

# Mellody Hobson

**Mellody Hobson** (born April 3, 1969) is an American businesswoman who is the president and co-CEO of Ariel Investments.<sup>[1]</sup> She is the former chairwoman of DreamWorks Animation,<sup>[2]</sup> having stepped down after negotiating the acquisition of DreamWorks Animation SKG, Inc., by NBCUniversal in August, 2016. In 2017, she became the first African-American woman to head The Economic Club of Chicago.<sup>[3]</sup>

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## Career

The youngest in a family of six children, Hobson graduated from St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago in 1987 and from Princeton University in 1991.<sup>[4]</sup>

Soon after her graduation from Princeton, Hobson joined Ariel Investments as an intern and rose to become the firm's senior vice president and director of marketing. In 2000, she ascended to become the president of Ariel, a Chicago investment firm that manages nearly \$13 billion in assets.<sup>[5]</sup> It is also one of the largest African American-owned money management and mutual fund companies in the United States.<sup>[6]</sup>

Hobson is also Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Ariel Investment Trust. She is a regular contributor on financial issues on CBS This Morning and formerly a spokesperson for the annual Ariel/Schwab Black Investor Survey.

Hobson serves on the board of many organizations, including JPMorgan Chase & Co., the Chicago Public Education Fund, the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and the Sundance Institute. She is also a director of the Starbucks Corporation, and formerly a director of The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. Hobson has been acclaimed in selections such as Time's 2015 Time 100 List, the magazine's annual list of the one hundred most influential people in the world),<sup>[7]</sup> Ebony magazine's "20 Leaders of the Future" (1992), Working Women Magazine's "20 Under 30" (1992), the World Economic Forum's "Global Leaders of Tomorrow" (2001), Esquire's "America's Best and Brightest" (2002), The Wall Street Journal's 50 "Women to Watch" (2004).<sup>[8]</sup>

Hobson created and hosted a show on ABC on May 29, 2009, called *Unbroke: What You Need to Know About Money*, featuring celebrities such as the Jonas Brothers, Oscar the Grouch and Samuel L. Jackson.<sup>[9]</sup>

**Mellody Hobson**



<b>Born</b>	April 3, 1969 <div>Chicago, Illinois, U.S.</div>
<b>Education</b>	<u>Princeton University</u> <div>(BA)</div>
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	<u>George Lucas</u> (m... 2013)
<b>Children</b>	1

In the American television drama The Good Wife, actress Vanessa L. Williams based her character, self-made businesswoman Courtney Paige, on Hobson, studying her via Hobson's TED talks.<sup>[10]</sup>

In 2017, Hobson was named to head the Economic Club of Chicago, the first African-American woman to do so.<sup>[11]</sup>

On August 6, 2017, Hobson guest hosted CBS Sunday Morning's annual "Money Issue" episode.<sup>[12]</sup>

On June 4, 2018, Hobson was named as Vice-Chair of Starbucks Corporation.<sup>[13]</sup>

On October 8, 2020, Melody Hobson and the Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation made the lead gift to establish a new residential college at Princeton University. Hobson College will be the first residential college at Princeton named for a Black woman and will be built on the site of First College, formerly known as Wilson College.<sup>[14][15]</sup>

## Awards

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Melody Hobson was inducted as a Laureate of The Lincoln Academy of Illinois and awarded the Order of Lincoln (the State's highest honor) by the Governor of Illinois in 2018.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Personal life

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Hobson began dating film director and producer George Lucas in 2006, after they met at a business conference.<sup>[17][18][19][20][21]</sup> Hobson and Lucas announced their engagement in January 2013,<sup>[22]</sup> and were married on June 22, 2013, at Lucas' Skywalker Ranch.<sup>[23]</sup> They have one daughter together, Everest Hobson Lucas, who was born via surrogacy in August 2013.<sup>[24]</sup>

Hobson was photographed by Annie Leibovitz for the 2016 Pirelli Calendar.<sup>[25]</sup>

She appeared on the Jack Good Show in August 2017, where she accepted the City of Birmingham's deepest appreciation for her charitable work with Birmingham's Bright Leaders of Tomorrow.<sup>[26]</sup>

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## External links

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- [Melody Hobson \(http://www.arielinvestments.com/our-team/\)](http://www.arielinvestments.com/our-team/)
  - [Melody Hobson \(https://www.ted.com/speakers/melody\\_hobson\)](https://www.ted.com/speakers/melody_hobson) at [TED](#) 
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