer, and told her they were still doing financial reports by hand. She brought in her PC and automated its systems.

Soon after starting, Ozmen was sitting at her desk late one night and discovered that Sierra Nevada was on the verge of going out of business. The little defense company, which primarily made systems to help planes land on aircraft carriers, had assumed that its general and administrative expenses were 10% of revenues, but she calculated that they were 30%. At that rate, the business couldn't keep operating for more than a few months. She marched to her boss' office to deliver the bad news. He didn't want to hear it, so she went straight to the owners. They were stymied. The bank wouldn't lend them any more money. At Eren's suggestion, the company stopped payroll for three months until the next contract kicked in. Employees had to borrow money to pay bills. "It was like the Titanic moment. We are waiting for this contract, but we didn't know if we were going to make it or not," says Eren.

**Since arriving in America in 1981, Eren Ozmen has gone from janitor to billionaire co-owner of Sierra Nevada Corp. "Look at the U.S. and what women can do here, compared to the rest of the world."**

That contract eventually came through, but Sierra Nevada was still living contract to contract two years later, when Eren, who was eight and a half months pregnant with her first child, got a call. The government audit agency had looked at the company's books and declared the company bankrupt and therefore unfit for its latest contract. Eren got on the phone with the auditor (she remembers his name to this day) and told him he had made a math error. He soon responded that she was right and that he needed to brush up on his accounting skills but that the report was already out of his hands. At that point Eren went into labor. Less than a week later, she was back in the office with her newborn.

The company limped along until 1994, when the Ozmens borrowed against their home to buy Sierra Nevada. Eren was sick of working for an engineer-led company that was lurching from financial crisis to financial crisis and figured she and her husband could do a better job running the place.



### **A Glance At Sierra Nevada's Dream Chaser**

**WATCH** ▶ 0:48

It took five years for the company to stabilize, with Eren keeping a tight handle on costs. "I can tell you, it wasn't a free-spending, freewheeling company. Everything was looked at," recalls Tom Galligani, who worked at the company in the 1990s. Eren worked for a time as the company's CFO and today is its chairwoman and president. Fatih became CEO and focused on creating relationships with government agencies and developing new products. He also began looking for companies to acquire.

**A**s the sun sinks over the Rockies, Eren sits by the window at Via Toscana, a white-tablecloth Italian restaurant outside Denver, sipping a glass of Merlot and explaining in rather unusual terms the couple's approach to buying companies. "Our guys go hunting, and they bring me this giant bear, which is not fully dead, and say, 'Now you do the skinning and clean it up,'" she says. Fatih, sitting beside her, joins in: "There's a lot of screaming. And blood."

Fatih and his team search for companies that have some sort of promising high-tech product. Then they go in for the kill. "Of the 19 [companies we've acquired], we've never bought a company that was for sale," he says.

"The first thing you do with the bear is to establish a trusting relationship," Eren says, while reminding it of the benefits. "Every company we bought is ten times bigger now." Over the years, Sierra Nevada has bought companies that do everything from unmanned-aerial-system technology to high-durability communications systems.

Its first acquisition was Advanced Countermeasure Systems, in 1998, which made equipment that helped protect soldiers from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Revenues have since zoomed from \$3 million a year to \$60 million, Eren says. A company is especially attractive to Sierra Nevada if, like Advanced Countermeasure, it has so-called "sole-source" contracts with the military, meaning it is awarded contracts without a competitive bidding process, under the rationale that only that specific company's product can meet the government's requirements. Last year the majority of Sierra Nevada's \$1.3 billion in government contracts were sole-source.

Sierra Nevada's biggest source of revenue is from aviation integration, which means folding new technologies into existing planes primarily at its dozen or so hangars in Centennial, Colorado. Often that entails stripping down commercial planes and turning them into jacked-up military ones, cutting holes to install weaponry, cameras, sensors, navigation gear and communications systems. "What we do is take someone else's airplane and make it better," says Taco Gilbert, one of the many retired generals on Sierra Nevada's payroll. For instance, it took the popular civilian PC-12 jet ("That a lot of doctors and lawyers fly around on," Gilbert says) and modified it so that Afghan special-ops-forces could pivot from surveilling the Taliban to conducting a medical evacuation in a matter of minutes. It sold the U.S. Customs & Border Protection a fleet of super-quiet planes that can track the movement of drug traffickers without detection. When wildfires were raging in California in 2017, Sierra Nevada aircraft, modified with heat sensors, thermal imaging and night vision, provided support.

But it's not just Sierra Nevada's responsiveness that sets it apart; it's also its prices. In their own version of the "80/20" rule, the company strives to provide 80% of the solution at 20% of the cost and time. In other words, "good enough" is better than perfect, especially if "good enough" is cheap and fast. To deliver, Sierra Nevada spends 20% of its revenue on internal R&D, coming up with creative ways to upgrade the military's aging aircraft for less.

"This allows them to punch above their weight class and leapfrog the large guys," says Peter Arment, an aerospace analyst at R.W. Baird.

"You can go to Boeing or Lockheed and take five or ten years and spend a lot of money," Eren says. "Or we can provide you with something right now."



Sierra Nevada Corp. President Eren Ozmen stands next to Vice President Mike Pence during the 2018 Space Symposium in Colorado. © 2018 BLOOMBERG FINANCE LP

**O**n top of the \$300 million it spent on the original Dream Chaser, Sierra Nevada has spent an additional \$200 million so far on the cargo

version and expects to invest \$500 million more by the time it's ready for takeoff. To recoup its costs, Sierra Nevada is counting on things going smoothly. The company has already earned \$500 million in milestone payments from NASA as it successfully completed design reviews as well as safety and test flights using the crewed Dream Chaser (which shares 80% of the same design and features) before it was retired. Much like when Eren was counting on that key government contract to cover payroll in 1989, Sierra Nevada is now waiting for the big payoff that will come when it sends the vehicle into space. Its launch date is set for September 2020, 11 months after rival Orbital ATK's Cygnus takes off in October 2019 and a month later than SpaceX's Dragon 2. If the Dream Chaser completes its six missions to the space station by 2024, Sierra Nevada will pocket an estimated \$1.8 billion.

Eren isn't blind to the risk that things could go wrong. But brimming with an immigrant's sense of patriotism, she talks of the glory of helping the U.S. reestablish its leadership in space. She thinks Sierra Nevada and other private companies can help the government catch up on the cheap. "Looking at what are the things we can do to make space available," Eren says, "it's the commercial companies who are going to come up with those creative ideas and help the country catch up."

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# French Entrepreneur And Disruptive Philanthropist Alexandre Mars Has Advice For Your Startup

Diane Brady Forbes Staff  
Assistant Managing Editor

0

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Alexandre Mars started his first business at 17, organizing concerts at his high school. He then bought two computers and launched a web agency before moving on to found several different companies, including Phonevalley (sold to Publicis) and Scroon (sold to Blackberry).

The French entrepreneur is now founder & CEO of both the Epic Foundation and Blisce. In Epic, he created a new model for philanthropy that involves backing a portfolio of highly-vetted nonprofits, offering donors innovative ways to support them and guaranteeing impact through data analysis and reports. Blisce, meanwhile, is the first B Corp certified growth-stage transatlantic VC fund.

For years, he notes, entrepreneurship was stronger in the U.S. for two main reasons: more capital to invest in startups and bankruptcy laws that made it easier to fail and bounce back. That made it easier for U.S. entrepreneurs to adopt the late South African leader Nelson Mandela's mindset of always feeling like a winner because you're either winning or learning. Europe-based entrepreneurs, in contrast, had to fight harder for money and dealt with laws that made the consequences of failure devastating. That's changing—as is the definition of success and how you achieve it.

In *Mission Possible*, the serial entrepreneur writes about his own experience and offers advice to others who want to launch a company. Check out our conversation by clicking on the link above.

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Diane Brady

I am an assistant managing editor at Forbes, overseeing our editorial team that runs the C-suite communities, careers, ForbesWomen, 30 Under 30, and related coverage.

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EDITORS' PICK

# The Memo: Elon Musk's Public Apology, Oscars Mixups And The End Of Wild Amsterdam Weekends

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*I'm the Managing Director for Forbes in Europe.*

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Simona Tabasco breakout star of The White Lotus GUERIN BLASK AND LEVON BISS FOR FORBES

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## The fight goes on

This week, we marked International Women's Day, a moment to celebrate women's achievements worldwide, and a rallying call to accelerate women's equality.

*Forbes* celebrated by hosting the second 30/50 Summit in Abu Dhabi, a global gathering of female leaders from our Under 30 lists and 50 Over 50 lists, alongside Hillary Clinton, Jessica Alba and Malala Yousafzai.

The mood was more somber inside the U.K. Houses of Parliament. Jess Philips MP continued her annual tradition of reading the names of every woman killed in the U.K. where a man has been convicted or charged as the primary perpetrator. This year, the names of over 100 women were read out loud, acting as a powerful reminder of the daily injustice women face not just in the U.K., but worldwide.

Despite this, there are growing numbers of people crying "equality has gone too far". The latest findings from the Global Institute for Women's Leadership make for difficult reading. While 68% agree inequality between men and women still exists, over half of respondents this year felt men are being expected to do too much to support equality and 48% felt things have gone so far that men are being discriminated against.

The advancement of women does not come at the expense of men. Equality isn't up for debate. The fight goes on.

## Five Things We Learned

**The youngest on this year's Forbes Under 30 Europe is just 14 years old.** The 8th edition of the Under 30 Europe list celebrates the brightest and best from across the continent, introducing the next generation of celebrities, cultural leaders and CEOs.

**Amsterdam is clamping down on 'nuisance tourists'.** In a bid to 'clean up the city' and attract more highbrow visitors, authorities will ban cannabis in the red light district, the weekend sale of alcohol in downtown areas after 4pm across the weekends and cut legal hours for sex workers. The end for Europe's most liberal capital?

**Elon Musk apologized after publicly mocking a disabled Twitter employee.** Musk's latest gaff resulted in a rare public apology, after the billionaire owner of Twitter criticized an employee's work and his need for disability accommodations. "Better to talk to people than communicate via tweet" said Musk.

**Kids raised by same-sex parents can outperform 'traditional families'.** Analysis by the British Medical Journal found children raised by LGBT parents fare as well as, or better than, children of the opposite sex. The latest research suggests around 15% of same-sex couples in the U.S. have children in their household.

**European ski resorts are switching to summer destinations.** In response to another relatively snow-free winter season, iconic ski destinations like Chamonix are pivoting to summer visitors. Climate change is threatening the winter ski industry, with one environmental group finding 9 out of 10 Italian ski resorts now depend on snow cannons to survive.

## The Good

**There's a new breakthrough vaccine for tuberculosis.** TB remains one of the world's biggest killers as current vaccines are sensitive to temperature and destroyed by sunlight, making them challenging to use in the developing world. A new freeze-dried, temperature stable vaccine has shown promising results in trials.

## The Bad

**Hot tap water burns thousands of Americans every year.** Injuries from tap water burns cost an estimated \$80m every year. There's a simple fix available: adding a thermostatic valve, which mixes hot and cold water, and costs from just \$30.

## Watch

**Olena Zelenska, First Lady of Ukraine, received the Torch of Freedom.** Hillary Clinton presented the inaugural award at the *Forbes 3050 Summit* in Abu Dhabi in front of an audience of the world's leading female changemakers. *Forbes, YouTube, free to watch worldwide.*

## Listen

**The true story behind 'that Oscars mixup'.** Remember when *La La Land* won best picture in 2017 and then subsequently didn't? Learn what really happened and the psychology behind mixups. *Cautionary Tales, Pushkin, free to listen worldwide.*

## Read

**Will AI elevate or alienate us?** Fans of *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus* will love this poignant new take on the biggest questions facing our species. *I, Human: AI, Automation, and the Quest to Reclaim What Makes Us Unique. HBR, from \$28.*

## Taste

**Elevate your cocktails by discovering the art of ice-making.** Jonathan Baker is a Self-proclaimed 'ice nerd' Jonathan Baker shares his secrets for perfecting an ice-cooled cocktail. You'll never look at ice cubes the same again.

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