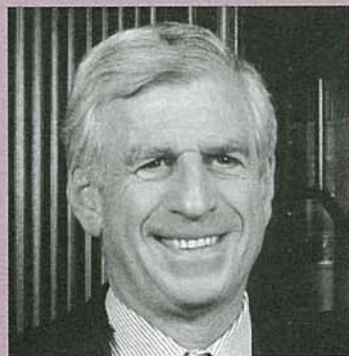


John Danforth

Friends and colleagues sometimes call **John Danforth** "Saint Jack." They say the former senator from Missouri has a backbone of integrity that keeps

"If he thinks something isn't being done properly, he'll say so and stick to it. He won't back off."

—Barbara Hackman Franklin,
former U.S. Secretary of Commerce



companies on the straight and narrow during turbulent times.

"In this year when boards are under pressure," says **Lynn Martin**, Danforth "is the type of person you'd have a greater likelihood of turning to." Martin is a former Secretary of Labor and a director of several companies, including **Procter & Gamble**.

As a Republican senator from 1976 to 1995, Danforth developed a reputation for honesty. Presidents and corporate leaders turn to him for help on the most difficult issues of

the day. He reviewed government actions in the 1993 Waco incident. He was also the man to whom a collapsing **Arthur Andersen** turned in early 2002, in an effort to show it was serious about regaining the public's trust.

Director colleagues say that Danforth does more than present a clean boardroom face everyone can feel good about. He demands accountability on issues of social responsibility. He also does solid work on bread-and-butter issues like accounting and strategy.

For instance, at **Dow Chemical**, Danforth is the first chairman of the public interest committee formed in 2000. It reviews the impact of company decisions on society. It looks at such areas as charitable contributions, political donations, minority employment and company codes of conduct.

"He's really put some teeth and credibility into that committee," says Dow Chairman **Bill Stavropoulos**. **Barbara Hackman Franklin** agrees: "He's made the agendas of those meetings more relevant to what is going on." Franklin is a former Secretary of Commerce and a Danforth colleague on the Dow board.

One example of Danforth's work on the committee has been the development of this year's public report. Dow issues it every two years for employees, customers and shareholders. It delineates how Dow's actions affect society and the environment. Management produces the report, and the committee reviews it.

In reviewing it, Danforth encourages management to remove jargon. He'll ask, "What does this really mean?" Stavropoulos notes.

Danforth says he and other committee members have tried to enhance the report's credibility by insisting

BORN

Sept. 5, 1936; St. Louis, Mo.

EDUCATION

B.A. with honors, Princeton University; L.L.B., Yale Law School; Bachelor of Divinity, Yale Divinity School

CAREER HISTORY

Partner, Bryan Cave LLP; Chairman, the Danforth Foundation; associate priest at the Church of the Holy Communion in University City, Mo.; former Republican U.S. Senator from Missouri and attorney general of Missouri

FAMILY

Wife, Sally; five children, 13 grandchildren

HOME

St. Louis County, Mo.

FAVORITE BOOK

The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

MOST ADMIRABLE PERSON

"My grandfather, William H. Danforth. He was founder of the Ralston Purina Company, the American Youth Foundation, and the Danforth Foundation. He was interested in encouraging young people to be their own selves and do their very best."

CURRENT BOARDS

Dow Chemical Co.; General American Life Insurance Co.; Cerner Corp.; MetLife, Inc.; Citigroup International Advisory Board



Danforth meets with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a trip to Africa last year.

that management put numbers in it. For example, they made sure management included documentation of minority hiring and retention rates. The committee “presses management to be concrete” and not just provide platitudes, Danforth explains.

Danforth says his emphasis in the future will be on corporate governance. Times have changed since a year ago, he says, when “corporate responsibility” primarily meant concern for the environment, diversity and safety.

“There’s been a new recognition of the capacity of business and business leaders to cause immense harm to themselves, shareholders and employees,” Danforth contends. Thus, “I think the most important focus of a board in general, and of a public interest committee, has to do with: What does the company stand for? What does the leadership stand for? Is it simply getting the stock up?”

Danforth is also a member of the corporate social responsibility board committee of **MetLife**, which has similar functions to the Dow committee. Colleagues at MetLife give him plaudits. MetLife has “an exemplary corporate compliance program, code of conduct and ethics,” says **Curtis “Hank” Barnette**, former chairman and CEO of **Bethlehem Steel** and a MetLife director. “Becoming familiar with that and contributing to that effort is something Jack has done extensively.”

Danforth is also committed to accounting integrity, colleagues say. This is something companies are learning to appreciate today more than ever.

One person who knows is Franklin, chair of Dow’s audit committee, of which Danforth is a member. Once recently, he voiced concern about an issue related to audit processes. Even though he’s a layman financially, he pressed his point through two conversations with the committee. His view prevailed.

“It was a key issue,” says Franklin, who declines to go into detail. She adds that boards shouldn’t want only CPAs on audit committees. “You want some people who will just ask seemingly basic questions that cut to the heart of the matter,” Franklin asserts. “Jack is the guy who will do that. If he thinks something isn’t being done properly, he’ll say so and stick to it. He won’t back off.”

Danforth also contributes greatly to discussions of company strategy, says Dow’s Stavropoulos.

In 1999, Dow agreed to acquire **Union Carbide**, the biggest acquisition in chemical industry history. Danforth asked many questions to clarify the thinking behind the deal. “He was studying whether this was the right strategic move,” Stavropoulos recalls. “He wanted to understand the strategy, the motivation.” He also notes that during acquisitions, Danforth always asks if Dow is paying the right amount and disclosing the right things.

Danforth’s directorial career hasn’t been bump-free. He was a director at **General American Life Insurance** in 1999 when the company stumbled into a liquidity crisis stemming from risky investments. MetLife rescued the company by buying it and agree-

ing to pay back some \$5 billion in loans on its behalf.

Overall, though, Danforth gets things done, and with fairness and integrity, colleagues say. That’s true not only inside but also outside the boardroom. Last fall, he began to travel to Africa as an envoy from President **Bush** to seek peace in Sudan’s civil war. He is credited with brokering a cease-fire in areas of the country. **Human Rights Watch** credits Danforth with “major steps towards improving the human rights crisis.”

This year, Arthur Andersen tapped Danforth in an effort to revive its reputation before it collapsed. The firm hired Danforth, an ordained Episcopalian priest, to examine its document-retention policy and recommend changes. The company was indicted and fell apart anyway. But the media recognized that Danforth’s hiring reflected the fact his integrity was beyond question. “When a reputation seems soiled beyond repair only the toughest stain remover will do,” said the *Chicago Tribune*.

At the **Clinton** administration’s behest, Danforth led an investigation into the 1993 deaths of Branch Davidian cult members in Waco, Texas.

Preserving a reputation means knowing when to say no. Accordingly, Danforth doesn’t accept all efforts to enlist his good name. He reportedly spurned a request by the 2000 Bush campaign that he head its legal team to fight **Al Gore**’s challenge to the 2000 vote count. According to published reports, Danforth wasn’t comfortable he would be on the right side. He didn’t quite buy Bush’s claim that a recount was unconstitutional. Given the closeness of the 5-4 Supreme Court decision that decided the election, his concerns seem understandable.