

Oration for Ms Clare Woodman CBE

Clare Woodman is the first woman to lead a top investment bank in the City of London and a champion of promoting good practice alongside diversity and inclusivity within the financial sector.

She is Head of Europe, the Middle East and Africa and CEO of Morgan Stanley and Co International PLC and her impact in her industry and beyond was recognised with a CBE in 2020.

Clare completed her BA in Government at Essex and remembers her time at Essex with great fondness, she later completed a postgraduate law degree at the College of Law and her MBA at the London Business School.

Despite her success at Morgan Stanley, finance was not Clare's first career choice. However, she has made the world of financial services her home for two decades.

Clare began her career at international law firm Clifford Chance then joined Morgan Stanley as a lawyer in Global Capital Markets in 2002.

Her career progressed quickly, and her focus widened. After developing her knowledge of risk in banking, she took on the role of Risk Officer for the Global Capital Markets division. She was later invited to join the Institutional Securities Management team, first in Europe, the Middle East and Africa and later as Global Chief Operating Officer of ISG.

Then in 2018, Clare became CEO for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, making her the UK's most senior woman in the banking industry.

Alongside her high-profile role, Clare is a mum of three and so understands the need to maintain a work-life balance and for companies to support their staff to do this.

She also makes time to leverage her senior platform to champion women in finance and support the communities in which Morgan Stanley operates.

She is a long-standing advocate for greater corporate inclusion and has helped spearhead and sponsor a number of women-leadership development programs. She is an active sponsor of the firm's Women's Business Alliance.

As she told the Financial Times, she feels a "responsibility to pull women up through the organisation" and to help other under-represented groups

She says: "We want to give our high-potential females the support they need. We provide training and development to ensure that women have the right skills at the right juncture to enable them to attain the success they deserve."

She is committed to furthering good practice through her industry-wide leadership roles, she is a member of the UK Investment Council, FCA Markets Practitioner Panel and Chair of the U.S.-UK Business Council. She is also a Trustee of the FT Financial Literacy and Inclusion Campaign.

Clare is a Trustee of the Morgan Stanley International Foundation, overseeing the firm's longstanding partnership with Great Ormond Street Hospital. This exemplifies Clare's enthusiasm for 'giving back' - using your professional skills and knowledge plus your time to help others.

Perhaps the biggest challenge she has been involved in through the Foundation is the relocation of a rooftop garden from London's Chelsea Flower Show to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, a project so ambitious that it was captured in a BBC documentary.

We're extremely grateful that Clare is also giving back by looking to support and inspire students at the University of Essex.

In 2020, Clare told the Financial Times that there weren't enough role models for her when she was growing up.

I hope Clare can be a role model for many Essex students here today. She exemplifies the Essex Spirit and shows you can progress on to the most senior roles while holding true to your values and, most importantly, you can use those values to inspire positive change and to make a difference.

Pro-Chancellor, I present to you Clare Woodman.