

Vail Resorts' Executive Chairman Rob Katz Named to Colorado Business Hall of Fame

Feb. 22, 2024 - When Vail Resorts introduced the Epic Pass in 2008, people called the company, and its CEO at the time, Rob Katz, crazy for offering such unprecedented access to its ski resorts for a previously unheard-of price. Yet, the Epic Pass went on to completely transform the ski and ride industry – and the spirit of innovation behind its start remains part of the foundation of our company culture today.

"He had a clear vision for the future, and I don't think any of us could have imagined or believed the extent to which his vision stretched," says Pat Campbell, senior advisor to the mountain division at Vail Resorts and chair of the National Ski Areas Association. "[His leadership was transformational for the company.](#)"

In February 2024, the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and Junior Achievement-Rocky Mountain recognized Rob's legendary contributions to the Colorado economy and beyond by inducting him into the [Colorado Business Hall of Fame](#). The honor is bestowed on leaders who have experienced "a lifetime of business success and have set powerful examples for others to follow."

Now the company's executive chairman, when Rob joined as CEO in 2006, he had a vision to "re-imagine the mountain experience around the world." By launching the industry-changing [Epic Pass](#), he helped make skiing and riding more accessible to all. Rob also dramatically expanded the company's footprint from five resorts in two states to 41 resorts in 15 states and four countries – giving Epic Pass holders even more ways to explore.

During his 16-year tenure, the company went through a major phase of cultural evolution, with a foundation rooted in innovation, investment, and leadership development that can still be seen to this day. Innovation into new technologies and ideas; investments into the guest experience, sustainability, and supporting our mountain communities; and leadership development focused on self-awareness, and individual growth, and increasing gender diversity within a historically male-dominated industry. Today, the company has 55,000 employees, up from 8,000 when he joined.

"He has the ability to see ten steps ahead," says Vail Resorts' Chief Executive Officer, Kirsten Lynch. "[It's] not just what should be done, but what actually could be done, and how it inspires the entire organization."

His leadership isn't only tied to business. A philanthropist at heart, Rob has kept responsibility at the forefront of his career both inside and outside of work.

Under his leadership, the company launched [EpicPromise](#), our responsibility platform focused on igniting a passion for the outdoors, conserving the natural environment, supporting our local communities and employees, and making our sport more accessible and inclusive. In 2017, we announced [Commitment to Zero](#), our bold sustainability goal to reach a zero net operating footprint by 2030. We continue to [report our progress](#) and are on track to reach our goals.

Outside of the office, Rob and his wife, Elana Amsterdam, New York Times bestselling author and founder of Elana's Pantry, run the [Katz Amsterdam Foundation and Charitable Trust](#). The organization seeks to address systemic injustice, including racial and social disparities in mental health, reproductive health and civic engagement. Together, they have given over \$56 million in grants to date.

Learn more about our executive chairperson and former CEO [in this video](#) from the Colorado Business Hall of Fame dinner.

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