



Vera Bradley Announces Barbara Baekgaard Transitions to Emeritus Status After 40 Years

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FORT WAYNE, Ind., March 14, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Vera Bradley, Inc. (Nasdaq: VRA) has announced that its co-founder Barbara Baekgaard, will not stand for re-election at the upcoming shareholders meeting and will instead transition to a Director Emeritus role. While she will be stepping back from official board duties, Baekgaard will continue to remain involved in the Company she co-founded and the Vera Bradley brand transformation.

Baekgaard's influence on Vera Bradley has been immeasurable. From launching the brand in 1982 with Patricia Miller to growing it into a beloved lifestyle company recognized for its vibrant, handcrafted patterns and innovative designs, she has played a pivotal role in shaping the business and inspiring generations of women entrepreneurs.

"Barb has been the heart and soul of Vera Bradley," said Jackie Ardrey, CEO of Vera Bradley. "Her leadership, creativity, and generosity have shaped not only our company but also the communities she serves. While she steps back from the boardroom, we are thrilled that she will continue to lend her visionary thoughts and insights as we continue to execute on the brand transformation.

Beyond Vera Bradley, Baekgaard remains a force in philanthropy and hospitality. In 1994, Baekgaard, along with Miller, established the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer after the loss of a dear friend to breast cancer. To date, the Foundation has raised over \$41 million for breast cancer research. She also founded The Bradley, Fort Wayne's only boutique hotel. Baekgaard continues her personal philanthropic endeavors and sits on boards focusing on medical research.

"I appreciate the collaborative support and business insights from Vera Bradley's Board members over these years, and am excited about the new path that will be charted by this new generation of the Vera Bradley Board." Added Mrs. Baekgaard, "I look forward to continuing to offer my insights and historical knowledge for our business. My love for the Vera Bradley brand remains undiminished, and I am extremely optimistic about the Company's future under Jackie's leadership."

As Baekgaard embarks on this new chapter, Vera Bradley remains steadfast in its mission to empower women through thoughtful design, social impact, and a commitment to giving back—values that Baekgaard has championed since day one.

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