

Bracebridge H. Young Award Acceptance Speech

July 2026

Good afternoon everyone,

Thank you to Paul, Stacy, and the Board of Directors for this incredible honor.

Receiving the Bracebridge H. Young Distinguished Service Award is deeply meaningful to me—especially knowing the legacy it represents and the remarkable individuals who have come before me.

As a member of the Society staff, this feels not only like an individual recognition, but also, and more importantly, like a reflection of this entire community—one that I have been incredibly fortunate to serve and be part of for many years.

And I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the extraordinary team I have the privilege of working with every day. The Society staff is small but mighty—deeply committed, incredibly thoughtful, and relentlessly focused on supporting this membership and advancing the profession. Any impact I have had is a direct reflection of that team.

When I joined the Society staff in 2013, it was my dream job.

Before joining the Society, I spent two decades in-house with public companies serving as a corporate secretary, general counsel, and governance professional, facing many of the same challenges that so many of you navigate every day. The Society had always been my go-to resource—for answers, benchmarking, practical guidance, and sometimes simply reassurance that I was not alone in navigating difficult situations.

So joining the Society was both an honor and, in many ways, a homecoming.

Over the years, having had the opportunity to serve as a governance professional both in-house and now through my various roles at the Society—including, now, as General Counsel supporting our own Board—has given me a perspective I did not fully appreciate before.

It has allowed me to experience this profession from both sides of the table: first as someone who relied on the Society for practical guidance and

perspective, and now as someone privileged to help provide that guidance to others.

And that perspective has led me to a simple belief that I want to share today:

In corporate governance—and in our careers—when things become most complex, the answer is often to go back to basics.

Our world is changing rapidly. We are navigating evolving regulations, competing expectations, technological disruption, geopolitical uncertainty, and challenges that would have been difficult to imagine years ago.

Yet at its core, corporate governance has not changed.

It is still about process.

It is still about judgment.

And it is still about helping boards make informed, principled decisions.

As we all know, boards are generally afforded the protection of the business judgment rule — not because every decision turns out to be right, but because the process behind the decision was sound.

That is what we do.

We are the stewards of that process.

In many ways, our role is not to determine outcomes—but to protect the integrity of how those outcomes are reached.

And I have found, throughout my career, that when situations become difficult—when there is pressure, ambiguity, or even crisis—those fundamentals matter even more. Sometimes they are the only thing we have to rely on.

Over the course of my career, I have experienced several moments that tested my judgment, my fortitude, and my understanding of my responsibilities as a governance professional. Some involved difficult disclosure decisions. Some involved investigations and crises. Some involved situations where I ultimately concluded that I could no longer fulfill my responsibilities in the manner the profession requires, so I chose to move on.

While the circumstances were very different, they all taught me the same lesson:

When the pressure is highest and the path is least clear, what guides us is not a new framework or a new trend.

It is our foundation.

And in each of those situations, coming back to basics is what made the difference.

Over time, I have come to think about those experiences as reminders of a few fundamentals that I try to carry with me every day.

So I offer a few thoughts—perhaps in the spirit of sharing something useful with this incredible group.

First: Master the fundamentals.

Understand the core principles of governance—fiduciary duties, disclosure, process, and documentation. Because even when everything else is changing, those principles remain constant.

Second: Protect the process.

Our role is not to control outcomes. It is to help facilitate decisions being made thoughtfully, with the right information, and in the right way. That is what ultimately protects the board—and the organization.

Third: Know whom you serve.

We may work closely with or be a member of management. We may build strong relationships. But our responsibility is to the company and its governance—not to individuals.

Fourth: Have the courage to act.

There will be moments where doing the right thing is uncomfortable. Those moments define our career more than almost anything else.

And finally: Never underestimate the value of this community.

Some of the most important lessons in this profession—about judgment, perspective, and how to navigate difficult situations—are not learned from a rulebook. They are learned from each other.

This Society is extraordinary because of its people. It brings together professionals with different perspectives and experiences, but with a shared commitment to strengthening governance and helping one another succeed.

That is what makes this organization—and this profession—so special.

This award is named for Bracebridge H. Young, a founding leader who helped build this Society and shape the profession we are part of today.

At its core, this award reflects a commitment to service.

So I accept it with deep gratitude.

Gratitude to Paul, to the Board, to my colleagues on the Society staff, and to the members of this extraordinary organization.

But most importantly, I accept it as a reflection of this community.

Because at the end of the day, this profession is not defined by any one individual.

It is defined by a community of governance professionals who are collaborative, supportive, principled, and committed to doing the right thing—even when no one is watching.

Ours is a role that is often invisible by design.

But it is pivotal.

And in a world that continues to change rapidly, our greatest strength is not in chasing what is new, but in staying grounded in what is fundamental—and in this remarkable community that helps us do it every day.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of it.