

# Miriam E. Nelson, PhD

**PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
NEWMAN'S OWN FOUNDATION**



**Miriam Nelson is an American public health and nutrition scholar and social entrepreneur focusing on the areas of children’s wellness, women’s health, and sustainable food systems.** She has authored or co-authored more than 100 scientific studies, research papers, and policy reports, and is nationally known for her “Strong Women” books series that have sold more than one million copies in 14 languages. As president and CEO of Newman’s Own Foundation, she advocates for children facing adversity due to medical issues and food insecurity. Since 1982, when Paul Newman first declared, “Let’s give it all away,” more than \$570 million has been donated to thousands of nonprofit organizations helping people in need around the world.

An emerita professor at the Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Dr. Nelson served as associate dean of the Tisch College of Civic Life. Nelson also co-founded ChildObesity180, and through that organization, worked with former first lady Michelle Obama on her Let’s Move! campaign. She served on the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2010 and 2015, and was senior advisor to the NSF-funded, Emmy-nominated PBS documentary, “In Defense of Food.” Nelson appeared in her own PBS special entitled “Strong Women Live Well,” and served as the chief scientific adviser for the “Marathon Challenge” documentary from PBS’s “NOVA.”

**Dr. Nelson is available to speak on topics including:**

## **THE POWERFUL LEGACY OF PAUL NEWMAN**

The world knows Paul Newman as a famous actor and film director, a devoted husband and father, and an accomplished race car driver. But his legacy includes revolutionizing the world of social enterprise by creating a food company that gives away all its profits. Since 1982, Newman's Own has donated more than \$570 million to good causes, particularly camps for kids facing serious illness as well as children's nutrition and food security. How did he come to establish Newman's Own, and what is the Foundation's impact today?

## **SYSTEMS CHANGE FOR A NUTRITION-SECURE GENERATION**

As of December 2020, the estimated rate of food insecurity for all Americans was 24.2%, whereas the estimated rate of food insecurity for Americans with children was 31.4%. Moreover, disparities across racial and ethnic groups are longstanding and pronounced. Over an 8-week period in 2020, 41.1% of Black families, 36.9% of Hispanic families, and 23.2% of white families reported food insecurity during at least one previous week.

Systems change occurs when established practices, prevailing culture, and policies are disrupted and there is a collective elevation in consciousness and agency to create equitable solutions. Newman's Own Foundation is working toward systems change by advocating for sound policies, elevating leaders at small and mid-size farms and connecting them to larger food systems, and by ensuring equity in the food system. How does the Foundation do it and what are they learning? What is working, and where does America need to go from here?

## **SCHOOLS: EPICENTER OF NUTRITION SECURITY AND MORE**

At various points throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 33 percent of households with children experienced some level of food insecurity. Congress gave the U.S. Department of Agriculture the authority to allow school districts to serve free meals to all children during the pandemic. This has been the key to reaching hungry children, including those who experienced empty pantries for the first time. While policies to address long-standing inequities are gaining support, there is also a need on the local level for stronger nutrition curriculum and upskilling of talent within the field. Miriam Nelson shares the ways in which the Newman's Own Foundation works with innovative leaders and organizations who are making significant gains in improving nutrition in schools.

# **WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR**

## ***LIFESTYLE CHANGES FOR MAXIMUM ENERGY AND EFFECTIVENESS***

Did you ever wonder how some leaders are as fresh at 8:00 p.m. as they were at 8:00 a.m.? Our habits of eating, sleeping, and exercise impact the energy we bring to the job. Miriam Nelson, PhD, nutrition scholar, president and CEO of Newman's Own Foundation, and author of the best-selling "Strong Women" series, explains how we can influence the energy available to us on a daily basis.

## ***NETWORKING AND DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR***

Relationships with elected representatives at all levels are important to successful advocacy to advance your mission. Miriam Nelson, PhD, president and CEO of Newman's Own Foundation, co-founded ChildObesity180, and through that organization, worked with former first lady Michelle Obama on her Let's Move! campaign. She also served on the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Drawing on her experience, she shares strategies for identifying allies, growing relationships, and co-launching innovative projects to further your goals.

## ***USING RESEARCH TO ADVANCE YOUR MISSION***

Reliable data are critical to building trust and advancing your cause with government, funders, the media, and the public you serve. Fresh insights can establish you and your organization as a thought leader. Miriam Nelson, PhD, president and CEO of Newman's Own Foundation and emerita professor at the Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, describes how you can connect with researchers in your focus area and use data and expertise to strengthen your communications.