

= Heather Bresch =

Heather Bresch ( born Heather Manchin ) is an American business executive and public policy advocate . She is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Mylan , a global pharmaceutical company based in Pennsylvania . She was named one of Fortune Magazine 's " 50 Most Powerful Women In Business " in 2012 and 2013 .

= = Early life and education = =

Bresch grew up in Fairmont and Farmington , West Virginia in a Catholic Italian American family . Her father , Joe Manchin , was a prominent politician throughout her childhood and is presently the United States Senator from West Virginia . Bresch attended Fairmont Senior High School in Fairmont , West Virginia and graduated from West Virginia University ( WVU ) in 1991 with a bachelor 's degree in political science and international relations .

= = = MBA controversy = = =

Bresch was an MBA student at West Virginia University until 1998 . In 2007 , the Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette reported that Bresch had claimed to have an MBA degree from West Virginia University , but the university disputed that . The university subsequently awarded her an MBA despite her not having attained sufficient credits ( 22 out of the required 48 ) . In the ensuing controversy , the university announced in April 2008 that it would rescind Bresch 's degree . Michael Garrison , WVU President at the time , was reported to be " a family friend and former business associate of Bresch " and a former consultant and lobbyist for Mylan . After a faculty vote of no confidence , Garrison and several university officials subsequently resigned .

= = Career = =

= = = Early work = = =

At a WVU basketball game in 1992 , Bresch 's father mentioned his daughter 's job search to Mylan CEO Milan Puskar . The company soon thereafter offered her a low @-@ level position in the quality control department of a factory in Morgantown . According to Bresch , she had misgivings about the offer . Her father said she should " absolutely take it " and try for a year . She took his advice , and started as a clerk , typing labels . She received frequent promotions during the following years , " working hard and learning the industry inside out " .

= = = Government relations and advocacy = = =

From 2002 to 2005 , Bresch served as Mylan 's director of government relations . She contributed to the development of the 2003 Medicare Prescription Drug , Improvement , and Modernization Act ( MMA , also known as " Medicare Part D " ) .

When Mylan expanded internationally , Bresch noticed that Mylan 's US @-@ based pharmaceutical manufacturing plant had full @-@ time staff from the Food and Drug Administration ( FDA ) devoted to it , whereas facilities abroad had not been inspected by the FDA for more than a decade . Bresch persuaded several of Mylan 's competitors to support what became the Generic Drug User Fee Act , which she proposed to lawmakers in 2010 . Under the law the pharmaceutical industry would pay fees of \$ 300 million in order to fund FDA inspections of foreign drug manufacturing facilities at the same rate as US @-@ based facilities . To advocate for the new law , she made regular visits to Washington , D.C. , and sponsored a whitepaper . The Generic Drug User Fee Act of 2012 was passed on July 9 , 2012 and required FDA inspections of pharmaceutical manufacturing locations abroad if they are importing into the US .

Bresch has also advocated for broader availability of EpiPens in public places to treat anaphylaxis ( severe allergic reactions ) , and has been active in raising awareness of HIV / AIDS treatment in developing nations . She helped facilitate the School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act , which made epinephrine more accessible in schools .

= = = Business executive = = =

Heather Bresch served in several executive roles at Mylan , such as Senior Vice President of Corporate Strategic Development , Head of North American Operations , Chief Operating Officer and Chief Integration Officer . Bresch led the integrations of Matrix Laboratories Limited and Merck KGaA 's generics and specialty pharmaceutical businesses with Mylan 's operations . She was also the chair of the Generic Pharmaceutical Association ( GPhA ) for two terms . Bresch was appointed President of Mylan in 2009 and joined Mylan 's Board of Directors in March 2011 .

Bresch 's appointment as Chief Executive Officer was announced in 2001 and she officially took the position in January 2012 . Bresch was the first female CEO of a large pharmaceutical business . At the time , she was one of 18 female CEOs of a Fortune 500 company . She was ranked 31 in Fortune Magazine 's 2014 " 50 Most Powerful Women " list Bresch initially did not think her role as a female executive was significant . After seeing how few female candidates were available for positions that require a background in science and math , she became more interested in promoting math and science education among young girls .

As CEO of Mylan , Bresch continued advocating for more regulation of the pharmaceutical industry by the Food and Drug Administration ( FDA ) . She was recognized in Esquire 's 2011 " Patriots of the Year " list for her work pushing for the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act ( FDASIA ) .

Under Bresch 's leadership , Mylan made several acquisitions , including a \$ 1 @. @ 6 billion acquisition of Agila Specialties . A \$ 5 @. @ 3 billion acquisition of Abbott Laboratories was announced in conjunction with plans to re @- @ organize the company in the Netherlands and move its domicile to a country with lower taxes . The New York Times said there was something " disconcerting " about a company that benefits from large government contracts renouncing their citizenship for tax benefits , but Mylan would eventually save almost 10 percent of its revenues in taxes each year . Bresch said it was a difficult choice to make , but it had to be done to maintain competitiveness against pharmaceutical manufacturers that had already executed similar inversion strategies .

= = Personal life = =

Bresch is married to Jones Day lawyer Jeffrey J. Bresch . She was previously married to West Virginia businessman Douglas Kirby . She lives with her husband and four children in Sewickley Heights , Pennsylvania .