LAUNCHING THE WBENC BLOG

LET’S CHAT!

A CONVERSATION WITH WBENC’S 2016 BOARD LEADERS
# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

This calendar includes events hosted by WBENC’s Regional Partner Organizations and Strategic Partners. Visit WBENC’s online calendar for more events.

## FEBRUARY 2016

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| 4 | WBCS Parade of Stars Awards Gala  
Dallas, Texas  
Click here for details. |
| 4 | City of Chicago, Department of Procurement Services 2016 Construction Summit  
Chicago, Ill.  
Click here for details. |
| 5 | WBDC-FL Countdown to Conference Jacksonville  
Jacksonville, Fla.  
Click here for details. |
| 5-12 | WBDC Milwaukee Powering Up to Increase Corporate Contract Opportunities  
Waukesha, Wis.  
Click here for details. |
| 9 | WBENCLink Database Training Webinar  
Click here for details. |
| 9 | WBCS February Table Topics  
Dallas, Texas  
Click here for details. |
| 9-10 | MBDA National 8(a) Winter Conference  
Orlando, Fla.  
Click here for details. |
| 10 | GWBC Tables of 8 - Carolinas  
Click here for details. |
| 10 | WPEO DC Brown Bag Lunch with McCormick & Company  
Washington, District of Columbia  
Click here for details. |
| 10-11 | ISM Diversity 2016  
New Orleans, La.  
Click here for details. |
| 11 | WBDC-FL Countdown to Conference Tampa  
Tampa, Fla.  
Click here for details. |
| 16-18 | Diversity Alliance for Science Networking Conference and EXPO  
Long Beach, Calif.  
Click here for details. |
| 17 | GWBC Corporate-2-Corporate Carolina Kick-off  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Click here for details. |
| 18 | GWBC Tables of 8  
Buckhead, Ga.  
Click here for details. |
| 21-23 | 2016 NAMWOLF Business Meeting  
New Orleans, La.  
Click here for details. |
| 23 | WBC-ORV 2016 WBE & MBE Matchmaker  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Click here for details. |
| 24 | WPEO-NY Brown Bag Lunch with NBCUniversal  
New York, N.Y.  
Click here for details. |
| 24 | WBEC-PA-DE-sNJ Listening to Your Business  
Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Click here for details. |
| 28-1 | MBDA National 8(a) Winter Conference  
Orlando, Fla.  
Click here for details. |

## MARCH 2016

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| 1 | GWBC Annual Meeting 2016  
Atlanta, Ga.  
Click here for details. |
| 2-3 | NGLCC LGBT Summit of the Americas & CCLGBTRO Launch  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
Click here for details. |
| 4 | WPEO-NY Annual Awards Breakfast  
New York, N.Y.  
Click here for details. |
| 6-12 | National Women in Construction Week  
Click here for details. |
| 8 | MLB Diversity Business Summit  
Phoenix, Ariz.  
Click here for details. |
| 8 | WBENCLink Database Training Webinar  
Click here for details. |
| 9 | WBEC-South Selling the Cintas Way: Nashville  
Nashville, Tenn.  
Click here for details. |
| 10 | USPAACC Business Roundtable Matchmaking & Networking Reception  
McLean, Va.  
Click here for details. |
| 11 | WBEC PA-DE-sNJ Annual Meeting  
Click here for details. |
| 11 | WBEC PA-DE-sNJ Executive Leadership Luncheon  
Click here for details. |
| 15 | GWBC Breakfast of Leaders  
Click here for details. |
| 15 | WPEO-NY WOSB Brown Bag Lunch with Metlife  
New York, N.Y.  
Click here for details. |
| 16 | WIPP Give Me 5: The 5 People You Need to Meet to Succeed in Federal Contracting  
Webinar  
Click here for details. |
| 17 | 6th Annual Veteran Woman Owned Small Business Seminar  
Arlington, Va.  
Click here for details. |
| 22-24 | PBWC 27th Annual Conference for Women in Business  
San Francisco, Calif.  
Click here for details. |
| 22-24 | Astra Construction, Manufacturing and Technology Industry Meetup  
San Leandro, Calif.  
Click here for details. |
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NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS:
AARP
ARDENT MILLS
CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS
CUMMINS INC.
EXPRESS SCRIPTS
FIFTH THIRD BANK
HANON SYSTEMS USA, LLC
HEALTHTRUST
MEDTRONIC
NISOURCE
PHILLIPS 66
THE RESOURCE GROUP, AN ASCENSION SUBSIDIARY
REYNOLDS AMERICAN INC.
STRYKER CORPORATION
VALEANT PHARMACEUTICALS
VMWARE, INC.
WESTROCK

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WWW.WBENC.ORG // FEBRUARY EDITION 2016
DEAR FRIENDS,

The new year is already well underway and WBENC is off to an amazing start with a direct focus on our mission and vision. As always, you can expect an amazing Summit & Salute in March and National Conference & Business Fair in June. Both events will have new features, including an emphasis on connecting WBEs and Corporate Members around innovative solutions and detailed knowledge-sharing that will impact the effectiveness of WBEs in the corporate and government supply chains.

Also new this year, we have launched our new interactive leadership series for Supplier Diversity professionals and are deep in preparation for the launch of our focus on supporting those who support us through our ACTIntentionally awareness campaign. As we look back on remarkable accomplishments in 2015, I look forward to sharing these activities with you throughout 2016, which will take us to even greater heights.

Success requires hard work, strong support, and effective leadership. We begin this year with a tremendous thank you to Benita Fortner for her WBENC Board Leadership role, Debbie Hurst for her Leadership Council Chair role, and Julie Copeland for her WBE Forum Leadership Role over the past two years. In addition to Benita, Debbie, and Julie, our retiring Board Members Lynn Marie Finn, Brenda Loube, Sharon Olzerowicz, Patricia Snyder, Dr. Rea Waldon and Blanca Robinson leave us in great hands as our new Board Members rotate onto the Board to begin their service.

I AM HONORED TO INTRODUCE TO YOU OUR 2016-2017 BOARD OFFICERS, LEADERSHIP CHAIR, AND FORUM CHAIR:

**BOARD CHAIR:** Theresa Harrison, Diversity and Inclusiveness Procurement Leader, EY

**1ST VICE CHAIR:** Kim Brown, Vice President, General Procurement and Supplier Diversity, Dell Inc.

**2ND VICE CHAIR:** Barbara Kubicki-Hicks, Senior Vice President, Procurement Executive, Bank of America

**TREASURER:** Larry Caldwell, Vice President of Strategic Supply Management, PepsiCo – continuing in this role for a new 2-year term

**SECRETARY:** Debra Jennings-Johnson, Director, Supplier Diversity, BP – continuing in this role for another 2-year term

**LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CHAIR:** Roz Lewis, President & CEO, Greater Women's Business Council

**WOMEN’S ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP CHAIR:** Cheryl Snead, CEO, Banneker Industries, Inc.

See the full list of the WBENC Board of Directors here.

You will be hearing from all of them throughout the next two years; however, I did want to share a little on what makes them passionate about serving in a leadership role with WBENC as they begin their new roles:
FROM THERESA: “I think the biggest challenge for WBEs is not knowing what is out there in terms of resources and guidance. As a Board Chair, I want to ensure we intentionally map our process and understand our decisions to bring together our WBEs as well as our Corporate and Government Members—and ensuring we support those connections and growth opportunities.”

FROM KIM: “Women owned businesses are vital to our nation’s growth, with an economic impact of nearly $3 trillion and the creation or maintenance of well over 20 million jobs. Their creativity, innovative ideas, willingness to embrace the challenges of launching and running a business, and, most importantly, their “can-do” entrepreneurial spirit thrills and inspires me. I am honored to play a role as a member of the WBENC leadership team helping women-owned businesses grow and thrive.”

FROM BARB: “I want to be associated with a group of leaders who make a difference. I’m passionate about WBENC’s mission and am honored to be a part of building a successful today and tomorrow!”

FROM ROZ: “As Chair of the Leadership Council, I am looking forward to working with WBENC and our AWESOME Regional Partner Leaders to inspire them to get important things done in a powerful way to grow our women businesses and provide a return on investment for our corporate members.”

FROM CHERYL: “I am honored to be chairing the Women’s Enterprise Forum and taking the vision and hard work of my predecessors to the next level. I am looking forward to continuing to see great collaboration from so many women business leaders on the Forum. I definitely hear more collaboration among my WBE peers, more so than my other small business peers, opportunities to look at how do we work together, as opposed to competing with each other. It really is joining forces to succeed together.”

I am thrilled to have such a wealth of knowledge and leadership available to support the WBENC network. Get to know each of them and be on the lookout for their advice and wisdom beginning with the launch of WBENC’s new blog. The blog gives us the opportunity to share rich, timely content with you throughout the year and creates a dynamic space for our community to continue to connect digitally. I hope you will join us throughout 2016 as we climb to a new summit. Those who make this possible will be together in Phoenix from March 22 to 24 as we continue to join forces to succeed together!

I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

PAMELA PRINCE-EASON
WBENC PRESIDENT AND CEO

NEW WBENC BOARD MEMBERS

ALITHIA BRUINTON
Director, Supplier Diversity
AT&T Global

MICHAEL BYRON
Senior Director, Supplier Diversity
Walmart Stores, Inc.

EMILIA DIMENCO
President & CEO
Women’s Business Development Center-Chicago

PAMELA S. WILLIAMSON, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Women’s Business Enterprise Council-West

HALLIE SATZ
CEO
Highroad Press

CINDY TOWERS
CEO
JURISolutions

ROYALYN REID
CEO
Consumer & Market Insights

CLIMBING TO THE SUMMIT
MARCH 22 - 24, 2016
REGISTRATION OPEN
summit.wbenc.org
Almost everyone reads blogs. I was late to the party, but chances are you are already interacting with blogs when you click that link on Facebook. It may surprise you that when you pick up your favorite magazine at the airport or dog-ear a page in any of the business books written in the last 10 years, that same writing or thought leadership, has probably been on a digital platform—like a website with a blog.

I asked my marketing team to update me on blogs as they began their planning for a new WBENC blog. In a nut shell, they shared that blogs started out as digital journals, but the modern blog format grew out of the need to share serialized columns and new ideas in a timely manner. The function of a blog is to post articles, categorize articles, and make those articles searchable.

In 2010, it was estimated that almost 50% of Americans read one blog post a day. In 2014, the Pew Institute found that Millennials are actually reading much more than Americans over the age of 30 because they are reading digital platforms, like blogs, as well as long-form books.

When we discussed launching a WBENC blog, we knew we had an audience. We knew our WBEs and Corporate Members were looking for timely, engaging content they could access on mobile devices. But our commitment to quality at WBENC is paramount. We knew we had to provide excellent content—relevant, timely information—that would also inspire and involve our communities.

Over the last year, we’ve developed a content strategy that will allow us to provide our constituents with more content, more of the time. Here are a few new features we’re debuting:

**LET’S CHAT:** A monthly column where leaders from the WBENC network participate in a Q&A on a business topic.

**WOMEN OWNED WEDNESDAY:** Each Wednesday we’ll highlight a Woman Owned business—and featured products with the Woman Owned logo.

**OPENING DOORS FOR OPPORTUNITY:** Every two weeks, we’ll feature open opportunities and applications for grants, scholarships, and programs for professional development.

**AROUND THE NETWORK:** Interesting links, news, and updates from the entire women business development field.

This platform will also give us opportunities to share important announcements, photos from events, videos on programs and services, and guest blog posts from WBENC’s WBEs, Corporate Members, and so many more.

Yet you won’t lose the WBENC content you’ve come to enjoy. We’ve structured our content so you can enjoy a bite, a snack, or a meal:

**BITE:** Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Just a headline and link to get you started.

**SNACK:** Subscribe to our blog to get the gears turning in your head and find resources at your fingertips.

**MEAL:** Sit down with our bi-monthly magazine, WBENC President’s Report for in-depth magazine articles, full spreads of events, and profiles of successful WBEs.

We hope you will enjoy this additional content and we want to hear from you as the year goes by as we continue to add more for our communities.

My sincere THANK YOU to the WBENC marketing team that continues to keep WBENC relevant in all communication spaces!
BLOGGING 101

YOU’RE PROBABLY ALREADY READING BLOGS

Most people are familiar with major news publications such as The New York Times and The Washington Post. You can think of blogs as mini, independent, digital publications. There is blog content on pretty much every topic you could think of, from basic business tools, to travel, to sports and so on.

BLOGS HAVE A NUMBER OF CHARACTERISTICS:

**FREQUENT UPDATES:** New articles and stories are published on a recurrent basis. Some blogs publish three times a week, some publish three times a day.

**HYPERLINKS:** One of the most exciting things blogs can do is connect you to even more resources. A blog post talking about the importance of building a marketing campaign might state that social media is an important component, linking the word “social media” to another blog post about social media strategy. As a reader, if that topic interests you, there is a direct connection to more information.

**VISUALS:** The nature of the internet enables all kinds of visuals to be shared in incredibly dynamic and interesting ways. You’ll find photos, infographics, videos, and more.

**ENABLE DIALOGUE:** Many blogs encourage discussion. Often bloggers will write about their opinions on a topic and end by asking their readers for their opinion. You may be surprised by the number of additional resources and information you can find in the comments section. Blogs often create a small community where rich dialogue and sharing takes place.
BE PROACTIVE IN YOUR BLOG READING

You can continue to wait for content to come to you organically, but if you want a more curated list to your interests, you can more proactively find your content. Finding the blogs you like and want to read is kind of like finding the next book you want to read. There are an incredible range of choices and a number of places to look. Step one is literally just finding them. Here are a few methods for tracking them down:

**BLOG DIRECTORIES:** Think of these like the card catalogue of blogs on the internet. Sites like Alltop organized blogs into categories and feature recently published articles, don’t miss their roundup of entrepreneurship blogs. There are many, many versions of blog directories. Find one that works for your style.

**GOOGLE SEARCH:** Alternatively you can always just search “best entrepreneurship blogs” on Google and see what pops up. Sometimes you’ll get a curated list of “top blogs on entrepreneurship” and some of those blogs themselves will show up in the Google search.

**DOUBLE CHECK YOUR FAVORITE PUBLICATIONS:** Do you love reading Inc. Magazine? Almost every printed publication also has a digital publication—a blog—too.

**ASK A FRIEND!** Just like you ask your buddies for what books to read or if they enjoyed a movie, find out what blogs have been catching your friends’ eyes.

**BLOGGER RECOMMENDATIONS:** Once you find a blog that you love, use them as a new resource. Bloggers will often list out the other blogs they love to read in their “About” section—and they also tend to link to them in their posts.

STAY CONNECTED

Once you find the blogs you like, you want to make sure you can find them again! Before blogs truly hit mainstream, most people would just bookmark all of the blogs they liked to read and open a million tabs to find the new posts. Now there are a growing number of resources to help you easily stay on top of your reading. Find one that works for your style:

**A BLOG READER:** The core functionality of a reader allows you to subscribe to your favorite blogs. When you open the reader on your device it will automatically update with all of the new articles published on the blogs you are subscribed to. This means you do not have to manually go check each blog you want to read, which can be an exhausting task. In essence, a blog reader is your own, personally curated, digital magazine. Blog readers can be accessed on your phone through the app store on your phone, tablet, and desktop computer. Some popular free apps for blog readers are Feedly, Flipboard, Newsblur, Inoreader and Selfoss.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Blogs and social media are closely intertwined. After publishing on their blog, most bloggers will post on social media with a link. If you find a blog you like, follow them on social media and click through when you see an article you find interesting.

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER:** Prefer to get content to your inbox instead? Many bloggers also publish a newsletter that highlights the content they published over the week or month. Sign up and you will get regular updates to your inbox.

**WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE BLOGS TO READ?**
**DO YOU BLOG YOURSELF? SHARE IN THE COMMENTS ON THE BLOG!**

**STAY TUNED TO THE BLOG FOR A ROUND-UP OF SOME POPULAR BLOGS!**
LET’S CHAT

“THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES AS A BUSINESS OWNER”

IN A NEW COLUMN CALLED, “LET’S CHAT,” WE DISCUSS TOPICS ON EVERY WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR’S MIND—AND WHAT MAY BE ON DECK TOMORROW. THIS MONTH, WE ASKED THREE KEY LEADERS FROM THE WBENC BOARD TO TACKLE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACED BY BUSINESS OWNERS, INCLUDING SCALING FROM A STARTUP, EMPLOYING GROWTH STRATEGIES, AND TACKLING FINANCING OPTIONS.

MOTERATED BY
LAURA BERRY, FOUNDER AND CEO, OF COGBERRY CREATIVE, LLC, THE CONVERSATION INCLUDES WBENC BOARD CHAIR THERESA HARRISON, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVENESS PROCUREMENT LEADER, EY; WBENC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CHAIR ROZ LEWIS, PRESIDENT, GREATER WOMAN’S BUSINESS COUNCIL; AND WBENC WOMEN’S ENTERPRISE FORUM CHAIR CHERYL SNEAD, FOUNDER, PRESIDENT, AND CEO, BANNEKER INDUSTRIES.

HERE IS AN EXCERPT FROM THE CONVERSATION:

We’ve talked about challenges for startups, but how about the challenges that seem to scale over time? How can startups continue to grow while meeting continual challenges?

THERESA: Within our Entrepreneurial Winning Women program, we’ve honed in on five different ways of how companies can scale. We have an infographic called “Five Ways to Win.” Here they are:

1. The first one is think big and be bold. Setting higher goals. I think a lot of times WBES don’t think big enough. We’re asking: “What’s your ultimate goal? What’s your big goal? What do you want to grow? A hundred million? Two hundred million?”

2. Then you must build a public profile. You’ve got to put yourself in the spotlight, and a lot of times, as women entrepreneurs and as women in the workplace, we don’t build a big profile. We kind of do the work and keep on going. We don’t celebrate our successes. But I think about the visibility in branding yourself, because when you go walk in to get funding, get access to capital, people will know you. It changes the scenario.
3. **Work on the business rather than in it.** Generally, everybody’s the CEO, COO, HR manager, fixer, technology person, etc. You’ve got to work on the business rather than in it. You’ve got to start hiring—like Cheryl says—hiring great people. That’s what you have to do. You have to surround yourself by great people and build a strong complementary team to help you grow the business.

4. **The fourth one is establish a key advisory network.** You’ve got to surround yourself with people who are going to help you get from A to B. That’s just not for today’s growth, it’s also for future growth. How is this team of advisors going to support you and drive that growth?

5. **The last one is evaluate financing options.** I think there’s a lot of challenges around finances. I think WBEs have to do their homework to understand what is all available, and I think sometimes it looks too scary and they put it off—or worse, don’t try to do it.

Generally, you’re talking about growth. If you’re trying to expand, understand the sources of growth capital, understand what a growth strategy is, and get knowledgeable about the process. Understand what the components of a pitch package are so you can present in front of financiers. It’s really important. In order for a company to grow, those are the five things.

**CHERYL:** Theresa, if I can piggyback on a couple of things you said, because I think you hit all of them. [Small business] finance needs change over time, so to your point, you have to understand what those options are. You may start off with just credit card financing. You then go into debt financing. You may have started with angel financing, like your family members, and then you may go on to venture capital. But you need to know that there are different stages of financing and when the right one is right for you.

The same goes with advisors. When Roz talks about building that mentor team, or that advisory team, don’t think that those people are going to be with you forever, because your needs will change. When you start a business, you have certain personal strengths and weaknesses, so you want to make sure that you’re bringing in folks who are going to complement your needs.

As we’re talking about it, you get what you paid for, I think a lot of times—and I know I did this, and I think a lot of women do as well—you look at if I need a controller or a CFO or a sales manager, and you’re like, “Wow, I can’t afford that market rate,” or “I can’t afford that attorney rate or CPA,” the question you really have to ask is, not if you can afford it, but “Can I afford NOT to have that level of quality?” It comes back tenfold.
Roz, do you see any difference on the local or regional level? When you see women trying to scale up, do they understand the benefits of staying local, potentially within their local market, instead of trying to go national?

ROZ: There is always a population of women businesses who see the benefits of scaling their businesses on a local level and are engaged in their Regional Partner Organization (RPO) to gain access to the many resources and information available to them.

Hopefully, our women businesses understand that growth doesn’t always have to be organic and should take a page out of corporate America. They conduct mergers and acquisitions all the time to maintain or increase market share in their own back yards. And consider importing your customers too. I call it “glocalization”; creating a global reach on a local level. It’s looking at your business through a different lens.

I have women businesses who want to stay local and some of them are doing very well. But I would say, “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” Think about the benefits of expansion before your market hits saturation.

CHERYL: I think that’s the benefit that WBENC brings. I also think that that’s the benefit that women in business bring to the table. I’ll use this as an analogy. It may sound stereotypical, but men don’t necessarily talk about partnerships, but women are much more collaborative.

I’ve seen it in the (Women’s Enterprise Forum), where even though you may have a saturation of employment agency or staffing agency businesses, rather than look at each other as competitors, these business owners try to really understand what each of them are better at, and where they can partner. I definitely hear more collaboration among my WBE peers, more so than my small business peers, opportunities to look at how do we work together, as opposed to competing with each other.

WANT MORE? TO READ MORE FROM “LET’S CHAT: THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES AS A BUSINESS OWNER,” VISIT THE WBENC BLOG.
APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 11, 2016

WHAT IS THE WBENC ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM?

• Tailored entrepreneur curriculum for 25 female collegiate students, pitch competition, and mentoring from the most successful Women’s Business Enterprises and America’s largest Fortune 500 companies.
• Exposure to nearly 4,000 attendees at the WBENC National Conference & Business Fair.
• Attendance is FREE for those accepted including conference, travel, lodging and expenses.

APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 11, 2016

To apply, visit http://www.wbenc.org/student-entrepreneur-program or contact Andrew Gaeckle, Senior Manager, Strategic Programs and Operations, at agaeckle@wbenc.org.
OPPORTUNITIES OPEN DOORS: DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR WBEs AND FUTURE WBEs

Although women often minimize discussing ambition, striving for improvement is a useful and admired quality in the entrepreneurial world. At WBENC, we want to help our network pursue their dreams—and open the doors for opportunities to grow their businesses.

In addition to our networking and education at our signature events, like the upcoming Summit & Salute and the National Conference & Business, there are several upcoming opportunities to seek professional development, join a network of women entrepreneurs, or even win an award to elevate your business’ visibility.

Below opportunities are listed in the order of their upcoming application dates.

**FASTEST GROWING WOMEN-OWNED/LED COMPANIES**

For the 9th year, the Women President’s Organization (WPO) is looking for the 50 Fastest Growing Women-Owned/Led Companies with sponsor American Express Global Corporate Payments.

Over the years, several WBENC-Certified WBEs have landed on this list as well as won the top spot. You do not have to be a member of WPO or any other organization to apply. Ranking criteria is based on revenue growth year over year.

**COMPANY ELIGIBILITY**

- Must be privately-owned
- Must be women-owned/led
- Must generate at least $500,000 (USD) in annual revenue as of January 1, 2011
- Must be able to supply tax documents as proof of revenue

**APPLICATION DUE:** February 15, 2016

**LEARN MORE AND APPLY HERE.**

**WBENC STUDENT ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM**

WBENC’s Student Entrepreneur Program (WBENC SEP) fosters growth for the next generation of women-owned businesses through tailored curriculum and mentoring from WBEs and WBENC Corporate and Government Members. In addition to one-on-one mentoring, students will also participate in a live pitch competition set at WBENC’s National Conference & Business Fair, and they will also have experiential learning through off-site visits to corporate campuses and accelerators supported by Shell and our Student Scholar Supporters.

**CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY**

- Student must be enrolled full time in an undergraduate or graduate program at a recognized College or University.
- Student must be studying in one the STEAM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, or Math), or have an entrepreneurial aspiration in a STEAM field.

**PROGRAM COST:** Free to student candidates. Applicants must be physically located in the continental U.S. at time of the program. WBENC SEP does not cover international travel costs.

**APPLICATION DUE:** March 11, 2016

**LEARN MORE HERE.**

*Interested in participating in the program as a WBE or Corporate Sponsor? Email Andrew Gaeckle to learn more about how to get involved, agabeckle@wbenc.org*
WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING LEADERSHIP LAB

Women in Manufacturing™ (WiM) and Case Western Reserve University’s (CWRU) Weatherhead School of Management have collaborated to produce the Leadership Lab for Women in Manufacturing which will provide executive education and training to WiM members in mid-to-high level management roles in manufacturing careers.

The Leadership Lab for Women in Manufacturing program consists of three sessions over eight days on topics including Women in Manufacturing: Bias Barriers and Opportunities; High-impact Leadership for Women in Manufacturing; and Skills and Strategies for Leading the Way Forward in Manufacturing.

PROGRAM COST: starting at $5,000 for a small-to-medium size company, but scholarship opportunities may be available

APPLICATIONS DUE: March 19, 2016

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER HERE.

DOROTHY B. BROTHERS SCHOLARSHIP

WBENC is proud to offer the Dorothy B. Brothers Scholarship to its Women Business Enterprises (WBEs) as an opportunity to receive up to $11,000 in tuition to attend some of the best executive education programs in the country. If awarded the scholarship, the WBE will choose from a list of WBENC approved executive programs to develop their business and themselves professionally to better serve their company.

THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS ARE APPROVED FOR SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS:
• The Tuck-WBENC Executive Program, brought to you by IBM
• Berkeley Center for Executive Education, University of California at Berkeley
• Darden Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Virginia
• Dartmouth Tuck School
• Harvard Business School
• Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University
• Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
• Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California
• McCombs School of Business, University of Texas at Austin
• University of California at Los Angeles, UCLA Anderson

APPLICATION DUE: May 2, 2016

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE SCHOLARSHIP AND REQUIREMENTS HERE.

MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE WBENC BLOG FOR AN UPDATED LIST OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR WBES!

THE TUCK-WBENC EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Brought to you by IBM, the Tuck-WBENC Executive Program is an intensive, five-day executive development program for WBENC-Certified Women’s Business Enterprises (WBEs). It is a concentrated learning experience designed to help WBEs beyond the startup phase to assess, improve, and grow their businesses. WBE attendees form a close network that will continue to provide a source of support, expertise, opportunities, and strategic alliances long after graduation.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY
• Currently certified and in good standing as a Women Business Enterprise by WBENC
• Must be the owner of the company
• Have a minimum of three years’ experience running a business
• Maintain a minimum annual sales volume of $500,000

PROGRAM COST: $3,750 for WBENC-Certified WBEs.

APPLICATIONS DUE: May 2, 2016

LEARN MORE HERE.
Tuck-WBENC Executive Program

brought to you by IBM

WBENC’s Executive Development Program

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS!

JOIN THE OVER 550 WBES WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS INCREDIBLE PROGRAM!

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SPACE IS LIMITED, APPLY NOW! Don’t miss this opportunity to be a part of the next class by attending the 2016 Tuck-WBENC Executive Program!

2016 TUCK-WBENC EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Program Date: September 25-30, 2016  |  Location: Palisades, NY
Application Deadline: MONDAY, MAY 2, 2016
For details and the application: Can be found on the Opportunities tab on www.wbenc.org

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE!

The Dorothy B. Brothers Scholarship eligibility and application information can be found on the Opportunities tab on www.wbenc.org.

Questions? Contact Lindsay Burger at Tuck@wbenc.org or by phone at 202.872.5515 ext: 8102
of the more than 7,000 distinct languages around the world, one of the most difficult is unofficial: legalese. Eartha Jean Johnson, Esq., President and CEO of WBENC-Certified LegalWatch, has been easing the language barrier between the corporate and legal worlds for nearly 20 years.

Her award-winning, corporate liability training and professional staffing company “assists executives and front-line managers in navigating the risks and consequences of improper communication and documentation.” LegalWatch’s training includes crosscutting topics such as gender and cultural sensitivity; contracts and procurement; and risk mitigation.

Because 90 percent of corporate lawsuits are based in the U.S., increasing globalization is opening up opportunities for litigation. Johnson is leveraging that growth to continue addressing liability across borders.

“A lot of companies are international or have an international component,” said Johnson. “A company may have litigation in the United States, but they may get documents from international countries—which are used for regulatory issues, which are also issues for lawsuits.”
Johnson’s company is focused on addressing two population gaps with her corporate liability training—U.S.-based companies with international offices and foreign-born employees wanting to work in the United States.

“Most of the time, I’m training the contractors, not necessarily the big oil companies, and the need for legal services will come up,” says Johnson. “I always say our slogan really is ‘Call us before you know you need us.’ And the reason is, far too often, it’s only when someone has been sued that they start to appreciate the implications. Even then, they are only doing damage control.”

While practicing in-house litigation at Exxon (prior to the Exxon-Mobil merger), Johnson discovered preventable employee communications were frequently the issues that left them liable. She left the company to start LegalWATCH in 1997. In the same year, Johnson joined the foundational WBENC network through her involvement with the Houston Women’s Business Council and helped to establish and edit the bylaws of the Women’s Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA). She certified LegalWATCH in 2010.

“WBENC is an equalizer,” says Johnson. “I’m from the Bronx. I came from parents that worked primarily, for somebody else—with not a lot of education. So, they couldn’t give me a lot of advice or a lot of guidance. This organization helps to remediate the fact that I didn’t have those connections. It’s like having a family that can make those introductions for you.”

Johnson believes that WBENC allows her to be in the right position for unique opportunities. Through connections with WBENC’s Corporate Members, she hopes to continue to educate and protect WBEs in the U.S. and abroad. LegalWATCH’s notable clients include CITGO, ConocoPhillips, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Halliburton, Siemens, and Wal-Mart.

On a local level, Johnson continues to be involved with WBEA—providing thought leadership and helping establish the Annual Golf Classic & Silent Auction. Nationally, she sits on WBENC’s Women’s Enterprise Forum and attends the WBENC National Conference & Business Fair, as well as other signature events.

“I joined WBENC so I could be certified,” says Johnson. “But I am also one of those social butterflies, I love talking to people—and I end up helping them. I would attend the conferences and provide legal advice or review rental agreements, as a volunteer. Because I would help out, our corporate members would also support me.”

From helping to establish WBENC to helping to establish LegalWATCH, Johnson’s membership has truly come full-circle.
A goal that is always important is keeping my hand on the heartbeat of diversity—staying relevant and up to date on all available opportunities, policies, and news regarding supplier diversity, small business, and certification,” says Faris. “I want my readers to use our magazines as resources and links for connecting with the corporations and government agencies that seek to do business with them.”

As DiversityComm, Inc.’s, founder and publisher, Faris sees DIVERSEability as more of a movement than just a publication. A movement, she says, worthy of “celebrating advancements and achievements and showcasing the positive images of all people with all types of abilities.”

“People with disabilities make up the largest minority group in the U.S.,” says Faris. “We hope to encourage service-disabled and abled communities to start their own businesses, to get certified, and to be successful as disability-owned business enterprises (DOBEs).”

Published every April and October, DIVERSEability’s first issue will include a range of articles, such as:

• “Five Reasons to Hire the Abled."
• “How to Travel the World in a Wheelchair."
• “The Importance of Getting a Diversity Business Certification."
• “What is Disability Inclusion?”

DIVERSEability is Faris’ sixth publication, adding to DiversityComm’s existing publications: Black

Diversity has been a passion of Faris’ since she was young. While living in apartheid-era South Africa, Faris was first exposed to the effects of segregation. With her Arab-American background, and having grown up in various countries, she was taught to appreciate the importance of diversity.

“Our magazines have always focused on diversity and inclusion, and when we started 25 years ago, the big push was equal opportunity and affirmative action,” says Faris. “A few years later, supplier diversity became the driving issue, and many companies were just beginning to establish supplier diversity programs. It was at this point that I learned about WBENC and the importance of supplier diversity, certification and small business equal opportunity.”

Since getting certified in 2008, Faris has been active in the WBENC network both regionally and nationally, believing in the power of education and networking. In 2013, she was honored as a guest speaker at the WBENC National Conference & Business Fair in Minneapolis and was a Women’s Business Enterprise Council-West’s (WBEC-West) Advocate of the Year nominee.

“I feel, as a certified WBE, that it is my responsibility to mentor and bring the power of certification to the next generation of woman business owners,” says Faris. “We are always actively seeking to do business with other certified companies, and we highlight corporations that choose to work with certified business owners on our Best of the Best lists.”

In addition to attending WBENC national conferences, she partners with over 200 diversity-focused organizations, including RPOs such as Astra Women’s Business Alliance (ASTRA); partners of WBENC such as the Diversity Alliance, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), and the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO); and sister certifying organizations such as the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), National Veteran Small Business Engagement (NVSBE), and the U.S. Business Leadership Network (USBLN) and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC).

“My primary goal is to educate, inform and inspire uncertified business owners and to make them aware of the benefits that come with being certified,” says Faris. “We want all business owners—veterans, people with disabilities, LGBT, women, and people of all diverse backgrounds—to become a stronger force competing globally and increasing our national economy.”

www.diversitycomm.net
ESSENTIALS - WBENC COLLECTION
Make a statement with the premier line of WBENC signature products. Engage our community and share the WBENC brand when you travel. See the WBENC Collection during the National Conference & Business Fair to select items that fit your personal style. You can also view and purchase additional products today online at shopwbenc.com.

- Pebble Grain Zippered Portfolio W/ Calculator
- Executive Rhinestone Pens
- Sling Backpacks
- Wine Carrier & Purse
- Alexis Nylon Purse Style
- Bling Mugs
- 16 Oz Tervis Tumbler
- Tervis Water Bottle
A little over a year ago, she was in the right place to launch Create For Retail, a division of Creative Resources, focused on building a bridge between promotional and consumer products.

“With Create For Retail, we’ve evolved to be the crossover between promotional and retail spaces,” says Schweitzer. “We source exciting new products, make them affordable for the mass market, and apply our innovative blend of packaging, branding, and distribution.”

In June 2015, Create For Retail launched their NOD product line, featuring items available under $10 as impulse buys. Curated into trendy categories, such as Inner Geek, Life Hacker, Worker Bee, and Kitchy Host, the NOD line focuses on providing consumers with “products they didn’t know they needed.” Named after the universal human nod of recognition, the NOD line is now working with retailers such as Target, Walgreens, and Bed, Bath, & Beyond.

“We want our products to be fun, witty, and appealing—but we don’t compromise on quality,” says Jenna Pugh, Create For Retail Vice President.
“It started with developing relationships and streamlining processes with manufacturers in China years ago, and we still go overseas to ensure we source authentically.”

Although Create For Retail has already experienced success, one of Schweitzer’s biggest challenges remains how to differentiate both divisions to decision makers on paper, including at the upcoming WBENC signature events like the Summit & Salute in Phoenix from March 22 to 24.

“Matchmaking is such a great opportunity, and a critical piece for both brands. Meeting face to face allows us to showcase how innovative and different each division is,” says Schweitzer. “Without these meetings, we risk getting lumped into only promotional products. Create for Retail may be a start-up, but 21 years of experience with a full-service agency like Creative Resources is pivotal to our growth.”

Pugh, who has almost a decade of retail expertise, has also worked on developing relationships not only with diversity teams at targeted companies, but also buying teams.

“We have the Woman Owned logo on all of our products because we are proud to be a women owned company. I’m often selling to women on the buying teams, so we have great conversations about diversity—but we need to continue building awareness about the potential of Woman Owned products in the marketplace.”

Schweitzer already has a strategy to help WBENC Corporate Members and WBEs alike experience the crossover between promotional products and retail merchandising. As a 2016 National Conference & Business Fair (NCBF) sponsor again this year, Schweitzer is excited for an upgraded, expanded booth space that will showcase Create for Retail’s new 2016 NOD product line and their dedication to creating irresistible merchandise.

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“Your phone is not going to ring just because you have WBENC Certification; you have to show up in a big way,” says Schweitzer. “As a NCBF sponsor, I’ve always seen the value of corporate connections, and I also know how much you can learn from getting your brand in front of other women.”

On March 3, she will be honored at the 10th Anniversary of Women’s Business Development Council (WBDC)-Minnesota celebration with the 2016 WBE of Year. Schweitzer credits her local RPO with getting her involved on the national level of WBENC. Her role on the 2013 NCBF host committee in Minneapolis was a turning point in her relationship with WBENC, and she now serves on the national Women’s Enterprise Forum.

“The last couple years have been pivotal in my growth,” says Schweitzer. “From formalizing an ownership agreement with my business partner Mark Waldorf of seven years to launching Create for Retail and expanding our services, it has all been about finding the right time to accomplish the next step.”

www.createforretail.com
www.acreativeresource.com

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ANNOUNCING SUMMIT & SALUTE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

JEN WELTER

Dr. Jen Welter has redefined the meaning of “leading lady,” paving the way for women and girls into new territories. Welter became well-known last summer when she became the first female to coach in the NFL, and that was just the most recent of a long line of groundbreaking achievements. We’re excited to announce her keynote at WBENC’s Summit & Salute in Phoenix, Arizona from March 22 to 24.

Jen Welter became the first woman to play a non-kicking position on a men’s professional football team when she played linebacker for the Texas Revolution. And before she became the Inside Linebacker Coaching Intern for the Arizona Cardinals in the summer of 2015, she was the first woman to coach in the Indoor Football League and helped coach the Texas Revolution to the most successful season in franchise history.

Holding a doctoral degree in psychology and a master’s degree in sport psychology, Welter now has 18 years of experience in collegiate and professional athletics as well as fitness and sports advising. Jen holds two gold medals for Team USA at the International Federation of American Football’s Women’s World Championship.

Her background gives her a unique perspective on coaching that focuses on each individual and brings a personal approach in an environment dominated by a focus on the win. Welter quickly became known for her ability to form bonds with the players and for her tendency to write personal notes to players and coaches before each game.

Welter knows the importance of hard work, determination, and inspiration for achieving goals. As a reminder of how much it means to her to play football, she carries the uncashed check for $12.00 that she earned in her first year as a professional football player—one dollar per game! She also knows the importance of having a strong network with the motto: “You can’t blaze a trail alone, otherwise you’ll get stuck in the woods.”

Welter grew up in a time when it wasn’t even possible for girls to dream of coaching in the NFL. But at 37, she made that her reality and she is inspiring that dream in young girls. She is opening the door for women across the league and in other male-dominated industries. She now believes that anything is possible:

“If men in the NFL can be receptive to a female coach, then there’s no place that dynamic can’t occur,” said Welter in a recent interview.

REGISTER TODAY FOR SUMMIT & SALUTE!
HAVEN’T REGISTERED YET?

TOP 5 REASONS TO ATTEND SUMMIT & SALUTE

1. NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK. It’s not what you know, it’s who you know. And it’s not really who you know, it’s who knows you! Take advantage of the robust face-to-face networking opportunities at Summit & Salute.

2. KNOW WHAT’S HOT NOW. Industry-focused sessions on best practices keep you on the leading edge of your industry.

3. MEET THE BRASS. This is where you can find those executives you’ve been hoping to connect with.

4. HAVE FUN. Don’t miss out on our celebration of some of our network’s highest achievers.

5. PHOENIX IS A BEAUTIFUL TOWN in March, so take some time to reflect on your business and go home renewed.

SEE YOU IN PHOENIX!

TOP 5 TIPS FOR PLANNING FOR SUMMIT & SALUTE

1. GET PREPARED! Visit us at summit.wbenc.org to review the schedule and site details. Know who the Top Corporations and Sponsors are. Arriving prepared sets you up for a productive week.

2. GET CONNECTED! Download the mobile app and stay connected to the latest and greatest Summit & Salute info. And while you’re in there—make sure your information is available and accurate—this is your opportunity to make your contact information available to all attendees.

3. GET YOUR BUSINESS CARDS READY! Yup, people still want them so make sure you don’t run out right when you’re on the verge of your next business deal or great partnership.

4. GET UP TO DATE! Make sure capability statement truly reflects your current capacity. And when you print them, go ahead and staple a business card on there. You want to make sure those two items stick together!

5. GET ENGAGED! Join the conversation on Twitter and Facebook so you never miss a thing.

REGISTER TODAY FOR SUMMIT & SALUTE!
Q: What’s the most important hiring decision you’ve made?

Answer: At Coranet, we’re now using the PXT assessment with great success. The PXT assessment addresses: can the person do the job; how will the person do the job; and will the person want to do the job. With PXT, we build a performance model for each job, find excellent matches for that role, and improve performance and retention.

Margaret Marcucci
CEO and President, CorAnet Corp.
www.coranet.com

My philosophy is to hire people who are smarter than I am in a specific area. This does basically two things: First, it allows my company to move forward and be positioned for growth. Second, it frees me up from some of the day-to-day, so that I can focus on growth strategy, business development, and overall management of my company.

Peggy Del Fabro
CEO, M. Davis & Sons, Inc.
www.mdavisinc.com
Personality and behavior assessment testing is one of our most powerful interviewing tools. A resume can tell you about their skills, but a personality assessment can speak to their behaviors.

Kimberly Lawton Koon
President, Lawton Connect
lawtonconnect.com

Hiring a proficient controller made a huge difference in our company. We had doubled our revenue and knew we were fine on cash flow, but had no idea where we stood from a profitability standpoint for various business units. Making this investment gave us better understanding of profitability by division, the ability to set budgets, and importantly, plan resource needs for growth.

Patti Massey
President and Founder, MYCA Material Handling
www.mycahandling.com

Two years ago, making the transition from a finance controller (retired) to hiring a Chief Financial Officer (CFO). I didn’t realize until I brought this experienced, dynamic and forward-thinking woman on board what I was missing.

A CFO not only does the job of a controller (past and present financial reporting and cash management), but looks forward—strategically positioning you and your company on the right track. I wish I realized this years ago!

Cheryl W. Snead
President and CEO, Benneker Industries, Inc.
www.banneker.com

For me, it is not about any single hire, but rather about building a world-class team. I believe in always hiring the best. Settling would have a negative impact on my high-achieving team. We keep a position open until we find great candidates. I am proud of each of my team members.

Hannah Kain
President and CEO, ALOM
www.alom.com

The most important hiring decision I made was just last year. We have grown to a size where we need more financial expertise and made the decision to hire our first Chief Financial Officer. Because the CFO’s role is so broad and effects the entire organization it’s critical to put the right individual in place. For me it was important that the person have the ability to work with individuals with minimal financial acumen as well as those that are more familiar with financial information. I went through a diligent hiring process and included the other members of our ownership team. We came to a consensus and are very pleased with the hire we made for this role. Having a dedicated full time CFO on board has helped position our company for continued growth and allowed me more time to spend with customers and on business development.

Rachel Sanchez
CEO, Prestige Maintenance USA
www.prestigeusa.net

It doesn’t matter how educated or experienced someone is, if they do not have the right attitude, it will not be a successful collaboration. My mantra is “Hire for attitude, train for skills.”

Jennifer Maier
CEO, WDS, Inc.
www.womends.com

The most important hiring decision I’ve made is hiring an assistant! I now have someone who can help keep me organized and on track with tasks.

Susan Michel
Founder and CEO, Glen Eagle
www.gleneagleadv.com

As a rapidly growing company, we developed a three year plan for hiring and cross-training. The leadership team determined that when we discovered a talented individual whose skills and expertise we would need, we would hire the individual immediately, rather than wait until the need was critical. Since the implementation of that policy, we have increased staff by approximately 50% with no loss of productivity.

Joan LaGrasse
CEO, Imagen, LLC
www.imagenanything.com

Upcoming Question:
“What advice would you give your ‘younger self’ about business?”

Send your answer to wbenc-news@wbenc.org. Your response could appear on these pages. Please limit your answer to 60 words.
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The Bracelet as individual as you are.

WBENC has created the Legacy Bracelet as a statement of your participation and ongoing support of our organization.

Each beautiful hand-crafted sterling silver bead represents different aspects of WBENC that have made it the progressive and respected organization that it is today.

Whether you are new to certification, membership or supplier diversity and women’s entrepreneurship, you can build your own beautiful piece of jewelry that will tell the story of how you’re engaged with WBENC.

Isn’t it time to start your Legacy®?