NEWS RELEASE

Eight Mitel Leaders Named to CRN's 2021 Women of the Channel List

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Recognized for continued channel advocacy and driving innovative programs to support both partners and customers through the challenges of the global pandemic

DALLAS – Mitel®, a global leader in business communications, today announced that CRN®, a brand of The Channel Company, has named Sue Anders, Stephanie Ford, Denise Hanson, Fiona Hills, Lana King, Kristi Lakich, Ilona Masche, and Jennifer Orr to the Women of the Channel list for 2021. This highly respected annual list recognizes the unique strengths, vision and achievements of female leaders from across the IT channel, including vendors, distributors and solution providers.

Selected by the CRN® editorial team for their contributions to channel advocacy, leadership, and dedication to the IT channel, this year's honorees have also made their marks by driving innovative ways of supporting partners and customers through the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, the Mitel team had a record-breaking eight channel leaders receive recognition for their contributions:

- Sue Anders, Regional Vice President, Verticals East, SLED and Healthcare – Anders is an effective negotiator and passionate about developing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with channel partners, sales teams, and customers. When the pandemic hit, she implemented programs to educate

partners on CARES Act funding as well as Mitel's extensive public sector contract portfolio to assist customers in procurement on a state-by-state basis. As lockdowns continued, she drove development of product bundles designed to support public sector organizations with the transition to remote work and established forums for partners to learn about solutions and financing options that would help customers navigate the everchanging landscape.

- Stephanie Ford, Vice President, U.S. Sales – Ford worked closely with sales and partners to support customers in adapting to the remote working environment brought on by the COVID-19 crisis, helping hospitals and healthcare clinics to implement new virtual contact centers in a matter of days, and guiding educational institutions in modernizing their communications technology to support the operational changes needed for virtual learning. Focused on building and maintaining partner relationships, Ford established a quarterly partner summit to keep partners abreast of market trends, provide continued education, and ensure an avenue for ongoing feedback.

- Denise Hanson, Senior Director, Partner Experience – Hanson has been a champion for Mitel's 'partner first' approach in a newly created role where she serves as a "voice of the partner" advocate within Mitel to drive post-sales initiatives in ways that elevate the partner experience while supporting alignment with Mitel's go-to-market strategy. Through more than 100 one-on-one conversations with partners, she gathered feedback on how Mitel could improve its post-sale experience and created a scorecard that's now utilized to prioritize Mitel's partner experience efforts. Hanson's hands-on engagement also enabled her to lead and execute multiple operational improvements that made an immediate impact on partners' ability to easily sell and deliver Mitel's cloud offerings.

- Fiona Hills, Director, Americas Global Partner Program – Hills led the development and launch of Mitel's new hospitality specialization, which recognizes and rewards partners for their expertise in hospitality-focused sales and technical solutions and enabled them to differentiate themselves in an industry heavily impacted by the pandemic. Hills was also instrumental in supporting the launch of Mitel's new partner portal and lead registration tools, which provide partners with greater visibility into their sales pipelines. Her efforts to educate internal sales teams on the value of partner enablement have led to higher program compliance with both technical and sales competencies that will in turn, enable partners to provide a quality, end-to-end experiences for customers.

- Lana King, Vice President, Partner Programs, Training & Enablement – King has been a driving force behind Mitel's channel operations and enablement, successfully leading change management programs for new partner portals and tools that enable partners to more effectively manage their Mitel business, as well as championing focus groups to gain partner input on the overall partner experience. Over the past year,

her guidance has driven multiple initiatives to support partners through the pandemic including adapting partner program assessment criteria to changing market conditions and introducing free, self-paced virtual technical training to help partners increase competencies without requiring travel. King has also played a critical leadership role in the development and implementation of Mitel's new **MiCloud Connect Partner Managed** model, which gives partners more control over the cloud customer lifecycle.

- Kristi Lakich, Regional Vice President, Channel Sales – Lakich played a key role in helping Mitel partners move their customers to remote work, including numerous success stories where the transition took place almost overnight. A highly engaged leader, she has been instrumental in increasing partner engagement through unique incentives and virtual events, guiding cross-functional efforts to improve the partner experience, and leveraging her personal network to help partners and channel managers build strategic relationships. Lakich is actively working on several initiatives that will enable partners to capture new UCaaS opportunities and empower them to serve as true consultants who can help customers not only address today's business challenges but stay well-positioned for the future.

- Ilona Masche, Marketing Director, Central Europe – Masche launched and implemented Mitel's first virtual roadshow series for channel partners in Central Europe. The Mitel Expo series spanned four weeks and, through Masche's leadership, saw a 97% participant rate, including engagement from 600+ channel partners in one country alone, and 2,700+ breakout session registrations. Based on the event's success, she consulted with other regions and channel partners to develop and implement their own virtual engagement strategies. Leading marketing for Mitel's most diverse sales region, Masche is focused on empowering partners to modernize their customer base and win new business by arming them with sophisticated marketing tools that increase market visibility.

- Jennifer Orr, Vice President, Master Agent Channel – Orr lobbied for and helped drive creation of the agent track within Mitel's partner program, including a certification for master agents and partners. Orr also helped to better align internal teams with channel needs while driving messaging and awareness around contact center capabilities. In the year ahead, she plans to increase partnerships and the number of incremental opportunities registered, as well as grow Mitel's enterprise business and contact center footprint.

"CRN's 2021 Women of the Channel list acknowledges accomplished, influential women whose dedication, hard work, and leadership accelerate channel growth," said Blaine Raddon, CEO of The Channel Company. "We are proud to honor them for their many accomplishments and look forward to their continued contributions to the IT channel."

“This year’s Mitel honorees truly embody our partner-first approach,” said Mary McDowell, Mitel President and CEO. “In an incredibly challenging year, their continued advocacy and passion for channel enablement, creative business solutions, and commitment to building meaningful relationships with our partners represent the best of Mitel’s strategy and our values as a company. Partners play an essential role in delivering a great communications experience for Mitel customers and the dedication these women showed in making that possible despite the challenges of COVID allowed countless organizations to not only survive during the past year, but to thrive.”

The 2021 Women of the Channel list will be featured in CRN Magazine on May 10th and online at **www.CRN.com/WOTC**.

Additional Facts

- Mitel is a leading provider of cloud communications, enabling more than 5 million users, including 1.5 million UCaaS customers (Source: Synergy Research Group).
- CRN® recognized Mitel with a **5-Star rating in its 2020 Partner Program Guide**.
- Mitel recently announced its **enhanced 2021 Global Partner Program**, extending its partner-first commitment with new resources to further empower partners to own the customer communications lifecycle and support cloud adoption.
- In February, Mitel launched its **MiCloud Connect Partner Managed model** in North America, giving partners more control over how they deliver and manage cloud services.

About The Channel Company

The Channel Company enables breakthrough IT channel performance with our dominant media, engaging events, expert consulting and education, and innovative marketing services and platforms. As the channel catalyst, we connect and empower technology suppliers, solution providers, and end users. Backed by more than 30 years of unequalled channel experience, we draw from our deep knowledge to envision innovative new solutions for ever-evolving challenges in the technology marketplace. **www.thechannelcompany.com**

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