Despite high-profile news about gender gaps, equal pay, and women on boards, once again the needle barely budged for women aspiring to top business leadership in corporate America, according to the 2012 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Women Board Directors and 2012 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Executive Officers and Top Earners.

Among the disappointing findings:

- Women’s share of Board Director and Executive Officer positions increased by only half a percentage point or less during the past year.
- Women held only 16.6 percent of board seats in 2012—the seventh consecutive year of no growth.
- Women held 14.3 percent of Executive Officer positions—flat-lined for the third straight year.
- Women of color held only 3.3 percent of board seats, indicating no growth.
- More than two-thirds of Fortune 500 companies had no women of color board directors for the fifth consecutive year.
- Women held only 8.1 percent of top earner slots.

In response to the stagnant growth in women board directors, Catalyst has created the Corporate Board Resource, a unique directory of CEO-endorsed board-ready women.

This initiative helps to counter the notion that board-qualified women are hard to find. Our member company CEOs can directly impact and increase gender diversity in their own boardrooms and at others where they have influence, providing extraordinary leadership opportunities for top women executives.

—Ilene H. Lang, President & CEO, Catalyst