In Memoriam

John C. Whitehead
Former Chairman and Senior Partner

Few people have contributed more to our culture and generations of leaders at Goldman Sachs than John Whitehead, who passed away this year. We honor his achievements and contributions in service to his country and our firm. John was a man of enormous grace and integrity, and his legacy will endure in the institutions he led and in the lives of those he cared for and mentored.

As a 22-year-old, John served as an ensign on the USS Thomas Jefferson, where he was placed in charge of five of the landing craft for the invasion of Normandy during World War II. His Higgins Boat landed on Omaha Beach, a site of extraordinary loss of life.

During his 37 years with Goldman Sachs, John was an influential figure whose decisiveness, high ethical standards and creativity helped lead the firm through a significant period of growth. One of John’s most important legacies was the codification of the Goldman Sachs Business Principles, which he crafted in 1979.

Shortly after retiring from the firm in 1984, John was asked to become deputy secretary of state of the United States, a role he held until early 1989. He was later awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal by President Ronald Reagan.

Throughout his life, he remained committed to public service and was active in innumerable educational, civic and charitable organizations. In late 2001, he was appointed chair of the board of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation to help revitalize that part of New York City after the devastation of September 11th.

John was a gifted leader, effective visionary and outstanding mentor. We will miss him.