



## John V. Balen

**Cornell degree(s):** BS '82 (ENG), MBA '86

*The Board of Trustees must not only advocate that Cornell continues to provide a safe and healthy environment for our faculty, students and staff to withstand the pandemic, but also ensure there is adequate funding and broad support for the multitude of vital initiatives, including diversity, equity and inclusion, which are so essential for Cornell to thrive post-pandemic and attract world-class scholars and students.*

### 1. How does Cornell's unique status as both an elite Ivy and a land-grant institution position it to improve the world? How can the trustees and alumni support Cornell's mission?

*Cornell has to appreciate its storied history of academic leadership, diversity and research excellence, but also not rest on its laurels. It must continue striving to be a beacon for world-class scholars who want to pursue groundbreaking research and collaboration. Such a vibrant culture will always naturally attract highly capable students who will further contribute to the inspiring environment. Without such talent, Cornell is nothing but a collection of land and buildings.*

*Cornell's trustees and global alumni community can ensure the necessary frameworks, resources and partnerships are readily available to enable innovative, cutting-edge academics and research. Besides capital, they can also provide critical access to their business and personal relationships, which can help foster new cross-fertilization collaborations both within and outside Cornell.*

### 2. How do you envision the Board of Trustees supporting Cornell's priority to strengthen and broaden diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across the university?

*In order for Cornell's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives to be successful, the Board of Trustees has to fully embrace and actively participate in all DEI initiatives. Certainly, Ezra Cornell's founding principal should serve as the DEI masthead. At a minimum, the board should:*

- Make DEI initiatives a top priority
- Routinely review DEI plan and policies against results and hold leaders accountable
- Set appropriate DEI objectives and milestones that are reviewed at all board meetings
- Set appropriate hiring objectives and routinely review all faculty and staff hiring, promotions and departures
- Ensure all university activities and policies are incorporating DEI initiatives
- Approve and provide funding for faculty, student and employee DEI programs and scholarships

### 3. Why do you hope to serve on the board and how are you uniquely suited to contribute to Cornell's success?

*As a first-generation college graduate, I have deeply appreciated my Cornell education and have always tried to pay it forward. For many years, I have participated with Cornell Silicon Valley and Entrepreneurship at Cornell, actively fostered alumni contributions, served on the Johnson Graduate School of Management Advisory Council, the Engineering College Council and the ECE Advisory Council. My experiences have provided me with keen insight on the opportunities and challenges faced by Cornell's deans as they build and fortify their respective colleges. In Silicon Valley, I have collaborated with some of the most innovative and entrepreneurial leaders in the world and would hope to bring such successful forward thinking to our Board of Trustees. I appreciate the critical importance of a strong, proactive and innovative board.*

### Professional experience:

- Digital Equipment Corporation, Engineer, 1980–1982
- Codenoll Technology, Applications Engineer, 1982–1984
- Horsley Bridge Partners, Managing Director, 1985–1995
- Canaan Partners, Partner, 1995–present

### Alumni service (2010–present):

- Cornell Silicon Valley (CSV) Advisory Council, 2001–present
- Electrical and Computer Engineering Advisory Council (ECE), member, 2011–present
- Engineering College Advisory Council, member, 2017–2023
- Johnson Graduate School of Management Advisory Council, member, 2012–2023
- Entrepreneurship@Cornell Advisory Council, member, 2009–2024
- Bay Area Cornell Student Send-Off, 2015–2017
- Cornell University Council, member, 2001–2005; 2007–2011
- Johnson Non-Reunion Class Campaigns, member, 2016–2020
- Johnson Reunion Campaign, member, 2005–2006; 2010–2011; 2015–2016
- TowerClub WC TA San Francisco, Chair, 2000–2002; 2003–2010
- Johnson lecturer and eLab mentor
- National Science Foundation I-Corps Cornell Team, mentor, 2020

### Community/public service/philanthropic priorities:

- Convent & Stuart Hall, Schools of the Sacred Heart, San Francisco, CA, Board Member
- Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton, CA
- Horizon Pass Residence Association Board, President

### Student involvements/activities:

- Johnson Marketing Club
- Johnson Men's Hockey Club, Player/Coach
- Johnson Frozen Assets Women's Hockey Club, Coach
- Cornell student fundraising phone-a-thons
- Sigma Nu Fraternity
- Cornell Engineering Co-op
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Club

### Additional information:

Raised in Waukegan, Illinois, by a first-generation American family, John lived in New York, Boston and now in Silicon Valley. An enthusiastic entrepreneurial advocate, he has been involved with startups and venture capital for over thirty five years. A partner with Canaan Partners, he has served on the board of twenty five early-stage technology startups. A strong believer in education, he has been a volunteer and board member for his local schools and serves on five Cornell advisory councils. He is an avid skier and hockey player. He resides in Hillsborough, California, with his wife, Norma, and they have two children: John '19 and Danielle '20.