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JULY 3, 2023

LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM & AWARDS 2023

## *Honorees & Finalists*



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## Letter from the Publisher



This year's 2023 Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards, which took place Wednesday June 28th at the Intercontinental Los Angeles Downtown, was a half day event of inspiration, education, and recognition. The top businesswomen in Los Angeles shared their wisdom through a series of dynamic discussions during the breakfast symposium covering topics such as making a mark in your respective industry, achieving effective leadership, expanding the talent pool, work/life balance, supporting our nonprofit community, supporting other businesswomen, and much more!

The afternoon portion was a spirited luncheon awards program where we honored outstanding achievements by women who make a difference throughout Los Angeles.

With hundreds of incredible nominees, there are clearly many accomplished and impactful leaders to draw inspiration from. This year, we named honorees in the following categories: CEO of the Year; Executive of the Year; Innovator of the Year; Emerging Woman-Owned Business Leader Award; Champion of Women Award; Mentor of the Year; Community Impact Advocate Award; Woman to Watch Award; and NextGen Woman of the Year.

We honored achievements by a number of powerful women who have made a difference throughout Los Angeles. Each of these remarkable honorees and finalists are described in these pages.

Many thanks to our sponsors, who help to make this event possible, and once again, congratulations to the honorees – Los Angeles area women who “lead by example,” successfully blending effective business vision with a passionate commitment to positively making a difference, both in the world of business and in the communities they serve.

Best regards,

Josh Schimmels  
Publisher & CEO

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## CEO OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### JOHNESE SPISSO

President, UCLA Health; CEO, UCLA Hospital System;  
Associate Vice Chancellor, UCLA Health Sciences

Johnese Spisso has been president of UCLA Health, CEO of UCLA Hospital System and associate vice chancellor of UCLA Health Sciences since 2016. With 30 years of experience, she is a nationally recognized academic health care leader, overseeing operations of UCLA's hospitals, clinics and the health system's regional outreach strategy.

Spisso led UCLA's expansion to provide convenient access to care throughout Southern California, with more than 250 clinics recording more than 3.1 million outpatient visits in 2021. In 2021, UCLA Health announced its plans to transform a former medical center into a state-of-the-art neuropsychiatric hospital that will help address the region's unmet need for behavioral health services. The new hospital will meet the state's highest standards for acute psychiatric hospital buildings and will include comprehensive behavioral health care services for adult, geriatric, child, adolescent and intensive care patients, as well as crisis care. In addition to expanding inpatient capacity, an adjacent medical office building will be renovated to expand, relocate and optimize outpatient behavioral health programs and clinic research and educational programs associated with the licensed neuropsychiatric hospital and dedicated psychiatric emergency services.

Spisso also led collaborations with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health to expand the age range of Medi-Cal patients that UCLA Health is able to treat as inpatients. Historically, Medi-Cal only covered hospitalization of patients younger than 21. As of October 2022, UCLA Health is able to provide inpatient treatment to Medi-Cal patients of all ages. This is a major milestone in UCLA Health's ongoing quest for greater access to health care.



### JESSAMYN DAVIS

FINALIST  
Co-CEO  
RIOS

With over 20 years of experience in growing businesses in Los Angeles and California, Jessamyn Davis has held a variety of roles in strategy, finance, and management for middle-market companies across diverse industries such as biotech, design, manufacturing, and entertainment. She has played a critical role in building infrastructure for growing companies and leading them towards institutional-scale ownership by employing effective team-building techniques, business development strategies, debt structuring, relocation, operational analysis, and process improvement.

For the past eight years, Davis has been instrumental in driving the growth of RIOS, a multi-disciplinary design collective headquartered in Los Angeles whose local portfolio of projects include Grand Park, ROW DTLA, and creative content and entertainment spaces for clients such as GoodRx, Sony, Universal, and Fox. She has led the growth of the firm from a single office with 75 employees to nearly 300 professionals spread across seven global offices.



### TRACY HERNANDEZ

FINALIST  
Founding CEO  
Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed)

Tracy Hernandez is the founding CEO of the Los Angeles County Business Federation, widely known as "BizFed," a nonprofit alliance of business networks that advocates for policies and projects that create jobs and grow the economy. Hernandez launched the grassroots alliance in 2008. Today, BizFed unites 235 organizations representing 420,000 companies employing five million people in Southern California. Its sister organization, BizFed Central Valley, unites another 80 groups.

Hernandez leads a team of grassroots policy advocates at BizFed who are fearless in speaking truth to power. They are small, but mighty, and take on big challenges to tackle pressing issues at all levels of government and across all policy areas. Their efforts have led to tangible improvements for businesses, employees, and residents throughout Los Angeles County. Under Hernandez's leadership, BizFed helped restaurants secure COVID relief grants and fought to reduce regulatory burdens, streamline permitting, and allow outdoor dining.



### THERESA EDY KIENE

FINALIST  
CEO  
Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles

As CEO at Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, Theresa Edy Kiene leads the second largest of 111 Girl Scout councils in the nation, with 50,537 total members, 150 employees, 18 properties and six retail stores. An experienced executive with strategic planning and change management expertise, Kiene provides direction and vision for the development and achievement of the GSGLA's mission to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. She is a lifetime Girl Scout herself.

Kiene came to GSGLA from Fuller Seminary, where she was vice president of strategic planning and change management. Six months after accepting the CEO position, COVID-19, civil unrest, mental health and learning loss challenges assaulted the youth and families of Greater Los Angeles. As a result of Kiene's quick action and unwavering leadership, GSGLA is thriving in 2023.



### MYRA NOURMAND

FINALIST  
Principal Agent and Luxury Real Estate Agent  
Nourmand & Associates

As the principal of Nourmand & Associates, Myra Nourmand plays a crucial role in the agency's success. With over 36 years of experience, she manages client and business relationships, mentors agents, and assists in the development and direction of the brokerage's strategic mission and long-term vision. Her dedication to mentoring and extensive knowledge make her one of the agency's most valuable assets.

Nourmand's expertise and connections have earned her the nickname "First Lady of Beverly Hills" in the real estate industry. Her clientele includes some of LA's most prominent figures, who seek her out to close deals on iconic properties. Most recently, she was entrusted with the iconic \$16.955 Bugsy Siegel Estate in Beverly Hills. Additionally, in this past year, she closed the highest sale in the Southwest Beverly Hills and the second-highest in the neighborhood's history at the time.



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## Celebrating leaders in the community

In every community, there are leaders who set the course for positive change through their vision and guidance. Their work not only supports local needs, but inspires others to do the same.

**Los Angeles Business Journal's 2023 Woman's Leadership Symposium Honorees, we celebrate your achievements.**

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EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR HONOREE

## RAINY HAKE AUSTIN

President  
 The Agency

**A**s president of The Agency, Rainy Hake Austin leads a global real estate firm responsible for representing buyers and sellers of the world's most distinguished properties. In her role as president, Austin oversees The Agency's residential real estate brokerage arm, The Agency New Development Group and The Agency's internal teams and operations, including its boutique in-house creative agency, which comprises design, PR, branding, social media, advertising, web design and digital marketing specialists who serve the firm's 1,800 luxury real estate professionals in over 80 offices across the US, Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean and Europe.

Appointed president in October of 2020, Austin has been a welcome addition to The Agency's executive team, especially in the midst of navigating a global real estate firm through the complex housing market over and economic environment over the past years. While the majority of Austin's full-time professional experience is concentrated in leading operations and branding for the luxury real estate industry, she also has provided invaluable strategic business and marketing strategies to every region the company operates.

Since joining as president of The Agency, Austin has significantly aided in the strategic growth and vision of the company. In 2022, she helped the company's global expansion reach new heights, entering 24 new markets this past year from New York to Seattle and Austin to Atlanta. In 2022 alone, the firm welcomed hundreds of agents and opened a record-breaking number of new offices in multiple different countries.

**UCLA** Health

Congratulations to all the recipients of the

# Los Angeles Business Journal Women Leadership Awards



Including CEO of the Year **Johnese Spisso, MPA**

President, UCLA Health, CEO, UCLA Hospital System  
 Associate Vice Chancellor, UCLA Health Sciences

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**HALÉ BEHZADI**

FINALIST

*Managing Director and North America Head  
 Citi Private Bank*

**H**alé Behzadi is the North America region head of Citi Private Bank and a member of the Citi Private Bank Global Leadership Team. She has direct responsibility for the private banking business across the United States and Canada. Prior to joining Citigroup and establishing the Private Bank office in Beverly Hills in 2002, Behzadi enjoyed a distinguished career with Bank of America as a senior vice president directing a team of private banking professionals in Beverly Hills.

Behzadi has built her career in Los Angeles for nearly four decades, all of which has been in wealth management. She has championed diversity and advancement of women throughout her career. In 2022, she established Citi Private Bank's Women In Wealth client segment through the creation of a board of client advisors tasked with forming strategies to identify, attract and serve women wealth creators.



**KAVITHA BHATIA**

FINALIST

*President and Chair, Prime Healthcare Foundation;  
 Chief Medical Officer of Strategy, Prime Healthcare*

**D**r. Kavitha Bhatia serves as the president and chair of the board of the Prime Healthcare Foundation, a 501(c)3 public charity, and chief medical officer of strategy for Prime Healthcare, one of the nation's leading health systems with 45 hospitals and more than 300 outpatient locations in 14 states.

Dr. Bhatia leads the development and implementation of strategic initiatives that advance the mission and long-term success of Prime Healthcare. Dr. Bhatia works with corporate and hospital leaders to prioritize system-wide value creation and implement strategic initiatives to ensure Prime's continued operational, financial, and clinical success. She is also recognized as a leader who is adept at building processes and systems. Dr. Bhatia's leadership and vision have helped Prime build the infrastructure to leverage its unique value and national scale. She facilitates visionary, out-of-the-box thinking and has led teams toward transformative change in nearly every area of the organization.



**ISOBEL LINCOLN**

FINALIST

*SVP, Human Resources  
 Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield*

**I**sobel Lincoln began her career with Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield in 2020 as vice president of human resources and talent development before being promoted to her current position of senior vice president of human resources at URW. She has spent her career building teams and implementing strategic and creative solutions for companies in tech, entertainment and finance industries including Warner Bros., Netflix, The TCW Group, Universal Music Group and 21st Century Fox.

Lincoln started with URW in January 2020 just as the company was beginning its evolution from legacy shopping mall owner and operator to creator and operator of multi-faceted mixed-use lifestyle destinations. She and her team supported the business not only through this transition but also through COVID by designing and implementing COVID protocols, supporting employees through furloughs, energizing staff, and helping to build a sense of trust during this time.



**JULIE MILLER-PHIPPS**

FINALIST

*Regional President, Southern California and Hawaii Market  
 Kaiser Permanente*

**J**ulie Miller-Phipps leads the hospital and health plan operations for Kaiser Permanente's Southern California and Hawaii markets, and partners with the leadership of the Southern California and Hawaii Permanente Medical Groups to improve the health of over five million members and their communities. Combined, the Southern California and Hawaii markets have over 82,000 employees collaborating with 8,600 Permanente Medical Group physicians to deliver high-quality, affordable care through 16 hospitals and 264 medical offices. In the Los Angeles Basin, that includes seven medical centers.

After 46 years and 12 positions within Kaiser Permanente, Miller-Phipps has announced plans to retire in July. She leaves a legacy of determination and leading from the heart that has resulted in tangible business outcomes. In addition, Miller-Phipps oversees funding and grants for programs that cultivate improvements in the economic, social, and environmental factors that strengthen the quality of health in Southern California and Hawaii.



**MARY OSAKO**

FINALIST

*Vice Chancellor, Strategic Communications  
 UCLA*

**M**ary Osako is the first person to lead UCLA's communications and marketing efforts as a vice chancellor, serving in the role since September 2019. She oversees the university's marketing and communications and helps maintain and enhance UCLA's reputation as U.S News & World Report's #1 ranked public university.

Osako has more than 20 years of experience leading complex communications efforts at some of the most innovative Fortune 500 companies in the world. In her role at UCLA, she has developed initiatives to maintain and enhance its reputation as a world-class research university and ushered in new ways of communicating its story. She has also strengthened marketing, communications and events across UCLA by instilling a commitment to collaboration for campus professionals. This is embodied in a weekly collaboration meeting where staff discuss updates from their departments, opportunities for collaboration and how to communicate around pressing issues.

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## INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### KALIKA YAP

CEO  
Citrus Studios Inc.

For the past 24 years, Kalika Yap has been a concurrent serial entrepreneur whose businesses and community engagement have focused on helping women and their businesses grow. In 1999, she created her first company Citrus Studios, a digital marketing agency. In 2006, she invented and patented the Luxe Link portable purse holder that solved the age-old problem that allows purses to hang off the side of the table at bars and restaurants. Orange and Bergamot was created in 2008 – an interactive design agency that focuses on helping women-owned businesses with branding, design and website marketing.

Yap was elected as one of the rare female presidents in the Los Angeles chapter of the Entrepreneurs' Organization. In short, she has committed herself and her businesses to serving her community by helping women take their businesses to the next level.

When not running multiple companies, Yap is a judge and mentor for the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), which helps young Los Angeles girls in underserved communities take control of their lives through entrepreneurship. She is also on the Women's Entrepreneurship Day Committee and AAPI United Task Force under the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti and Bass. Yap also volunteers as an entrepreneur in residence at the Harvard-Westlake School, mentoring students in their business ideas.



### COOPER HARRIS

FINALIST  
CEO  
Klickly

Cooper Harris is a serial technology entrepreneur, author, and speaker who currently serves as founder and CEO of Klickly, a VC-backed, award-winning commerce-enablement platform headquartered in Santa Monica. Harris built Klickly with the goal of empowering the world's most innovative eCommerce brands. The Klickly platform allows brands access to commerce technology that previously was only available to enterprise companies with huge budgets. Additionally, by building a proprietary, "buyable" ad (or "smart checkout") Harris hoped to allow brands to reach a wider audience and consumers to check out faster, anywhere online.

The challenge of building first-of-its-kind technology, as a female founder, was daunting; nevertheless, after building a world-class tech team and issuing multiple patents, Harris took the product to market and now has successfully launched with almost 2,500 brands, helping empower them to compete with the large incumbents in the space.



### MAJA MATARIC

FINALIST

*Chan Soon-Shiong Chaired and Distinguished Professor of Computer Science, Neuroscience, and Pediatrics University of Southern California*

Dr. Maja Mataric is the Chan Soon-Shiong chaired and distinguished professor in the Computer Science Department, with appointments in the Department of Pediatrics Neuroscience Program at USC, founding director of the USC Robotics and Autonomous Systems Center (RASC), co-director of the USC Robotics Research Lab, and the lead of the Viterbi K-12 STEM Center.

Dr. Mataric is a recipient of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics & Engineering Mentoring (PAEMEM) from President Obama. Her research has been supported by NSF, NIH, DARPA, ONR, industry, and foundations. In addition to her numerous high-impact research publications, Dr. Mataric is the author of a popular introductory robotics textbook, "The Robotics Primer," is on the editorial board of the ACM Transactions on Human-Robot Interaction. Dr. Mataric's research in the past two decades has been in the new field of socially assistive robotics (SAR) she pioneered.



### PAULETTE PANTOJA

FINALIST

*Founder and CEO Blu Digital Group*

Paulette Pantoja is a visionary leader recognized for her innovative use of technology within the film and TV digital supply chain industry. As the CEO of Blu Digital Group, she has built a global media technology company that provides end-to-end digital media software and services to the OTT, broadcast, and video streaming industries.

Pantoja founded Blu Digital Group in 2007 as the first dedicated Blu-ray disc testing facility in the film and TV home entertainment industry. Since then, she has led the company's expansion into media processing and software licensing of its patented and proprietary cloud-based solutions for digital distribution workflows. With a focus on quality, speed, scalability, and efficiency, Blu Digital Group's award-winning cloud-based software leverages AI and automation to set the standard for digital media distribution. Under Pantoja's leadership, Blu Digital Group has grown to over 200 full-time employees and has facilities in multiple countries.



### MERCY STEENWYK

FINALIST

*CEO and President ForensisGroup Inc.*

More than 32 years and 30,000 cases since she launched her innovative concept, Mercy Steenwyk's ForensisGroup continues to support attorneys and private and government agencies by providing consultants and expert witnesses in nearly every discipline. Testimony from ForensisGroup experts has helped keep lead out of drinking water, oil out of oceans, dangerous chemicals out of food, and has led to safer skyscrapers and more reliable power grids, while preventing intellectual property theft. ForensisGroup expert witnesses have been used in some of the largest, most complex cases including one with over \$40 billion at stake.

Steenwyk continues to lead her team in the ever changing and evolving landscape of business and technology with the incorporation and exploration of AI. She is steadfast in her continuous effort to evolve with the changing work style and behavior of the new generation of clients.

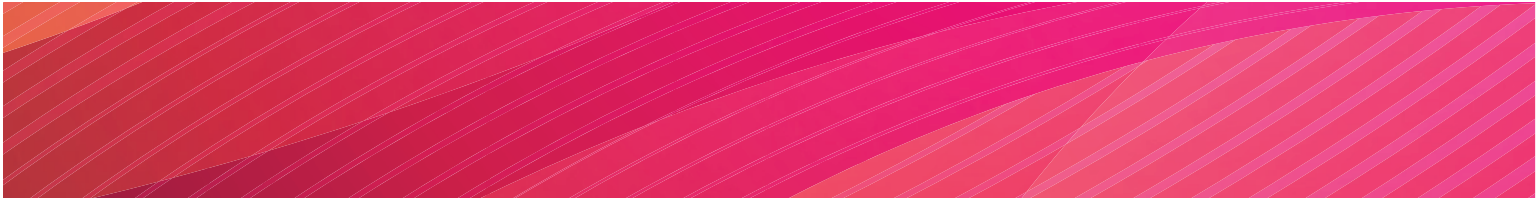


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EMERGING WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS LEADER HONOREE

**KAYLA SINGER**

CEO  
 Luna CX

**K**ayla Singer began her career at PwC in the Deals Practice, focusing on M&A valuation and strategic value consulting for Fortune 500 clients across multiple sectors. Singer presented valuation models to some of the largest companies in the world. She can take complicated financial concepts and translate them into language anyone can understand. She then transitioned to management consulting. Singer has traveled to 40 countries, immersing herself in a wide variety of cultures and types of people.

Recognizing her love for building teams and outsourcing, Singer started her own firm to do just that in September of last year. Her company is called Luna CX and Singer is growing her business and hopes to have a 500-person company in the next five years. She specializes in building incredible teams and helping her clients become more successful and improve their service practices.

On top of her business roles, Singer is also a principal in her family office with more than 70 fund investments across real estate, private equity, venture capital, and debt. The office also has several co-investments with funds and more than 70 direct investments. She helps bring in investment opportunities and is part of the team that provides advisory services for the leaders of the portfolio companies which can benefit. She excels at identifying and solving business problems and bringing in new work, clients and managing them. Singer can tackle any problem you put in front of her and is a champion for helping other women succeed.



**GIOVANNA BRASFIELD**  
 FINALIST  
 CEO  
 Brasfield & Associates

**D**r. Giovanna Brasfield, commonly known as “Dr. G,” has many significant highlights in her career in construction leading diversity & inclusion for large general contractors both in commercial and civil construction. Brasfield recently served as the highest ranking African American in the US and Canada for Flatiron’s Southwest Division as the vice president of project diversity & inclusion leading contract commitments for the Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA)’s Automated People Mover Project (APM) for small business engagement, local workforce inclusion, and youth education.

In October 2021, Brasfield has taken her knowledge and experience to consult with her own DEI practice “Brasfield & Associates.” As a consultant, she serves more firms within the construction industry with her expertise in DEI and aiding companies with project pursuits in meeting contractual requirements that engage women, diverse businesses, local workforce, and youth engagement.



**DIANA RAMOS SANTIAGO CARTER**  
 FINALIST  
 CEO  
 Arykas and Ybots Public Relations Firm

**D**iana Ramos Santiago Carter is an experienced chief executive officer with a demonstrated history of working in the entertainment industry. She is a US Army Veteran, high-powered Hollywood film producer, talent manager, casting director, distribution rep, and senior public relations analyst. Carter is the CEO & founder of Arykas & Ybots PR based out of Hollywood with offices in New York City and soon London.

Carter dedicates her time to understanding what works and what doesn’t when it comes to brand acceleration and innovation. She and her firm specialize in talent publicity and branding, with an approach that provides businesses with the extra adrenaline shot they need. Carter and her creative team take the time to understand each brand and finding the most effective way to convey the brand’s messaging to its audience from strategy to implementation.



**CHRISTINE MCKAY**  
 FINALIST  
 CEO  
 Venn Negotiation

**A**s the CEO and founder of Venn Negotiation, Christine McKay has helped hundreds of small and mid-sized companies across more than 50 countries negotiate more effectively. She has negotiated with nearly half of the Fortune 500 and helped her clients improve broken business relationships, grow revenue, and avoid catastrophic failures. She passionately empowers entrepreneurs and business owners to ask for more of what they want and showing them how to get it.

McKay is also the author of “Why Not Ask: A Conversation about Getting More,” which provides insights into her unique life story as a single mother from rural Montana who managed to earn an MBA from Harvard Business School, her subsequent career and the negotiation lessons she learned along the way. Determined to create a better life for herself and her children, her drive and grit have been instrumental in propelling her to where she is today.



**JESSICA STARMAN**  
 FINALIST  
 Co-Founder and CEO  
 Elev8 New Media

**J**essica Starman is a seasoned public relations professional and media relations expert and is the co-founder and CEO of Elev8 New Media. Since starting Elev8 in 2018, Starman and her team have provided private and publicly-traded companies with media relations services and strategy-focused full-service public relations to clients across all industries. Elev8 has obtained coverage for clients in mainstream, broadcast, trade, and local media. Jessica now employs a team of ten in-house with additional outsourced contractors to service clients across North America.

Based in Los Angeles, Elev8 New Media is an award-winning boutique public and media relations firm specializing in securing earned media and press coverage for its client companies. Additionally, Elev8 provides full-service social media services to its clients. Starman advises her experienced team of professionals and client executive teams on corporate strategic positioning and effectively articulating company stories to the mainstream community.



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## CHAMPION OF WOMEN HONOREE

### CYNTHIA JANKOWSKI

Senior Vice President, Co-Head of Agency Finance  
PNC Bank

Cynthia Jankowski is a compassionate, inclusive and highly regarded leader at PNC. During the nearly three decades that she has been with the company, the Agency Finance business within PNC Real Estate has experienced significant growth. Under Jankowski's leadership, the Agency Finance servicing portfolio and employee count have doubled in size.

Her passion for developing and growing talent has been directed toward advancing women in the workplace. She has dedicated the past decade to growing professional organizations that bring women together across PNC, serving as a subject matter expert for Agency Finance across the PNC footprint.

Jankowski is a founding member of PNC's Virtual Women Connect, a group focused on connecting colleagues, retaining and advancing women through personal growth and professional development programs within PNC's footprint. Jankowski has helped heighten women's advancement and professional achievements while maximizing their contributions to the business. She continues to advance this important work by serving as a business segment liaison and co-chair of PNC's Virtual Women Connect mentoring program. She is an initial member of the C&IB (Corporate and Institutional Banking) ForWARD (For Women's Advancement, Recognition and Development) group, an employee resource group formed for the advancement of early career women. She currently serves as an executive sponsor and the market representative for PNC's Greater Los Angeles market. A pioneer in advocating for women in business, Jankowski is a founding member of the Women Business Advocate leadership team at PNC in Greater Los Angeles. This team is focused on advancing the company's efforts to help women financial decision-makers succeed.



### DR. SORAYA COLEY

FINALIST

President  
Cal Poly Pomona

Throughout her career, Dr. Soraya M. Coley, the first woman and first African American to serve as president of Cal Poly Pomona (CPP), has actively mentored and championed women toward positions of leadership. During her tenure, CPP has grown its enrollment, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and has expanded its legacy as a national leader in promoting social and economic mobility. President Coley has appointed many women to cabinet-level positions at CPP, which is currently 75 percent women, including the provost and vice president for academic affairs, the vice president for student affairs, and the vice president for administrative affairs.

President Coley has consistently demonstrated a sustained and continuing commitment to the advancement of women through actions or initiatives enhancing women's leadership development. As the ACE Southern California Women's Network presidential sponsor for four years, President Coley has devoted resources to the professional development of women.



### JESSE DRAPER

FINALIST

Founding Partner  
Halogen Ventures

Jesse Draper is a trailblazing founding partner at Halogen Ventures, with a proven track record of supporting female entrepreneurs thanks to her focus on early stage investing in consumer technology companies led by female and co-ed teams. As the first solo female GP in Los Angeles, Draper's experience spans four generations of venture capitalists, and she brings deep expertise in understanding consumer trends and behavior, identifying innovators, and solving problems at scale. Since 2015, Draper has raised over \$50 million in funding from institutional investors, endowments, funds of funds, and family offices to invest in the next generation of female founded billion dollar businesses.

Halogen Ventures has invested in over 70 female-founded companies, with ten exits under the portfolio. Among her notable portfolio companies are the Skimm, Babylist, ThirdLove, HopSkipDrive, The Flex Company, Squad (acquired by Twitter), Eloquii (sold to Walmart), and This is L (sold to P&G).



### IRMA VARGAS

FINALIST

Program Manager  
New Economics for Women

Irma Vargas is program manager for the New Economics for Women's East Los Angeles BusinessSource Center (ELA BSC) which is a partnership with the City of Los Angeles' Economic Workforce and Development Department (EWDD). In her current role, Vargas not only strategizes with the EWDD but also collaborates closely with NEW's sister business centers and the local chambers, community organizations and community advocates to support business development and job creation/retention especially for the disadvantaged women and women of color entrepreneurs and small business owners in the East Los Angeles area.

Vargas is known for her continuous service to such underrepresented women and women of color entrepreneurs and small business owners especially with her procurement expertise. As a community leader and Latina with an entrepreneurial mindset, she has been a tireless advocate in promoting government procurement contract opportunities, especially to underrepresented women business owners to enhance their success.



### DENISE YI

FINALIST

Managing Director  
Citi Private Bank

Denise Yi is a managing director and the North America co-head of Women in Wealth at Citi Private Bank. Since becoming North America co-head of Women in Wealth in 2022, Yi and her team have developed and launched a critically important business segment to serve and support women's financial journeys. In this capacity, Yi is co-leading the business development efforts and advancing the private banking experience tailored to women clients built upon three core pillars to educate, engage, and elevate women business founders, corporate executives, inheritors, and investors.

Yi is a passionate champion for diversity, equity and inclusion. She served as the co-chair of Citi Private Bank North America's Diversity Operating Committee for the last two-plus years. She is a culture carrier and actively promotes diversity, equity and inclusion. She is also a thought leader who has advocated to advance DE&I initiatives in several impactful leadership roles.

# CONGRATULATIONS



**EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR**  
NOMINEE  
**CHRISTIE**  
**COOK**  
VP, Human Resources



**WOMAN TO WATCH**  
NOMINEE  
**NICOLE**  
**DURHAM-MALLORY**  
Executive Director,  
Development, IHOP



**NEXTGEN WOMAN**  
NOMINEE  
**JAMIE**  
**SWANSON**  
Paralegal



**COMMUNITY IMPACT ADVOCATE**  
NOMINEE  
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## MENTOR OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### MABEN JIMENEZ

Associate Principal Director  
The Aerospace Corporation

**M**aben Jimenez is the associate principal director of Directorate H within The Aerospace Corporation's Electronic Programs Division. In this role she is responsible for leading Directorate H's west coast staff in their support of the development of several space program acquisitions, and she works as the primary interface with the local Engineering and Technology Group in the management of program resources.

As a successful Latina professional, Jimenez is well-aware of the challenges that come with navigating the higher education and early career space. She is passionate about supporting others in their journey towards success, just as she has done brilliantly herself. As a female Latina in STEM, Jimenez has been an outstanding role model and mentor for girls and young women, and all Latinas and Latinos to pursue engineering careers in the aerospace industry.

Jimenez is a mentor at Aerospace for the 5x5 program of the physical science labs and also for the Electronics and Sensors Division. She supports STEM outreach activities for K-12 students, like an event at the LA Zoo, through Aerospace's STEM events and community partnerships. She is also active in Aerospace's Employee Resource Groups, including Aerospace Women's Committee and Aerospace Latino Members Association (ALMA) to support her peers and younger employees to build community and provide mentorship. Beyond Aerospace, Jimenez serves on the STEM Advantage Board of Directors, where she is also a member of our Programs Committee and an engaged and visible role model and mentor for STEM Advantage Scholars.



### MARY JREISAT

FINALIST

Senior Project Manager  
Shawmut Design and Construction

**I**n an industry that's just 10% women, Mary Jreisat has not only forged a name and reputation for herself – establishing herself as a go-to builder for completing the most complex and important renovations in the most condensed timelines – she has also lifted up the women around her. This is even more impressive as Jreisat has continuously worked on sports venues projects for the last four years – another male-dominated industry.

One of the keys to Jreisat's mentorship is that she understands everyone learns and progresses differently. For example, Jreisat mentored a woman who made a career change into construction, joining a stadium project where Jreisat helped her solidify her skills. Now, she's on the largest project in Shawmut's 40-year history. Jreisat works to excite the future generation, paving the way so women have an easier experience and know how to approach their roles with confidence.



### SANDRA KLEIN

FINALIST

US Bankruptcy Judge  
US Bankruptcy Court, Central District of CA

**J**udge Sandra R. Klein's professional experience is inextricably linked to her community service and philanthropic endeavors – she has truly walked the walk of an exemplary mentor every day since the very beginning of her long career. Judge Klein serves as a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Central District of California. She has been committed to public service throughout her career, with a focus on educating, mentoring, and giving back to her community.

Since taking the bench, Judge Klein has continued to serve the public, especially youth in underserved communities. She is co-founder and co-leader of a Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles troop for girls experiencing homelessness. Having launched a series of impactful mentoring programs for young students, Judge Klein's commitment to public service includes offering the next generation of lawyers real-life experience and making the bankruptcy court more accessible for self-represented litigants.



### KIMBERLY RAVENELL

FINALIST

Partner  
Withum

**K**im Ravenell is the tax practice leader in Withum's Encino office. She has over 25 years of experience providing tax planning and compliance services for high-net-worth individuals and closely held businesses of all sizes. She prides herself in her responsiveness to her clients and in providing the best client service possible.

Over the years, Ravenell has mentored dozens of team members. An advocate for mentoring underrepresented groups, she is a leader of "Women of Withum's" empowerment program, which focuses on the elevation and inspiration of women. She also consistently demonstrates that she evaluates her own personal success by her team's success. Whether there is a requirement for a quick phone call or an in-depth coaching meeting, Ravenell will gladly volunteer her time on weekdays or weekends. She promotes equity for all women by providing a safe space for women team members to network and seek support.



### EMILY BURKHARDT VICENTE

FINALIST

Partner, Co-Chair Labor and Employment  
Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP

**E**mily Burkhardt Vicente is co-chair of the Hunton Andrews Kurth's national labor and employment team and diversity and inclusion committee. She was selected as co-chair of the national labor and employment practice of an American Lawyer 100 firm after only eight years as a partner. This is no small feat and a testament to her leadership abilities. She has defended some of the largest Fortune 100 companies in high-stakes employment litigation and is one of few lawyers to successfully take hybrid class and collective action cases to jury trial.

Beyond Vicente's accomplished professional career, she has a deep commitment to supporting and lifting women professionally and personally. She co-leads the firm's small office women's mentoring circle and she provides mentorship to women across all stages of their careers, offering valuable and constructive feedback to push others forward.



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LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM & AWARDS 2023



## COMMUNITY IMPACT ADVOCATE HONOREE

### DENISE BOOTH

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Vice President of Community Relations and Player Programs  
LA Clippers

**D**enise Booth serves as the LA Clippers' chief diversity and inclusion officer, vice president of community relations and player programs and has worked for the team for more than 25 years. Over that span, she has helped the Clippers donate millions of dollars and led thousands of events benefitting the Southern California community. She has long been recognized as an accomplished community leader who prioritizes and values both big and small projects, always having a major impact.

In her role as chief diversity and inclusion officer, Booth champions, promotes, measures and guides the inclusion strategy and diversity initiatives across all parts of the Clippers organization, which includes the LA Clippers, G League Ontario Clippers, live entertainment venue the Kia Forum, and Intuit Dome, the Clippers' new arena opening for the 2024-25 NBA season. She is focused on continuing and evolving the organization-wide cultural competence. Booth was elevated into this position after spending decades furthering the Clippers' initiatives benefitting diverse communities, with work ranging from running mentorship programs for youth to providing resources and programming to communities in need.

As the vice president of community relations and player programs for the Clippers, Booth has built critical programs and relationships with the Clippers' community partners. She is responsible for the creation and execution of all Clippers community programs and outreach initiatives, including charitable donations and player appearances. She also leads programming that promotes positive personal, professional, and social development of Clippers players, directing them to maximize their NBA career experience and prepare for their post-NBA lives.



### TAMMY CAPRETTA FINALIST

Chief Transformation and Risk Officer  
Keck Medicine of USC

**T**ammy Capretta, RN, MPH, serves as chief transformation and risk officer for Keck Medicine of USC, supporting growth within Keck Medicine. Capretta's integral role in many of Keck Medicine's efforts has supported the growth and development of the Keck Medicine organization.

In her position, Capretta created and oversees four offices: the Office of Integrated Risk Management, the Office of Integrated Credentialing, the Care for the Caregiver Office and the Office of Healthcare Compliance. These offices ensure that as Keck Medicine grows throughout Southern California and beyond, the health system brings the same quality of care to the community. Due to Capretta's efforts, patients know they can receive uniformly excellent treatment and care whether they are in Newport Beach, Visalia, Santa Clarita or another of the health system's 100 plus unique clinics. Capretta is also a leader in Keck Medicine's successful "Culture of Safety" initiative.



### ANGELA UNDERWOOD JACOBS FINALIST

Senior Vice President and Regional Manager  
California Bank & Trust

**A**ngela Underwood Jacobs has established a successful career as a bank executive and holds an admirable and distinguished record of service as a former city council member and in many charitable endeavors. In 2015, Jacobs began her service on the Lancaster City Council, where she became known as a vocal advocate for small businesses and staunch defender of working families. In 2016, she was the first African American woman elected to serve on the Lancaster City Council.

Jacobs is currently senior vice president of the Greater Southern California North Region at California Bank and Trust. She looks forward to the opportunity to continue to contribute to the ongoing development and prosperity of the region. Utilizing the invaluable leadership experience that she has acquired throughout her professional career; she has been instrumental in the development and success of multiple committees and outreach programs.



### BONNIE ROBERTSON FINALIST

Manager, ESG  
Dine Brands Global

**B**onnie Robertson has proven to be a valued member of the Dine Brands team and has played an essential role in Dine Brand's efforts to serve its people and planet. Every year, Dine issues an ESG report that reports on the progress the company makes in this area and through Robertson's role, she greatly contributes to the report's accuracy and impact, covering the topics of people, planet, food, and governance. Her leadership and expertise in ESG management have helped Dine Brands improve in corporate sustainability, demonstrating the company's commitment to positively impacting the world.

Robertson's contributions to the community, particularly in the ESG field, further demonstrates her commitment to making a positive impact. She continuously identifies opportunities for the company to give back to its communities, whether through volunteering, donations, fundraising, waste reduction initiative, she truly lives by the values of doing what's right.



### SHAAMA SHARADA FINALIST

WISE Gabilan Associate Professor;  
Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering and  
Materials Science and Chemistry  
University of Southern California

**D**r. Shaama Sharada is an expert in the development and application of quantum chemistry and molecular dynamics methods to design catalysts for sustainable chemistry. Her research program focuses on developing algorithms and frameworks to accelerate the prediction of viable catalysts for applications ranging from energy-efficient gas-to-liquid fuel conversion and green chemistry for light-assisted CO<sub>2</sub> utilization.

Dr. Sharada's work was published in the special issue for women in physical chemistry of the Journal of Chemical Physics, and was subsequently awarded government funding. Her pioneering research in unearthing the steps constituting catalytic cycles for light-driven CO<sub>2</sub> utilization using molecular organic catalysts will be key in unlocking viable green chemistry routes for mitigating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Dr. Sharada is also making significant strides in the computational design of molecular thermal catalysts.





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**Kirsten Fraunces**

*EVP, Head of Capital Markets*

Executive of the Year (non CEO)



**Serina Molano**

*Senior PR Coordinator*

Next Gen Women

**Los Angeles Business Journal**

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**WOMEN'S**  
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WOMAN TO WATCH HONOREE

**STEPHANIE LOMIBAO**

Philanthropy Director  
Bank of America Charitable Foundation

For more than 20 years, Stephanie Lomibao has followed her passion for helping others through her career leading philanthropic initiatives and programs, fundraising, and overseeing employee volunteerism across public, private, and nonprofit sectors in Southern California. Currently, she is director of philanthropy for Bank of America, one of the world's largest corporate philanthropies, which awarded more than \$360 million in grants to nonprofits and charities last year alone.

Lomibao leads a team that manages the largest philanthropic programs of the Bank of America Charitable Foundation from her downtown Los Angeles office. She helps ensure hundreds of millions of dollars annually get deployed to nonprofits on the frontlines of serving the most vulnerable and impoverished communities through programs addressing food insecurity and providing workforce development and job placement opportunities, among others.

Notably, Lomibao helped create the company's framework around hunger relief, including leading the Give a Meal program with Feeding America, one of the Bank's most successful cause programs. This effort resulted in more than \$20 million donated to a network of more than 200 food banks nationwide, including \$1 million to the LA Regional Food Bank. Many of the programs Lomibao has created at the national level had their roots in Los Angeles as programs she led locally, such as food drives at Dodger Stadium, and leadership development programs with the Special Olympics of Southern California for students in urban schools with disabilities. In 2022, Lomibao was promoted to lead the Bank of America Foundation's Leadership pillar, a role created specifically for her.



**MARGAUX BURKHOLDER**

FINALIST

Senior Project Manager  
Walter P Moore

Margaux Burkholder is a licensed structural engineer with 13 years of design experience. She has worked on a range of project types and has experience with high-rise and performance-based design, seismic retrofit and rehabilitation, multi-family residential, commercial, sports, and entertainment.

One of Burkholder's noteworthy projects early on included the \$234 million County of Los Angeles Hall of Justice seismic retrofit and parking structure. The project turned the red-tagged, 14-story, 1925 Hall of Justice into new office space for the LA Sheriff's Headquarters as well as adding a 1,000-car parking structure. Burkholder executed the project from start to finish with her team. She also worked on the \$2.5 billion and 1.5 million square foot Century Plaza project involving the renovation of the existing 16-story historic Century Plaza Hotel and addition of two 46-story residential towers. Burkholder was integral part of the project's success.



**SARAH CHUNG PARK**

FINALIST

Founder and CEO  
Landing International

Sarah Chung Park is the founder and CEO of Landing International, a B2B technology platform unlocking retail success for emerging beauty brands. A beauty industry veteran since 2003, Park is a sought-after expert and trusted advisor to beauty retailers across North America. Since starting Landing in 2014, Park has launched over 200 emerging brands into retail doors, resulting in over \$40 million in retail sales.

Park founded Landing with the mission of making the beauty industry a more conscious and inclusive place. Landing's tools are designed to champion mission-driven brands and game-changing retailers committed to creating greater innovation, representation, and responsibility. Driven by the belief that empowering independent brands creates a more inclusive and diverse industry, Park innovates B2B technologies to level the playing field in beauty. She has also become a leading resource in the beauty industry for retailers looking to provide minority-owned, women-owned brands to their customers.



**ANNAMARIE JONES**

FINALIST

Chief Operating Officer  
MemorialCare Medical Foundation

Annamarie Jones is chief operating officer of MemorialCare Medical Foundation in Fountain Valley. Jones has served in many roles during her healthcare career, which has allowed her to build a strong foundation in operations. Building a strong organizational culture is her passion. One way she is approaching this at MemorialCare is by personally rounding with staff and clinicians at every location.

Jones has established leader rounding with the executive management team and developed an online rounding feedback tool with dashboards to help track and trend concerns raised by doctors and staff. Because of the consistent visits, teams are more willing to provide feedback, which allows for overall improvement in team engagement and operational results. It has helped MemorialCare Medical Foundation leaders improve trust and build stronger relationships between the executive teams and clinic staff, while producing documented feedback that is conducive to positive change and improvements.



**JENNY KANTOR**

FINALIST

Executive Vice President, Group Head  
Edelman

Jenny Kantor has nearly two decades of consulting experience, specializing in corporate positioning, media relations, thought leadership, and business transformation communications. She creates communications programs that help organizations promote, protect, and evolve reputations, manage transitions, and align around a strategic vision.

Kantor has supported communications efforts for clients across multiple sectors including technology, B2B, higher education, health/wellness, food, and retail. Her client list includes Comcast, Mattel, Intuit, the University of Phoenix, UCLA, Verity Health, Nordstrom, and more. This past year, Kantor was promoted to executive vice president and appointed oversight of Edelman's corporate communications practice for Southern California, based on the consistent value she has delivered to her clients, colleagues, and the agency. Under Kantor's oversight, the corporate practice delivered a 25.4% fiscal year-over-year increase in top-line revenue.



# Congratulations Jenny, Chanel, and Kristina!

Edelman congratulates Jenny Kantor, Chanel Lake, and Kristina Gong on being nominated for the Los Angeles Business Journal Women's Leadership Award. Each day and on each project, these nominees are leading game-changing work and ensuring that our colleagues can bring the best of who they are to their work—taking action and shaping impactful moments and movements at Edelman, with our clients, and for our communities.



LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM & AWARDS 2023



## NEXTGEN WOMAN OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### ELIZABETH CAPATI

Senior Associate  
Colliers

Elizabeth Capati exemplifies tenacity, fierce determination, and grit. As a senior associate at Colliers' South Bay office, Capati works with industrial industry veteran Jeff Smart, specializing in industrial investment sales and leases. Prior to joining Colliers in 2019, she was a research analyst for a top-producing retail investment sales team at Marcus & Millichap's Washington D.C. office. This served as her introduction to commercial real estate and where her passion for the industry was born.

After moving to Los Angeles in 2019, Capati joined Colliers' South Bay office, where she began as a client services coordinator supporting several top-producing industrial brokers. She solidified her industry knowledge in this role by assisting brokers with their business and marketing initiatives. Though she was living in a new city, working for a new company, and focusing on a new sector (industrial), she was determined to excel.

In 2020, Capati received her California Real Estate Salesperson's license, and by August of 2021, she became a full-time broker. Since then, she has completed 27 deals totaling over 3 million square feet, with approximate total consideration of \$300 million. This includes selling two buildings totaling over 200,000 square feet, with an impressive turnaround from listing to closure in under two months. In 2022, Capati was recognized by Colliers for the prestigious "Rookie of the Year" award for her perseverance and determination throughout her first year of brokerage. She is an active member of the Emerging Industrial Leaders steering committee and part of the leadership board for Colliers' Los Angeles Women's Broker Network.



### ABEGAYLE DE CASTRO

FINALIST

Project Engineer

PCL Construction, California Buildings

Abegayle De Castro is project engineer on the Consolidated Rent-A-Car facility (ConRAC) megaproject at Los Angeles International Airport for PCL Construction. The project is her first in a full-time role; she previously worked on large sports facility project during her internship with PCL. De Castro worked in a team of two to manage the construction of the building the exterior perimeter structures and the envelope for a 5.5 million square foot facility, managing subcontracts and scheduling, responding to RFIs, overseeing quality control and executing on the safety program and procedures. More recently, she's assisting with closeout, punch, startup and commissioning.

Although she is relatively new to construction and working on a project of such massive scale that many early-career engineers could only dream of, De Castro shines bright. She is already known for being a team player, and her work product is impeccable.



### SARAH JOHANSON

FINALIST

Senior Manager, Marketing Operations

Matthews Real Estate Investment Services

Starting her career as a marketing coordinator at Matthews in 2016, Sarah Johanson has grown to be a leader, mentor, and respected marketing professional in the commercial real estate industry. Showing her work ethic, communication skills, and dedication to success, she quickly rose in the ranks from coordinator to specialist to ultimately Matthews' senior manager of marketing operations.

Johanson has learned the ins and outs of commercial real estate. She uses her experience to adapt and revitalize the company's property marketing platform and develop a dedicated team to ensure agents receive top-level marketing assets. She created and built out the company's pre- and post-production teams. Johanson stands out among her peers as a self-starter, executing ideas and delivering results. She initiates and oversees ongoing efforts to automate marketing processes, working closely with Salesforce representatives and various departments within Matthews.



### RACHEL RUSSELL

FINALIST

Assistant Director, Field Marketing

EY

Rachel Russell is an award-winning event marketer, creating and executing memorable experiences for attendees. She is the assistant director, field marketing at EY and runs the Entrepreneur Of The Year program, which recognizes business leaders in 145 cities and 60 countries throughout the world.

In addition to building relationships with business leaders of high-growth companies, Russell works with the LA Office managing partner to strategically position EY's brand in the Los Angeles market through the deployment of multi-channel campaigns such as events, partnerships, PR, web and paid social. She researches local organizations, evaluates event sponsorships, and develops field marketing plans to meet go-to-market objectives and achieve revenue goals. In 2023, Russell is managing EY's presence at the Upfront Summit and US Open. She is working to differentiate the firm's brand and ensure they are showing up at the best events.



### KYLIE WONG

FINALIST

Project Architect

HGA

Kylie Wong, RA, is a project architect in HGA's Los Angeles office. She joined the firm after graduating magna cum laude with her Bachelor of Architecture from USC. As a member of HGA LA's ACE (Arts, Community, Education) Practice Group, Wong specializes in performing arts and higher education projects. Currently, her main projects are public Southern California Community College projects. She is proud to serve BIPOC communities within underfunded campuses and still provide them with long lasting design solutions.

Since joining HGA in 2017, Wong has always enjoyed taking on leadership roles in extra-curricular activities within the firm along with her leadership on project work. Rather than waiting for opportunities to present themselves, she has actively sought out ways to get involved. She began by leading the office's Wine and Design, a monthly forum to elevate the level of design discussion outside of day-to-day work.

*Congratulations*

**Lori A. Roth**

*Nominated for the  
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## Empowering Women in Leadership

### Navigating success through networking, mentorship, company culture and talent acquisition

By VANESSA TERZIAN

As a woman in leadership, I understand the importance of embracing key elements that contribute to professional growth and empowerment. Successful networking, the value of mentorship, thriving within a company's culture, and finding the right talent for your team are essential components that shape our journey towards leadership excellence. In this article, I will share insights and strategies to help you navigate your path to success.

Successful networking has been instrumental in my professional growth and advancement. By building a strong network, I have been able to open doors to new opportunities, forge valuable collaborations, and expand my sphere of influence. Embracing online platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and professional networking communities has allowed me to connect with industry peers and thought leaders. Actively participating in industry events, conferences, and networking groups has provided me with the chance to engage in meaningful face-to-face

interactions and build lasting relationships.

Keep in mind, effective networking is not about collecting contacts; it's about building genuine connections. Seek authentic engagement, offer support, and be willing to share your knowledge and resources. Nurturing these relationships will create a circle of influence that amplifies your impact and fosters your professional growth.

Mentorship has been a cornerstone of my personal and professional development. Having a mentor has provided me with invaluable guidance, support, and insights from someone who has walked a similar path and overcome challenges. My mentor's experience and wisdom have helped me identify blind spots, broaden my perspective, and enhance my leadership skills.

Finding the right mentor requires intentional effort. Look for mentors who align with your goals, values, and aspirations. Their mentorship can be transformative, empowering you to navigate the complexities of your career with confidence. Remember, mentorship is a two-way street, and both mentor and mentee can learn and grow from each other's experiences.

Thriving within a company's culture is crucial for achieving your full potential as a woman leader. Company culture encompasses values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape the work environment. When the organizational

**By building a strong network, I have been able to open doors to new opportunities, forge valuable collaborations, and expand my sphere of influence.**

culture aligns with your own values and goals, it creates a sense of belonging, motivation, and fulfillment.

To thrive within a company's culture, it's important to assess whether your values and aspirations align with those of the organization. Cultivating self-awareness and understanding the cultural dynamics can help you identify areas where you can contribute and make a meaningful impact. Building authentic relationships with colleagues, embracing diversity and inclusion, and actively participating in company initiatives are ways to shape and influence the culture around you.

Building a high-performing team is an integral part of effective leadership. Finding the right talent goes beyond identifying individuals

with the right skills and qualifications; it also involves assessing their alignment with the organization's values and goals.

When hiring talent, prioritize diversity and inclusion, as diverse teams bring varied perspectives and innovative ideas. Implement comprehensive recruitment strategies that focus on attracting exceptional candidates from varied backgrounds. During interviews, assess not only their technical competencies but also their cultural fit and alignment with the team's values and vision. Providing opportunities for skill development, growth, and recognition is essential for retaining top talent and fostering a thriving team culture.

As women leaders, we have the power to shape our journey by leveraging networking, embracing mentorship, thriving within company cultures, and building exceptional teams. By nurturing meaningful connections, seeking guidance from mentors, aligning with organizational values, and prioritizing diverse and talented individuals, we can shatter barriers, redefine traditional norms, and create a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



Vanessa Terzian is a partner at Lagerlof, LLP. Learn more at [Lagerlof.com](http://Lagerlof.com).



**Cynthia Jankowski**  
 Senior Vice President,  
 Co-Head of Agency Finance

## Thank you for making a difference.

We're proud to congratulate Cynthia Jankowski, Senior Vice President, Co-Head of Agency Finance, on her nomination to the 2023 Women's Leadership Awards. Her commitment to developing and growing talent, helping businesses succeed and enhancing the communities we serve is making a lasting difference in the places we call home.

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# Work-Life Balance Not Found in a Policy, but Within Each Individual

By LORI A. ROTH

In a fast-paced world, achieving a work-life balance has often felt like an abstract concept. We've all heard about those one-size-fits-all solutions that promise to bring equilibrium, such as rigid schedules and designated communication hours. But the truth is, there's no magic formula engraved in a corporate policy or an employee manual. Achieving work-life balance is deeply personal—it can't be scripted.

So, let's start by asking ourselves, "What does work-life balance truly mean to us? How does it look and feel?" The journey to balance begins with these introspective questions.

When it comes to being a leader, the key lies in offering your team the flexibility to craft their own personal formula for attaining work-life balance. Let's be clear, though—remote work alone doesn't equate to balance. While it may be a vital piece of the puzzle, true flexibility goes beyond our physical location.

I am a firm believer that balance is achieved when I can wholeheartedly devote myself to the task at hand. Whether crafting a compelling presentation for a meeting or preparing a nourishing dinner for my family, my goal is to be fully

**The key lies in offering your team the flexibility to craft their own personal formula for attaining work-life balance.**

present, productive, and impactful. I strive to be the best I can be and give my all, regardless of what I am doing. When I attain this state, I find myself productive, content, and fulfilled.

Organization serves as a cornerstone to achieving balance in my life. I rely on lists, prioritize tasks, and consciously schedule projects to ensure I can tackle each one effectively. This approach allows me to focus solely on what I'm doing at that moment. Once everything is accounted for in my schedule, I can be present and productive without the weight of unfinished tasks looming in my mind.

Another vital aspect of achieving balance is surrounding ourselves with exceptional people and understanding how and when to leverage the resources available to us. For instance, I leverage talented individuals and resources to

help me in areas that I do not enjoy or excel in professionally and personally, resulting in time gained to enjoy family and friends and be more productive in all settings. However, I enjoy the art of cooking and find immense fulfillment in it, so I prioritize it whenever possible.

It's important to emphasize that while this is the formula that works for me, everyone must define their own unique formula. Ask yourself: What brings me joy and fulfillment? How can I maintain productivity in all areas of my life while fostering healthy relationships? How can I reduce stress and negative behaviors?

The reality is, as leaders, we can't give our teams work-life balance, but we can provide them with the flexibility and support that enables them to be at their best. We can suggest tools and examples that work for us and those around us. At that point, it's up to each person to embrace discipline and personal accountability, establishing their own formula for achieving balance and preventing burnout.

For instance, leaders can set a reasonable expectation that emails, calls, and messages should be addressed within 24 hours. Then it's up to each person to determine when they respond and when to disconnect from their

devices entirely based on what works best for them. This requires self-evaluation and a solution-oriented approach.

Discovering the right formula for balance may not happen overnight. It might require uncomfortable changes and adaptability to life's circumstances. I vividly recall my own struggles while running a business and a household and meeting the needs of my family—I did not always have balance. However, we do what we must, we learn from what we do right and what we do wrong, and we keep adjusting and moving forward.

When balance seems elusive, let's reflect on being our best selves. When we are able to be present and focus on the task at hand, we will feel better, perform better, and make meaningful contributions in all areas of our lives. This will extend to our relationships and positively impact the people who mean the most to us.

Ultimately, that is the best possible outcome.



Lori A. Roth, CPA/ABV, CFF, is global managing partner at Prager Metis. Learn more at [pragermetis.com](https://pragermetis.com).

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# Secrets of Effective Leaders

By DAYLE M. SMITH, PH.D.

If you're looking to learn a little something about leadership, you don't have to look far. A simple Google search yields countless results. As a dean and professor of leadership who's written several books on leadership, I am often called upon to share my thoughts. A question today's leaders should ask themselves is how do we learn from what's happening around us that may affect how we lead? So instead of providing a familiar set of tips on how to be a more effective leader, allow me to share several insights I keep drawing from as I lead the College of Business Administration (CBA).

Our CBA mission puts leadership front and center and calls for us to "develop business leaders with moral courage and creative confidence to be a force for good in the global community." Where does the "secret sauce" come from? As leaders, we draw from our own experiences and from the influences of those we admire, those we choose to be different from, and those we can learn from.

I often get inspired by coaches and players who look to do more than just win. As Babe Ruth famously said, "It's hard to beat a person who never gives up." Leaders who recognize talent and, more importantly, ensure that

hard work, grit, and that "never give up" attitude is rewarded are destined to find synergies in an organization built around people and shared goals. It's easy to spot expertise on a resume; much more difficult to discern the inner strengths of someone who never gives up. Great leaders don't give up on others – they work hard to bring out the best in every colleague for the betterment of the organization.

One of my favorite inspirational leaders was former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright who said, "as a leader, you have to have the ability to assimilate new information and understand that there might be a different view." Great leaders value diverse perspectives and accept that their answer is not always the right answer. A secret to my success as a leader is surrounding myself with extraordinary people. My favorite mantra to my staff is there's no problem we can't solve if we put a bunch of smart people around the table to come up with the best solution.

Another impactful leadership lesson comes from "The Wizard of Oz." Remember when Dorothy pulls the curtain back only to discover that the mystique of the "great and powerful Oz" was a fraud? The lessons I learned from that scene are gleaned from avoiding the disappointment that Dorothy experienced

which speaks to the significance of authenticity. In short, what's behind the curtain matters. No amount of PR or fake boldness will instill confidence in those you lead. Who you are and how you present to the outside world need to be aligned. Dorothy learns that lesson from her ensemble cast—she had what she needed all along. At LMU, we talk about developing moral courage and creative confidence—key qualities of not being afraid to speak out and do the right thing. Embracing your knowledge and commitment to being a force for good is not magic—it's what you bring to the organization in meaningful ways. So, though the wizard turned out to be not so powerful, he did reveal a key leadership trait that helped Dorothy and company find what they were looking for – their authentic selves.

A more recent example of leadership that resonated with me comes from the popular TV series "Ted Lasso." One scene, in particular, made an impression. Ted's boss, Rebecca Welton, is invited to a meeting to form a global league that will put more money in the hands of team owners. Rebecca is hesitant to attend, believing she's only been invited because she's a woman. There are several takeaways here. A colleague reminds her that the reason for the invitation should be irrelevant – she now has a seat at the table. We

see Rebecca put her anxiety aside, find her inner confidence, and advocate against the proposal. Demonstrating both moral courage and creative confidence, she calmly reminds the other owners what's truly important – the beauty of the game and the loyal fanbase. The antagonist quickly loses support and viewers applaud Rebecca for how she handled herself. She learns, as did many characters in "Ted Lasso," the power of belief! Belief in oneself enables skill, power, and influence to come alive.

In short, as I reflect on my own experiences as a leader and where I draw inspiration – real or fictional – the ingredients for the secret sauce are clear: 1) Grit, determination and hard work; 2) Diverse and collaborative teams ideating on the best solutions; 3) Authenticity (what's behind the curtain matters); 4) Belief in yourself and helping others believe in what they bring to the organization; and 5) Moral courage and creative confidence (when you have a seat at the table, make a difference).



Dayle M. Smith, Ph.D., is dean of the LMU College of Business Administration. For more information, visit [cba.lmu.edu](http://cba.lmu.edu).

## At the top of our voice.

DLA Piper congratulates the outstanding honorees recognized at this year's Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards event. We thank you for your contributions to the Los Angeles community.



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# Making A Lasting Impact

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# More Than Half of Women Small Business Owners Face Greater Obstacles Than Male Counterparts

With one out of every five small businesses failing before the end of their first year, opening and running your own business is an enormous challenge. According to a recent Groupon survey, it's even tougher for female entrepreneurs with more than half of respondents, 56 percent, saying that they had to overcome greater obstacles than their male counterparts and nearly 50 percent of respondents saying that they were held to a higher standard when trying to open their own business.

The poll, commissioned by Groupon last year, surveyed more than 850 women small business owners to find out what sort of challenges they face, the best states for women to open their own business, why these entrepreneurs decided to become their own boss, how they achieved success and the most important issues they want to see addressed in the 2020 presidential election.

"As one of the largest marketplaces of small businesses anywhere in the world, we're thrilled to honor female entrepreneurs and recognize the contributions and value they bring to our lives on a daily basis and to the communities we call home," said Sarah Butter-

fass, chief product officer and Women at Groupon executive sponsor. "Many of the women that we interviewed had to overcome unique challenges in order to get their business off the ground and offered a number of key insights for other women thinking about starting their own business."

## OVERCOMING UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES

Seventy-one percent of women small business owners reported that they faced unexpected challenges when they opened their business. Some of these challenges included: balancing a business and a family, struggling to be taken seriously, defying social norms, owning their own accomplishments and gaining access to capital. Thirty-four percent of women small business owners said they had to finance the opening of their own business through personal savings or by borrowing from a retirement account.

## RANKING THE BEST STATES TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Taking into account a number of different factors such as barriers to entry, economic con-

**'We're thrilled to honor female entrepreneurs and recognize the contributions and value they bring to our lives on a daily basis and to the communities we call home.'**

ditions and available small business resources, Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Tennessee ranked as the best states for women to start their own business. Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington, South Carolina and Ohio rounded out the top 10. The top five ways identified by survey respondents in which state officials can help small businesses are: lowering or simplifying taxes, offering more small business resources, improving access to healthcare and insurance benefits, making housing more affordable and

creating greater access to capital.

## BECOMING YOUR OWN BOSS

According to the survey results, being your own boss, having a flexible schedule, pursuing your passions, gaining more control over your future and receiving equitable pay were the top five biggest reasons women went into business for themselves.

## ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Of surveyed respondents, it took an average of nearly three years to make their small business a success. Entrepreneurs said that putting in the hard work, taking pride in the quality of their product or service, building a personal network, serving an underserved market or space and having innovative business ideas were the biggest keys to their success. Thirty-six percent of survey participants said they work more than 40 hours per week, and 76 percent stay up at night worrying about the success of their business.

To learn more about the Groupon's merchant solutions and how to work with Groupon, visit [groupon.com/merchant](https://groupon.com/merchant).



Junior Achievement of SoCal proudly congratulates  
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 Senior Vice President of Programs, JASoCal  
 for the Los Angeles Business Journal's Women in Leadership -  
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Kat's decades-long commitment to nonprofit leadership at Junior Achievement demonstrates her passion and purpose in providing opportunities for the economic success of young people. Her efforts to re-engineer public education by leading the efforts to bring 3DE Schools by Junior Achievement to Southern California will undoubtedly provide increased potential for success to thousands of under-resourced students over the coming years.

Congratulations to Kat and all her fellow nominees!



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We are proud to nominate **Lisa Reddy** as a “Woman to Watch: an emerging leader who made noteworthy contributions this past year”!



Lisa, Vice President, Leasing Officer at Prologis, has spent her career making space for herself and other women in the traditionally male-dominated industry of industrial real estate. Lisa has been critical to the company’s exceptionally strong performance in Los Angeles and Orange County markets. Her individual portfolio totals 15.8 million square feet, which includes 140 properties, three development sites and supporting 157 customers. 2022 was a major year for Lisa in her team. In the backdrop of an ever-changing pandemic and several macro headwinds, Lisa completed 32 lease transactions with a total lease value equal to more than \$340 million. Lisa is highly active in the industry and the Southern California community at large. She is on NAIOP’ Southern California Board of Directors and serves as NAIOP Southern California Membership Committee co-chair. Lisa also sits on USC’s Lusk Center for Real Estate Board and is on the Carson Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors as well as the City of Long Beach Economic Partnership Board of Directors.

# Study Reveals Attributes, Priorities and Career Paths of Women CEOs

## Women CEOs Speak Today' highlights progress made during the last five years and where more work is still needed

Last year, Korn Ferry released "Women CEOs Speak Today," a new study highlighting the career journeys of women CEOs and what has led to their successes and their ability to transform the role of CEO. The study updates 2017 research done by Korn Ferry and The Rockefeller Foundation, and reveals that while progress has been made, more needs to be accomplished.

Over the course of several months, Korn Ferry interviewed 21 women CEOs – the majority of whom have been appointed within the last two years to lead Fortune 500 companies. As part of this study, the CEOs were asked to discuss a range of topics, including their personal histories, careers and key experiences.

"The progress that has been made toward The Rockefeller Foundation's goal of 20% women CEOs in the Fortune 500 by 2025 is significant," said Jane Stevenson, Korn Ferry vice

chair, board and CEO services and global leader, CEO Succession. "If we are going to build on this momentum, starting early in their careers, women need to be encouraged and offered development opportunities to rise to the highest echelons of the corporate world."

"I've seen firsthand that when women lead, they succeed, from the corporate boardroom to the walls of power to the Situation Room. To address today's challenges, we can, and we must, meet the demand for talented CEOs with the many qualified women ready to lead — it is simply in everyone's best interests," said Retired Adm. James Stavridis, chair of The Rockefeller Foundation Board of Trustees.

The report highlights three major themes regarding the role of women as CEOs:

**Women are actively seeking and stepping into the CEO role – but not frequently enough.** Many talented, high-potential women often do not consider the CEO role for themselves, seeking out functional roles instead of being in charge of a profit-and-loss center, which is seen as a clearer path to the CEO position. More than half of those interviewed said embracing tough assignments and delivering stellar results helps women gain the courage, confidence

and visibility needed to propel their careers.

**Women are transforming the CEO role.** Traditional command-and-control leadership is not yielding the same returns; instead, 60% of the CEOs say leaders today must be more collaborative and empathetic to create truly diverse and inclusive enterprises that unleash the full talent in their ranks.

**Women are growing through experience.** For the women CEOs interviewed, early board service has been integral to their success as leaders. In fact, 70% underscored how early board exposure benefited their careers—by developing leadership skills, boosting visibility, and preparing to manage their own boards once CEO. The study also shows a variety of diverse paths that lead women to the CEO role – everything from engineering to sales, law and medicine.

"Like the original Women CEOs Speak research, we find rich diversity in women's paths to the CEO role as well as the courage and purpose-driven leadership that is a hallmark among radically human leaders," said Evelyn Orr, Korn Ferry head of CEO and executive assessment in North America. "In Women CEOs Speak Today, we note the CEOs were aware that being

CEO was a possibility for them and they sought roles and board service that would prepare them to lead at the enterprise level."

"Fewer women today said they had to 'fight' their way into the corner office," said Stevenson. "Also, in many cases they say they were cultivated by sponsors/mentors to become CEOs, and importantly, they were highly interested in being looked at as CEOs and not as women CEOs."

The report offers key takeaways for both organizations and women leaders.

For organizations, it recommends fostering a culture that encourages intentional growth and development and supports women as they move across areas to gain an enterprise perspective. Opportunities for women to advance need to evolve from being fortuitous to systemic.

For women, it recommends leveraging their network, building alliances, and practicing the self-care so essential to extending their leadership impact.

The Rockefeller Foundation is pioneering philanthropy built on partnerships at the frontiers of science, technology and innovation.

Learn more at [rockefellerfoundation.org](http://rockefellerfoundation.org).

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Mazars is proud to support the 2023 Women's Leadership Symposium and Awards. We salute this year's nominees for their outstanding achievements, invaluable contributions to our community and inspiring the next generation of female leaders.

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# Study Finds 75% of Female Execs Experience Imposter Syndrome

A majority of executive women across a range of industries identified having experienced feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt, or imposter syndrome, at certain points in their careers and say they believe it is commonly experienced by women in corporate America, according to a new study released late last year by KPMG LLP, the U.S. audit, tax, and advisory firm.

“Advancing the Future of Women in Business: A KPMG Women’s Leadership Summit Report” polled 750 high-performing executive women who are one or two career steps away from the C-suite and have participated in the KPMG Women’s Leadership Summit.

“KPMG has a long-standing commitment to the advancement, development and empowerment of women, which extends beyond our organization and into the broader marketplace,” said KPMG U.S. chair and CEO Paul Knopp. “It is important for organizations to gain a more thorough understanding of the specific issues women may face as they advance in their careers and as they move toward the C-suite. We hope the thought-provoking findings and solutions in this study help leaders everywhere as we work to further advance

inclusion and diversity.”

Key findings of the study include:

- Seventy-five percent of executive women report having personally experienced imposter syndrome at certain points in their career.
- Eighty-five percent believe imposter syndrome is commonly experienced by women in corporate America.
- Seventy-four percent of executive women believe that their male counterparts do not experience feelings of self-doubt as much as female leaders do.
- Eighty-one percent believe they put more pressure on themselves not to fail than men do.

## OVERCOMING IMPOSTER SYNDROME

“It’s important to realize that most women experience similar doubts at some point in our careers,” said Laura Newinski, KPMG U.S. deputy chair and chief operating officer. “Our contribution as leaders is pivotal. Together, we have the opportunity to build corporate environments that foster a sense of belonging and lessen the experience of imposter syndrome for

**‘It is important for organizations to gain a more thorough understanding of the specific issues women may face as they advance in their careers and as they move toward the C-suite.’**

women in our workplaces.”

The female executives included in the in-depth survey represent a range of industries across more than 150 of the world’s leading organizations and were nominated by their CEOs to participate in the Summit.

## ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Nearly half (47%) of executive women

say that their feelings of self-doubt result from never expecting to reach the level of success they have achieved.

- When asked which dynamics within the workplace were most valuable to help reduce feelings of imposter syndrome, 47% said having a supportive performance manager and 29% said feeling valued and being rewarded fairly.

- Due to a variety of external factors, 56% have been afraid that they won’t live up to expectations or that people around them will not believe they are as capable as expected.

- To overcome imposter syndrome, 72% of executive women looked to the advice of a mentor or trusted advisor when doubting their abilities to take on new roles.

- Fifty-four percent of executive women agreed that the more successful they become, the lonelier it gets at the top because they enter new peer groups. However, 32% of women identified with imposter syndrome because they did not know others in a similar place to them either personally or professionally.

For more information or to download the full report, visit [KPMG.com/WomensLeadership](https://www.kpmg.com/WomensLeadership).

Thank you for giving  
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Citi is proud to support the Los Angeles Business Journal Women’s Leadership Symposium and their commitment to inspiring their community.





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# Federal Government Announces New Resources to Support Women Small Businesses Owners

During the Small Business Administration's (SBA) second annual Women's Business Summit in March, President Biden announced new resources to support women small business owners, and he reaffirmed the Biden-Harris Administration's continued commitment to supporting all of America's small businesses. The President announced that SBA will expand the Women Business Centers network, bringing the total to 160 centers across the country that assist women entrepreneurs through training, mentoring, business development, and financing opportunities.

"Small businesses are the engines of our economy. That's why from his first day in office, the President has taken action to assist our nation's small businesses as they recover from the economic impact of the pandemic and continue to grow," read a statement issued by the President's office in March. As a result of these actions, a record 10.5 million applications to start new businesses have been filed in the last two years.

#### WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS SNAPSHOT

The entrepreneurial spirit of women and women-owned and operated businesses is

demonstrated by a number of recent statistics:

- Women own 12 million businesses in America, employing more than 10 million workers.
- They continue to trailblaze across industries every day, starting nearly half of all new businesses in the United States in 2021.
- Last year, annual earnings for women owned businesses increased by almost 30%, with women-owned businesses in the manufacturing sector experiencing a 35% increase.

The Biden-Harris Administration has already taken significant steps to support women-owned businesses. These include:

#### PROVIDING RESOURCES AND MENTORSHIP TO WOMEN SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

Many small businesses, especially those from underrepresented communities, lack the access to technical expertise, accountants, and lawyers employed by better resourced businesses. The administration has made a commitment to focus on meeting small businesses owners, including women small business owners, where they are by offering extensive

**'Small businesses are the engines of our economy. That's why from his first day in office, the President has taken action to assist our nation's small businesses as they recover from the economic impact of the pandemic and continue to grow.'**

support services to navigate available programs.

The administration has:

- Invested millions to establish the largest network of Women Business Centers (WBC) in history. These centers are specifically designed to assist women, providing training, mentoring, business development, and financing opportunities, recognizing that women still face unique obstacles in the business world. This Administration has invested nearly \$70

million in the Women Business Centers network, expanding it for the first time into all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. This includes tripling the number of WBCs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI), and other minority-serving institutions (MSI). President Biden will announce that the SBA will expand the WBC network with an additional 15 locations, bringing the total to 160 centers across the country.

- Awarded \$100 million in grants through the Community Navigators Pilot Program to organizations in all 50 states and Puerto Rico to bolster the ability of organizations that already have deep connections in their communities to provide resources and guidance to traditionally hard to reach small businesses. The program focuses on socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses, rural communities, and small businesses owned by women and veterans. The President's Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposes an additional \$30 million to support this critical initiative.

#### EXPANDING ACCESS AND AVENUES TO CAPITAL

Capital is vital for small businesses to start



## Congratulations!

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and grow. That's why expanding access to capital, and making sure there are ample pathways to reach that capital, is a core pillar of the administration's agenda to support small businesses. This Biden-Harris Administration has:

- Invested \$10 billion through the American Rescue Plan's State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) to help states, territories, and Tribal governments leverage billions more in matching public and private dollars to support small businesses across the United States, with a particular focus on business owners from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. SSBCI provides funding for credit and venture capital programs. This is a vital tool to address the capital access gap for women-owned businesses, who receive less than 2 percent of all traditional venture capital dollars.

- Delivered over \$10 billion in capital to women-owned small businesses through SBA's 7(a) and 504 loan programs in 2021 and 2022. The 7(a) loan program provides funding to small businesses seeking short- and long-term working capital to purchase equipment, supplies, and addresses other critical business growth needs. The 504 loan program provides long-term, affordable fix-rate financing for major assets that promote job creation and business growth.

**LEVERAGING FEDERAL SPENDING TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES**

The federal government spends more than \$600 billion every year in goods and



services, and this Administration is committed to ensure that federal spending supports entrepreneurship and wealth creation. This Biden-Harris Administration has:

- Set a goal of increasing the share of federal contracting dollars awarded to small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) by 50% by 2025. This will result in an estimated additional \$100 billion in federal contracting dollars to underserved small businesses over a five-year period, many of which are owned by women. In 2021,

the Administration awarded 27.2 percent or \$154.2 billion in federal contract dollars to small businesses, an \$8 billion increase from the previous fiscal year. Women-owned Small Businesses (WOSB) received more than \$26 billion for the third straight year.

- Focused on ensuring that funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, CHIPS and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act continue to create meaningful wealth-building opportunities for women-owned businesses,

creating billions of dollars in contracting opportunities for America's small businesses.

In addition, the President's American Rescue Plan made critical investments which saved hundreds of thousands of small businesses from shutting their doors during the pandemic, including by:

- Providing assistance to 220,000 child care providers – which are nearly all small businesses, and are over 90% women-owned and women staffed. Ninety percent of child care providers that received support report that these funds helped them stay open and operating. One in three child care programs who received support report that they would have been forced to close permanently without these funds.

- Revamping the Paycheck Protection Program to ensure that businesses with less than 20 employees – in particular sole proprietor businesses that are disproportionately owned by women – had priority access to relief.

- Providing critical breathing room to more than 100,000 restaurants, food trucks, street food vendors, breweries, and other food service businesses through the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. Over 40,000 grants totaling over \$10 billion went to women-owned businesses via the Restaurant Revitalization Fund.

- Supporting more than 13,000 hard-hit live entertainment small businesses, nonprofits, and venues with \$14.5 billion in grants through the Shuttered Venues Operator Grant program.

To learn more, visit [sba.gov](http://sba.gov).



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## Partnership Accelerates Gender Equity and Representation in Sports

This March, Endeavor and the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) announced a new partnership to accelerate gender equity in women's athletics. The partnership, which includes a \$250,000 donation from Endeavor Impact on behalf of Endeavor and UFC, will focus specifically on creating pathways for women athletes, coaches, administrators and executives to enter and succeed at the highest levels of their industries.

Endeavor and WSF will collaborate on events to assist women athletes in their professional development as they transition into sports and entertainment roles following their athletic careers; host networking events to bring athletes, experts and business leaders together; collaborate on advocacy efforts; and support policy work to increase equity at all levels within the industry and beyond. This partnership uniquely combines Endeavor's sports organizations, including UFC, IMG Academy and WME Sports, as well as sporting events including the Madrid and Miami Open tennis tournaments and HSBC Women's Championships golf tournament with WSF's advocacy work, vast network of community partners and impactful programs for girls and women.

"We at the Women's Sports Foundation are thrilled to be joining forces with Endeavor to showcase the importance of investing in women," said WSF CEO Danette Leighton. "This partnership is vital as we work to illuminate the equity gaps for girls and women on and off the field of play. Together with Endeavor, we will be able to deepen our impact and inspire more girls and women to experience the transformative power of sport."

"We look forward to helping the Women's Sports Foundation advance their mission by creating concrete solutions to address the issue of gender equity in women's athletics," said Romola Ratnam, SVP and head of impact and inclusion at Endeavor. "We will activate the full Endeavor network on behalf of the Foundation and amplify their incredible work via our clients and properties."

The Women's Sports Foundation was founded by Billie Jean King in 1974. For nearly 50 years, WSF has been advocating for gender equity in sport and working to expand access and opportunities for girls and women so they can play, compete and lead without barriers.

The Women's Sports Foundation exists to enable girls and women to reach their poten-



tial in sport and life. Focused on being an ally, an advocate and a catalyst, the Foundation strengthens and expands participation and leadership opportunities through research, advocacy, community programming and a wide variety of collaborative partnerships. From its inception to Title IX's 50th anniversary last

year, WSF invested over \$100 million in these impact efforts, helping to shape the lives of millions of youth, high school and collegiate student-athletes, elite athletes and coaches.

To learn more about the Women's Sports Foundation, visit [WomensSportsFoundation.org](http://WomensSportsFoundation.org).

**Congratulations to all the remarkable nominees of this year's LA Business Journal's Women's Leadership awards!**

Your unparalleled drive and outstanding accomplishments are an inspiration to the next generation of female leaders, shaping a brighter future for all. We applaud your influence and celebrate your well-deserved recognition.

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# New Marketplace for Women Entrepreneurs Platform Launches

## Platform creates access to new markets for women-owned businesses

**B**ank of America, in partnership with Seneca Women, has launched a new online marketplace for women entrepreneurs, providing them access to new markets and opportunities for consumers to shop and support their businesses.

The Bank of America Marketplace by Seneca Women features a wide range of women-owned businesses, searchable by category and geography. It currently spotlights approximately 100 women from around the world including the U.S., Germany, India and Mexico, with various sectors represented such as apparel, items, home goods, fitness and beauty products.

“The Marketplace allows us to leverage our resources, partnerships and scale to create greater opportunities for women business owners to reach new markets for their products and services,” said Cynthia Bowman, chief diversity, inclusion and corporate social responsibility officer at Bank of America. “At Bank of America, we know that

when women thrive, whole families, whole communities and whole economies thrive.”

“We at Seneca Women are thrilled to be partnering with Bank of America on a marketplace to showcase women-owned businesses,” said Sharon Bowen, partner, Seneca Women and chair of the New York Stock Exchange. “Women business owners have shown remarkable resilience and ingenuity during these challenging times, starting businesses at historic rates. The Bank of America Marketplace by Seneca Women will enable us to support them by shopping from incredible women-owned businesses.”

Bank of America has leveraged key partners including the Tory Burch Foundation, Cherie Blair Foundation, the Bank of America Institute for Women's Entrepreneurship at Cornell and Vital Voices to help identify women who are taking part in the Marketplace.

“Access to markets is critically important to any business, whether mission-based or for-profit,” said Ariela Suster, CEO of Sequence Collection, an El Salvador based social enterprise, whose products are available on the Marketplace. “At Sequence, increasing our visibility and market opportunities will help us fulfill our mission of

disrupting the cycle of violence that limits at-risk youth, and provide employment and training opportunities for young men and women who live in gang and violence-ridden communities.”

### INVESTING IN WOMEN

Bank of America is committed to investing in women through programs that support women entrepreneurs by providing access to training, mentorship, capital, markets, and philanthropic support, helping to empower women in communities around the globe. For example:

- Through the Tory Burch Foundation and Bank of America Capital Program, the bank has provided more than \$95 million in affordable capital to over 5,000 U.S. women entrepreneurs to help grow their businesses.

- Through Bank of America's partnership with Cornell University, 100,000 women will have the ability to pursue a business education through the only online Ivy League program offering a certificate in women's entrepreneurship at no cost.

- Since its inception in 2011, the Global Ambassadors Program, a partnership between Bank of America and Vital Voices, has support-

ed more than 350 women from 85 countries—by helping women grow their businesses.

- The bank partners with the Cherie Blair Foundation in its Mentoring Women in Business program to connect women small business to mentoring expertise.

- In partnership with Seneca Women, the Bank of America Access to Capital Directory features hundreds of organizations providing funding for women-owned businesses across the US.

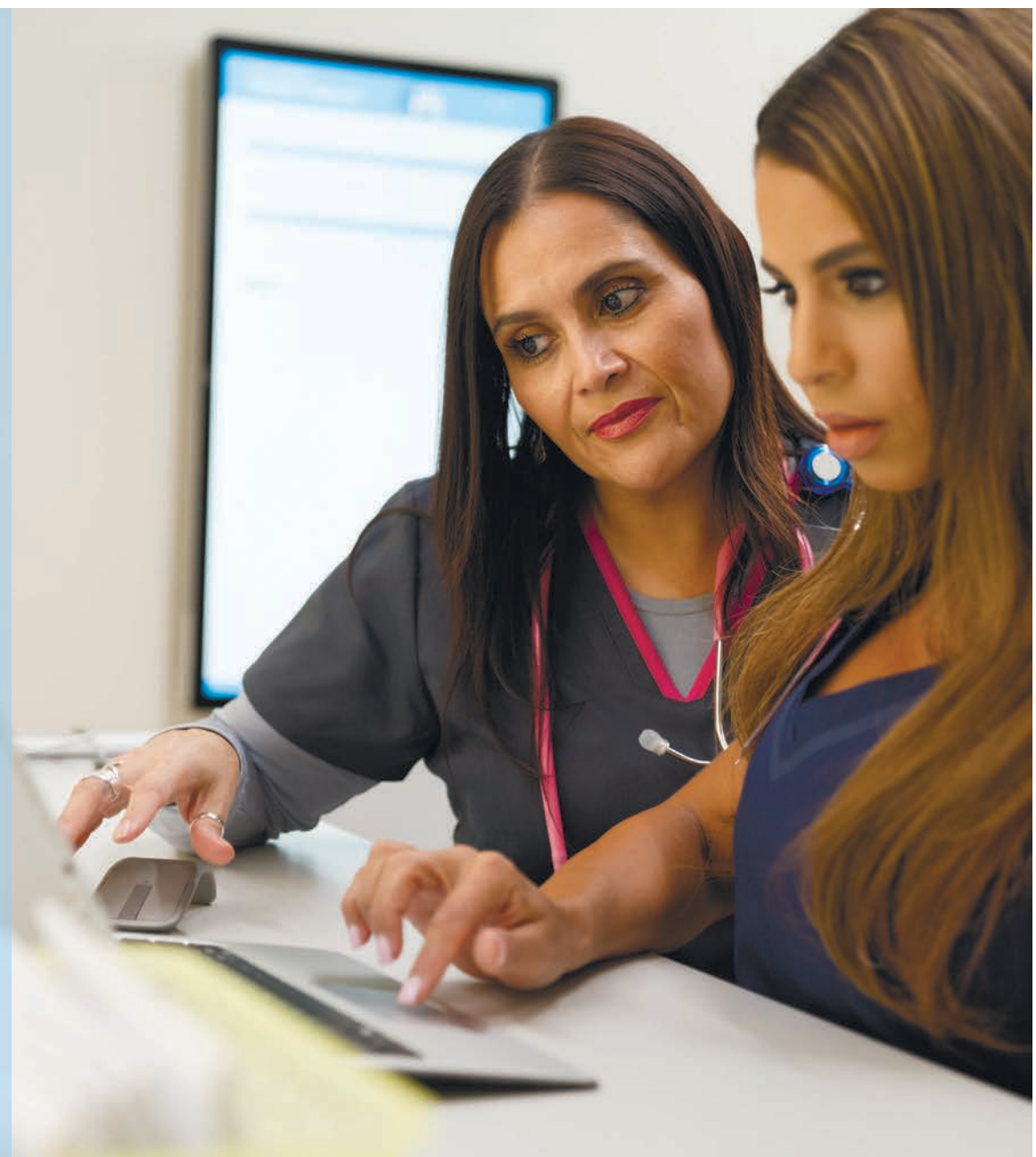
Seneca Women is a global leadership and media platform that works to advance women in the economy and around the world. Seneca Women has sought to accelerate women's progress through signature events at Davos, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York Stock Exchange as well as through partnerships with organizations including Apple, Bank of America, Bloomberg, The Coca-Cola Company, Mastercard, and P&G, among others. The Seneca Women Podcast Network on iHeartMedia, launched with founding partner P&G, builds on the success of this work.

Learn more at [bofamarketplace.senecawomen.com](https://bofamarketplace.senecawomen.com).

In 2022, Kaiser Permanente is proud to share that 74% of our workforce are women; and 56% of our National Leaders are women. We celebrate the role women play in making Kaiser Permanente a better place to work, a better place to receive health care, and a better partner in the communities we serve.



Data represents Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals employees and does not include physicians.



# A New Look at What Impacts Women at Work Today

## The annual "Women at Work" survey reveals the impact of working conditions, abortion access, pay transparency, and more among working women in the US

**C**NBC and Momentive, maker of SurveyMonkey, in March announced the results of their joint Women at Work survey. The survey, which polled over 5,000 women in the U.S., finds that working women continue to feel increased stress and burnout amid tough economic conditions. Nearly half (41%) of working women who have seriously considered quitting in the past 12 months say they're overwhelmed with work. Meanwhile, more than half of working women (56%) say their mental health suffers from burnout at their job, which is roughly unchanged from the 2020 and 2021 surveys (53% and 54%, respectively). Even though nearly half of working women (46%) say the possibility of an economic downturn or recession has not caused them to make any changes at work, 27% of working women say they have worked longer hours over the past year, while 17% say they have delayed taking time off and 15% have asked for a raise. These

results are nearly identical to working men.

The survey also highlights access to abortion for working women following last year's Supreme Court ruling that overturned Roe v. Wade. Working women say abortion access is now a key factor when considering job location with nearly a quarter (23%) who say they will not work in a state that limits or bans access to abortion, almost three times as many who say they will only work in a state that limits or bans access to abortion (8%). Additionally, with new pay transparency laws going into effect this year, the top motivator for more than half of working women (52%) who are considering quitting their job is higher pay, while nearly half of working women (41%) say they have not heard about newly published salary ranges and relatively few of either gender (12% of women, 16% of men) say they have used published salary ranges to try to negotiate a raise for themselves.

Despite these economic and political challenges, many working women continue to have high ambitions and career aspirations. Overall, nearly half of working women (48%) consider themselves "very ambitious" when it comes to their career, which is below early pandemic levels (54% in 2020). Ambition remains highest for women of color with two-thirds of Black women workers (64%) describing themselves

as "very ambitious," nearly the same as last year's poll (66%). Meanwhile, more than half of Hispanic women (52%) consider themselves "very ambitious," slightly lower than last year's survey (55%).

"Pay transparency laws enacted within the last year might help finally eliminate the persistent wage gap between men and women—but they haven't yet," said Laura Wronski, director of research at Momentive. "Nearly half of workers are unaware that companies are publishing salaries for open roles, but as awareness increases workplace norms around pay are ripe for disruption."

Additional key findings from the survey include:

### MANY WORKING WOMEN CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE

### WITH STRESS AND BURNOUT

- Around three in 10 women (28%) say the biggest source of work-related stress stems from being overwhelmed at their job.

- This year, 24% of women report working more hours per week than they were a year ago, while 45% are working about as many hours as before and just 20% report working fewer hours now, which is all unchanged from the 2022 survey.

### PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES AND PAY TRANSPARENCY

- More working women than working men (41% and 33%, respectively) say they have not heard about newly published salary ranges, and relatively few of either gender (12% and 16%, respectively) say they've used published salary

**'Pay transparency laws enacted within the last year might help finally eliminate the persistent wage gap between men and women—but they haven't yet. Nearly half of workers are unaware that companies are publishing salaries for open roles, but as awareness increases workplace norms around pay are ripe for disruption.'**

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## Congratulations

to the nominees from Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles!



**CEO of the Year**

**Theresa Edy Kiene**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Mentor of the Year**

**Hon. Sandra Klein**  
U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the  
Central District of California



**Community  
Impact Advocate**

**Tania Van Herle**  
Co-CEO of HED;  
Vice Chair, GSGLA Board of Directors



**Executive of the Year**

**Brenda Zamzow**  
Chief Financial and  
Administrative Officer

ranges to try to negotiate a raise for themselves.

- Among working women, 44% report their salaries have increased in the last 12 months, a slight uptick from 40% who reported salary increases one year ago. Another 39% say their salary is about the same as it was a year ago, while 15% say their salary is lower now. Among working men, 42% say their salary is higher, 39% say it is about the same, and 17% say it is lower than it was a year ago.

- More than half of working women (65%) have been stationary in their positions over the past 12 months despite claims of a “great resignation,” compared to 33% who are considering an exit now or have already exited.

**WOMEN ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO SAY ABORTION ACCESS IS A KEY FACTOR WHEN CONSIDERING JOB LOCATION**

- Younger working women are some of the most motivated by last year’s Supreme Court ruling: 32% of working women age 18-34 say they will not work in a state that limits or bans access to abortion, compared to 18% of working women age 35-64 and 21% of working women 65 and over.

- Working women that earn a higher income are more apt to view this as impacting their lives: 29% of working women that make \$100,000 or more say they will not work in a state that limits or bans access to abortion, compared to 23% of women with incomes of \$50,000-\$99,999 and 21% of women with incomes under \$50,000.

- Nearly three-quarters of men (73%) say

the overturning of Roe v. Wade has made no difference in where they are willing to work, while 15% say they will not work in a state that limits or bans abortion and 10% say they will only work in a state that limits or bans abortion.

The CNBC/Momentive Women at Work

online poll was conducted February 14-21, 2023 among a national sample of 10,278 adults, including 5,420 women. Respondents for this survey were selected from the more than two million people who take surveys on the Momentive platform each day. The modeled error estimate for this survey is plus or minus 1.5 percentage point. Data have been

weighted for age, race, sex, education, and geography using the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey to reflect the demographic composition of the United States age 18 and over.

Complete results of the survey can be found at [momentive.ai](https://momentive.ai).



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**empower others**

A great mentor is someone who possesses the remarkable ability to inspire, guide, and empower others, igniting a spark of potential and pushing them towards their own greatness. Congratulations to Withum partner, Kim Ravenell, a Mentor of the Year finalist at the Los Angeles Business Journal’s Women’s Leadership Awards, — for providing her invaluable support that has transformed lives and fostered personal and professional growth.



[withum.com/women-of-withum](https://withum.com/women-of-withum)

# Training Program Initiative Seeks to Increase Number of Women in Construction

Funds will help remove barriers to women, non-binary and underserved populations entering building and construction trades in California

Late last year, The California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and its Division of Apprenticeship Standards, on behalf of the Labor & Workforce Development Agency, announced the availability of \$25 million in funding to improve access to training and employment opportunities for women, non-binary and underserved populations within the building and construction trades. The Equal Representation in Construction Apprenticeship grant funds will be used to cover childcare costs and improve outreach.

"The money from this grant will help remove obstacles to entering this industry," said DIR Director Katie S. Hagen. "When we spoke with women in construction, they told us childcare costs were one of the biggest barriers to working in the trade. We want to

encourage organizations to utilize this funding to remove barriers, support parents and get creative in reaching out to these historically underserved groups in the construction trades."

The grant aims to help organizations that are already working to assist women, non-binary and underserved communities to enter the construction trades. Community-based organizations, local education agencies, workforce boards, unions and other organizations that support equity in the construction industry are eligible to apply.

"In California, women and non-binary individuals make up only 3.5 percent of active apprentices in the building and construction trades," said Labor Secretary Natalie Palugyai. "When we stop to think about why, it's in large part because construction is widely viewed as a man's job. We want to change that. By providing childcare supportive services and expanding our outreach to new and underserved populations, we will support access and equity in the construction industry, while also helping to meet its urgent need for skilled workers."

California has invested significantly in apprenticeship via the 2022-2023 state budget including an additional \$15 Million to

augment the 2021-2022 investment of \$15 Million into a Women in Construction Priority Program at DIR.

The grant funds complement the recently released Advancing Apprenticeship in California: A Five-Point Action Plan to expand the state's number of apprentices to a half-million by 2029 with equity at the center of that strategy.

The Department of Industrial Relations' Division of Apprenticeship Standards consults with employers to develop a skilled workforce, by establishing innovative apprenticeship programs that offer training, to create viable career pathways for Californians.

The California Department of Industrial



Relations, established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws.

Learn more at [dir.ca.gov](http://dir.ca.gov).

## Congratulations!

Omoné O. Livingston  
 MSCE, CCM, ENV SP  
 Founder, President & CEO

O2EPCM, Inc.  
 dba O2 Engineering, Projects  
 & Construction Management

2023 Los Angeles Business Journal  
 Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards  
 WOMAN TO WATCH AWARD FINALIST



O2EPCM, Inc. is humbled and honored by this nomination and wishes to thank the Los Angeles Business Journal, our nominator (Lisa C. Sachs, FAIA, FCMAA, CCM), clients, and well wishers for your continuing support.

Congratulations to all the other Los Angeles Business Journal 2023 Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards nominees and finalists for their accomplishments!

