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From Wall St. Bundlers to Bradley Cooper: Inside the State Dinner Guest Lists

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The guest lists of White House state dinners are boldface ledgers showing the people whom presidents want to influence and reward. On Thursday, President Obama's state dinner is for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada. Here we deconstruct the guest lists of the previous nine. [RELATED ARTICLE](#)



Stephen Schwarzman, left, and Lloyd C. Blankfein with his wife, Laura.
Credit From left, Pool photo by Chris Kleponis, Brendan Smialowski/Getty

35%

Of the guests were from Wall Street and the
business sector

Of 1,350 Obama state dinner guests — we’re not including spouses or dates whom guests bring along — about 12 percent were “bundlers” — people who bundle large campaign contributions for Mr. Obama from contacts and friends. Close to 60 percent, some 800 people, were must-invite members of the administration, Congress, the diplomatic corps and official delegations.

The remaining 550 guests, the ones the White House really wanted to invite, make up the group we’re analyzing here.

The largest number in this group — 35 percent — came from the business world and Wall Street. Many were bundlers. President Obama may have once called big bankers shameful, but they have found a welcoming door at the White House.

Guests include (**bundlers in all categories are shown in bold**): Lloyd Blankfein, Goldman Sachs; Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Group; Warren Buffett, Berkshire Hathaway; Kenneth Chenault, American Express; Jamie Dimon, JP Morgan Chase & Co.; **Fred Eychaner, Newsweb Corporation**; Larry Fink, BlackRock; **Mark Gallogly, Centerbridge Partners**; **James Gorman, Morgan Stanley**; Jeff Immelt, General Electric; **Hamilton (Tony) James, Blackstone**; **Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty III, McLarty Associates**; Alan Mulally, Ford Motor Co.; **Scott A. Nathan, the Baupost Group**; Indra Nooyi, Pepsico; Virginia M. Rometty, IBM; Stephen Schwarzman, Blackstone Group; Carlos Slim, Telmex; and **Robert Wolf, UBS**.



From left, Bradley Cooper with Suki Waterhouse, Whoopi Goldberg with Thomas Leonardis, and Harvey Weinstein with Georgina Chapman. Credit From left, Manuel Balce/Associated Press, Haraz N. Ghanbari/Associated Press, Brendan Hoffman/Getty Images

14%

Of the guests were from Hollywood and the arts

Whether it's dinners with Jeffrey Katzenberg and Steven Spielberg or jams with B.B. King, Mr. Obama likes actors, directors and musicians. The group, representing another source of campaign cash, infuses state dinners with the flavors of pop culture and highbrow arts.

Guests include: J.J. Abrams, producer/director; Mary J. Blige, singer; George Clooney, actor; Stephen Colbert, talk show host; Bradley Cooper, actor; Misty Copeland, ballet dancer; Idris Elba, actor; **Ari Emanuel, talent agent; David Geffen, producer**; Whoopi Goldberg, actress; **Jeffrey Katzenberg, producer**; John Legend, singer;

Maya Lin, architect; Julia Louis-Dreyfus, actress; **Andy Spahn, publicist**; Steven Spielberg, director; Barbra Streisand, singer/actress; George Takei, actor; James Taylor, singer; Cicely Tyson, actress; and **Harvey Weinstein, producer**.



From left, Shelby Bryan with Anna Wintour, Gwen Ifill with Wendell Pierce, and Caryn Zucker with Jeff Zucker. Credit From left, Brendan Smialowski/Getty Images, Brendan Hoffman/Getty Images, Pool photo by Andrew Harrer

16%

Of the guests were from the media

White House beat reporters found their way onto the state dinner guest lists along with columnists, television personalities and various media moguls.

Guests include: JuJu Chang, ABC News; Katie Couric, Yahoo; Thomas Friedman, The New York Times; Gwen Ifill, PBS; Debra Lee, BET Networks; Jorge Ramos, Univision; Brian Roberts, Comcast; Diane Sawyer, ABC News; Bob Schieffer, CBS News; The Rev. Al Sharpton, MSNBC; Shane Smith, Vice Media; **Anna Wintour, Vogue magazine**; and Jeff Zucker, CNN Universal.



The author Jhumpa Lahiri with Alberto Vourvoulias.
CreditMandel Ngan/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

7%

Of the guests were members of the intelligentsia

Mr. Obama's favorite dinners are small gatherings of intellectuals, often held outside Washington, that last into the small hours over dry martinis and wine. He returns the favor with invitations to the White House.

Guests include: **Deepak Chopra, author**; Amy Gutmann, University of Pennsylvania; Robert Kagan, Brookings Institution; Jim Yong Kim, Dartmouth College; Henry Kissinger, Kissinger Associates; Jhumpa Lahiri, author; Bette Bao Lord, author; Joseph Nye, Harvard; Amartya Sen, Harvard; George Shultz, Hoover Institution; and Strobe Talbott, Brookings.



From left, Sheryl Sandberg, Mark Cuban with Tiffany Cuban, and Tim Cook.

Credit From left, Mandel Ngan/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images, Pool photo by Chris Kleponis, Molly Riley/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

12%

Of the guests were from sports, technology and health sectors

Sports stars have long been invited to state dinners, but Mr. Obama has reached out in a big way to Silicon Valley titans as well. And when health care is one of your biggest legacies, you're apt to extend White House invitations to doctors, researchers and scientists, too.

Guests include: Steven Ballmer, Microsoft; **Marc Benioff, Salesforce.com**; Tim Cook, Apple; Mark Cuban, Dallas Mavericks; Larry Ellison, Oracle; **David Friedman, Sandy River Health System**; Reed Hastings, Netflix; Elizabeth Holmes, Theranos; Billie Jean King, tennis champion; Michelle Kwan, Olympic figure skater; Robert Manfred, Major League Baseball; **Marissa Mayer, Yahoo**; Rory McIlroy, golf champion; Elon Musk, Tesla and Space X; Mark Sanchez, New York Jets; Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook; **John Scully, former Apple executive**; **Sally Susman, Pfizer**; **Steve Westly, venture capitalist**; and Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook.

NOTE: The percentages do not add up to 100 because they do not include some smaller categories, like foundation presidents, labor leaders and personal friends of President Obama. The affiliations attributed to guests are from the time they attended the state dinners.

Sarah Cohen contributed research.

Correction: March 11, 2016

An earlier version of this article misspelled the name of a former president of Dartmouth College. He is Jim Yong Kim, not James Yong Kim.

Because of an editing error, a chart in print on Thursday about guests at nine White House state dinners during President Obama's terms erroneously identified 50 guests as "bundlers" — people who collected large campaign contributions for Mr. Obama. A corrected chart that highlights the names of the bundlers and that identifies the 50 guests who were not bundlers can be found at nytimes.com/national.

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Obama's Top Fund-Raisers

Fund-raising totals through May for some of the top “bundlers” (those who gather checks from friends and business associates) for President Obama’s campaign and the Democratic National Committee, according to internal financial documents obtained by The New York Times. The figures do not include contributions from the fund-raisers themselves and may not reflect all of the money they raised. [Related Article »](#)