



JEFFREY A. THINNES

Experience Pre-JTI Inc. (1984-1999)

Jeff began his career as a lawyer representing German family offices and other foreign investors in the US from 1984-1989. In 1990 he joined The Aspen Institute, a values-based leadership and policy institute, serving as Deputy Director in Berlin, Germany (1990-1993) and as Vice President in Aspen, Colorado (1993-1995). While with The Aspen Institute he designed, raised funding for, and moderated numerous high-level policy programs and corporate executive leadership seminars covering a wide range of business and political topics.

In 1996 Jeff accepted the newly created position of Vice President, Trade & Investment for Daimler-Benz AG (now Mercedes-Benz Group AG) in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, Jeff built a team that supported the formation and execution of U.S. and global business development strategies while also managing several sensitive U.S. public relations issues for the company.

Experience with JTI, Inc. (1999-2026) and SummaForte, Inc. (2021 - 2024)

Following the Mercedes-Benz Group's merger with Chrysler, Jeff founded JTI, Inc. in 1999. In the early years he assisted German companies with the design and execution of US market entry and growth strategies and political engineering plans focused on protecting and expanding US and global business interests. He also supported US companies in assessing their business operations in Europe. Clients ranged from German DAX 30 and U.S. NASDAQ listed companies to smaller technology companies.

From 2002-2004, based in Munich, Germany, Jeff served as interim Managing Director and successfully executed a turnaround strategy he designed for the Central Europe subsidiary of a US publicly traded company. From 2004-2006 he served as Co-Managing Partner of a Germany-based professional services firm with 22 offices around the world. There he designed a comprehensive restructuring plan approved by over 80% of the firm's partners.

In 2006, in the wake of a major corporate corruption scandal, Jeff was asked to help Siemens assess and re-build their global compliance program. Thereafter he advised some of Europe's largest companies on their global ethics and compliance programs. While doing so, Jeff personally trained over 3000 managers and individually coached over 140 board members and senior executives in East and West Europe, Asia, North and South America, the Middle East, and Africa. on Values-Based Leadership. Jeff has published numerous articles and provided expert commentary for European and US television, radio and print media on a number of issues related to corruption within large international companies as well as global sports organizations.

In 2021, Jeff embarked on an entirely new adventure with his wife and son, establishing a health & wellness company, SummaForte ("top strength" in Latin). SummaForte leveraged CBD, other natural nutrients, and innovative production and delivery technologies to create products that enhanced human performance and recovery. The company was supported and embraced by top scientists, physicians, athletic trainers and professional and Olympic athletes. In 2024, the persistently uncertain regulatory environment around CBD eventually led Jeff and the team to wind down the business.

Since 2024, Jeff has continued to advise U.S. and non-U.S. companies on business growth strategies in areas ranging from cutting edge cyber- and identification security to revolutionary 4D AI-driven therapeutics. For a coalition of market leaders in the "cash ecosystem," Jeff launched the "Payment Choice Coalition" whose aim is to raise awareness of the importance of cash as a payment rail and promote legislation to secure the right to use cash in brick & mortar retail settings.

Boards & Memberships

Georgetown Univ. BMW Center for German and European Studies

Former Chairman of the Advisory Board

Rotary Club of Great Falls, Virginia

Founder & Chairman of the Board

Founded largest new Rotary Club worldwide in preceding 5 years

Breakthrough Art Organization

Founder & President

Not-for-profit focused on issues of art and basic human rights

Spirit of HOPE - Humanitarian Olympians for Peace

Co-Founder & Board member

Engaging former Olympians worldwide in humanitarian projects

American Council on Germany

Member and Young Leader

Atlantik Brücke

Member

Bosch Fellowship

Awarded in 1990 (declined due to Aspen Institute Germany offer)

Select TV & Print Media

Aspen Institute Germany – Transatlantic Relations Topics

ZDF, Sat.1, Bayerischer Rundfunk, CNN, NBC, ABC, and International New York Times

JTI – Anti-Corruption Topics

CNN, ABC News, BBC Sport, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, LA Times, Foreign Policy

Guest Professorships

Indiana Univ. Maurer School of Law

Business, Law, Ethics & Compliance

Thunderbird American Graduate School of International Management

European Integration

Georgetown University

International Marketing

Indiana Univ. Kelley School of Business

Values-Based Leadership

Studies

Studies in Europe

- Innsbruck (1976-77)
- Freiburg (1979-80 Rotary Fellowship)
- Kiel (1982-83 DAAD Fellowship)
- Saarbrücken (1984-85 DAAD Fellowship–LL.M European Union Law)

Studies in USA

- Harvard University (Master of Public Administration)
- Indiana University (Juris Doctor)
- University of Notre Dame (Bachelor of Arts– Political Science)

Jeff is married to Fionnuala Gallet (Dublin, Ireland) who he met in Saarbrücken, Germany, and has four adult children: Aoibheann, Murtagh, Fionntan and Declan.

Contact

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