

# womanink

Buffalo Niagara Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners

Winter 2025



## EACH One Reach ONE

NAWBO BUFFALO NIAGARA **MEGA MIXER**  
National Association of Women Business Owners



May 14  
2025  
4:00-8:30 PM



**NAWBO**  
BUFFALO NIAGARA  
National Association of Women Business Owners

EVENT SPONSOR



**BANK OF AMERICA**

Buffalo Niagara Marriott | Amherst, NY | [www.nawbowny.org](http://www.nawbowny.org)

## Message from the President



**Patti Mancabelli**

### Attending a National NAWBO Event: Why You Can't Miss the 2025 Experience in Washington, D.C.

As business owners, we navigate challenges and celebrate wins, often in our own silos. But what happens when you step outside those boundaries and immerse yourself in a room full of innovative, driven women who are shaping the future of business? Magic happens. That's exactly what the NAWBO delivers with its National Events, and the upcoming conference in Washington, D.C., June 5-8 promises to be no exception.

Here's why attending a National NAWBO Event can be a transformative experience for you and your business:

**1. Unparalleled Networking Opportunities.** National NAWBO Events bring together women business owners from across the country, representing a diverse range of industries and experiences. This isn't just a networking event – it's an opportunity to build meaningful relationships with women who understand your journey. Whether you're looking for mentorship, collaboration opportunities, or simply someone who "gets it," these connections can be invaluable.

**2. Advocacy and Empowerment.** Washington, D.C., is the perfect backdrop for this year's event because it places us where NAWBO started fifty years ago. NAWBO's is the voice of women business owners, and this event brings those voices together for education sessions, a partner briefing, group meetings on the Hill and, of course, the annual group photo on the steps of the Capitol. Experience the empowerment of speaking out on issues most important to all women business owners.

**3. Access to Thought Leaders and Game-Changing Ideas.** The lineup at National NAWBO Events is always top-notch. Leadership Onboarding, Membership Meeting, and the National Women's Business Conference, concluding with the Annual Awards Gala. The 50th event sessions are designed around NAWBO'S three pillars of Education, Leadership and Advocacy and our Keynote is Actress & Social Justice Humanitarian Ashley Judd! This experience provides insights into emerging trends, practical strategies, and innovative ideas that can help you take your business to the next level.

**4. A Recharge for Your Business and Your Spirit.** Running a business is rewarding, but it can also be exhausting. Attending a National NAWBO Event is like hitting the reset button. You'll leave feeling energized, inspired, and ready to tackle the challenges ahead with renewed focus. It's an investment in yourself – and by extension, your business.

**5. A Chance to Celebrate Our Collective Success.** One of the most powerful aspects of an in-person National NAWBO Event is the sense of community. It's a reminder that while our individual paths may look different, we are united by a shared mission to grow our businesses, empower others, and create lasting impact. Together, we celebrate how far we've come – and dream about what's next.

The June 2025 NAWBO Event in Washington, D.C., is more than just a conference; it's a call to action. It's a reminder that when women come together, incredible things happen. So mark your calendar, pack your business cards, and prepare for an experience that could redefine your path forward. See you in DC! ☺

**Patti Mancabelli is the President of NAWBO Buffalo Niagara 2024/2025 and owner of Mancabelli Law PLLC**

## Prioritizing Wellness as a Business Owner



**Stephanie Kennedy**

As a business owner, it's easy to put the needs of your business above your own. Deadlines, client demands, and the constant pursuit of growth can make self-care seem like a luxury rather than a necessity. However, prioritizing wellness isn't just about personal health – it's about ensuring your business thrives, too.

That is the reason that wellness is this year's theme for our programming for NAWBO Buffalo-Niagara.

Here are a few ways to maintain wellness as a business owner:

**1. Set Boundaries.** Define your work hours and stick to them. Overworking may feel productive in the moment, but long-term success depends on sustaining your energy.

**2. Practice Delegation.** You don't have to do everything yourself. Trust your team or outsource tasks to avoid burnout and focus on what you do best.

**3. Schedule Breaks.** Even small pauses during the day can improve mental clarity and reduce stress. Try stepping away for a quick walk or a few minutes of mindfulness.

**4. Stay Active.** Regular exercise boosts mood, reduces stress, and improves overall energy levels. Find an activity you enjoy and make it part of your routine.

**5. Connect with Others.** Being a business owner can feel isolating. Lean on your network for support, whether that's through mentorship, collaboration, or simply sharing experiences.

Your well-being is the foundation of your business. By prioritizing your health, you're better equipped to lead, innovate, and grow sustainably. Remember: a thriving business starts with a thriving owner. ☺

**Stephanie Kennedy is the owner of Reach Digital Media Solutions.**



# M&T Bank

**Jennifer Huber, Vice President**

M&T Center  
575 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
(716) 349-0136

 Equal Housing Lender. ©2024 M&T Bank. Member FDIC. [mtb.com](http://mtb.com)

# MANCABELLI LAW PLLC BUSINESS COUNSEL

## Injured? Call The Coppola Firm.

*"David Goodman went above and beyond to guide me through my case. I was blessed to have his knowledge and expertise. He took away my anxiety of going through such a traumatic experience. There are not enough words to express my gratitude."*

-L. R.

## Real. Ready.



David Goodman



Lisa Coppola

4033 Maple Road, Suite 100, Buffalo, NY 14226  
716.839.9700 | [www.coppolalegal.com](http://www.coppolalegal.com)



GREEN PASTURES STILL  
WATERS IS EXPANDING!



EMBRACE THE POWER OF HEALTH

**716-922-2772**

1413 Hertel Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14216  
(entrance on North Park)

– chair lift installed for seniors –

Our commitment to you is to create a truly holistic and unique experience, in a caring and professional environment. Services include medical, sports, and relaxing massages; relaxing and therapeutic body treatments.

Green Pastures Still Waters Wellness Center now offers

- Personal trainers
- Day spa
- Reki
- Fitness classes
- Tap dancing
- Tai chi
- Kick boxing
- Massage

## Year-End Planning: Essential Steps for a Strong Start to 2025



Heather Jackson-Fassari

Now is the ideal time for businesses to reflect on this past year's performance and prepare for the opportunities and challenges of 2025. Effective year-end planning can strengthen financial health, streamline operations, and ensure a smoother transition into the new year.

Here are some essential steps to consider.

**Develop a Strategic Foundation.** Having a strategic plan is one of the most important drivers of your business. Your plan should include an understanding of the current state of your business and the development of your strategic goals, as well as the tactical steps needed to achieve your goals. A one-page business plan for the upcoming year is a great way for a concise and easy to follow plan that can be shared with key stakeholders.

**Budget for Financial Success.** Your financials are another key driver of your business. You should have a good understanding of current financials and what they mean. In addition to reviewing your current financials, you should also have a budget for next year. Consider new products or services and see where you can reduce costs. This should be part of your strategic planning process.

**Prepare for Taxes.** Having clean financials is key in preparing for tax filings. Be sure to have receipts and documentation organized in case you are asked by your tax accountant. Confirm that payroll and sales taxes are being filed properly, if applicable. Review your payroll numbers to ensure the accuracy of your employees' W-2s. You may also be responsible for issuing 1099 forms to contractors or suppliers that you have paid.

**Review Contracts & Policies.** You also want to review any contracts and important documents, such as insurances, employee benefit packages, supplier contracts, equipment leases, and loan documents. Maintaining schedules of these documents is helpful all year round to keep up on renewals and rate changes.

As you can see, year-end preparation isn't just about wrapping up your financials. It is also about revisiting your strategy, planning for next year, and ensuring that your business is streamlined. Having all these components in place helps you operate more efficiently, makes tax time run smoothly, and sets your business up for success in the new year. ☺

Heather Jackson-Fassari is the owner of Interlink CFO.

## Seeking Nominations



Laura Zimberg

As you may know, NAWBO Buffalo Niagara is actively seeking outstanding candidates to join our chapter's board of directors. Each year, some board members complete their terms, creating an opportunity to bring in fresh perspectives and expand our board, which currently has 11 dedicated members. While my fellow board members are truly remarkable, we're excited to grow our leadership team further.

The board plays a vital role in carrying out our mission and setting our goals. Our commitment to the organization's purpose is driven by a sense of public accountability, and the mission guides our planning, decision-making, volunteer efforts, and resource prioritization. It serves as the foundation for fundraising strategies, strategic planning, and all other board responsibilities.

As part of the Buffalo Niagara Chapter Board, members uphold a fiduciary duty to serve both our members and our partners, overseeing the chapter's affairs and maintaining a strong vision and strategy. Board members also help shape and implement policies, ensure organizational effectiveness, and deliver member value.

The Nominations Committee invites candidates with the following leadership attributes and qualifications to apply:

- Membership: A NAWBO Premier (voting) member in good standing.
- Committed to NAWBO's Core Values, including Humility, Integrity, a Servant Heart, Team Spirit, Open-Mindedness, Reliability, Inspiration, and Communication ("HISTORIC").

An application will be available in the soon. Also available to you, on request, are:

- 1.) Chapter bylaws; 2.) Board member expectations; and 3.) The Ten Responsibilities of a Board

Feel free to reach out to Jeanne Hellert (info@nawbowny.org) for any of these important documents.

Thank you for considering applying for this most important role. The NAWBO National CEO Jen Earle always says, "teamwork makes the dream work." ☺

Please reach out to Jeanne or any of the Nomination Committee members with your questions:

Buffalo Niagara Nomination Committee: Laura Zimberg, LMT – chair

Lisa Coppola, Paula D'Amico, Christine Howard, Jackie Lennert, Andrea Schillaci, committee members

Stephanie Kennedy and Jeanne Hellert, non-voting members

Laura Zimberg is the owner of Green Pastures Still Waters, LLC.

## Family Owned Since 1982

Amrex Chemical Co., Inc. is a wholesale chemical distributor headquartered in Binghamton, NY. We purchase chemicals from suppliers throughout the country as well as imported material. Amrex Chemical services its customers throughout New York State, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey with our own fleet of vehicles and our staff of dedicated drivers.

Amrex Chemical Co. Inc. was founded in 1982 in Binghamton, NY by William F. Rexer, Jr. at its headquarters location on East Frederick Street. Over the next 30 years, the company has expanded throughout the Southern Tier of New York with multiple warehousing locations. In 2004, the company expanded into Western New York with the purchase of our Buffalo location on Exchange Street.



# AMREX

CHEMICAL CO., INC.

**CHEMISTRY IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF LIFE**

*Main Office*

*Buffalo Office*

[www.amrexchemical.com](http://www.amrexchemical.com)  
Mailing Address  
P.O. Box 642  
Binghamton, NY 13902

Main Office  
117 East Frederick Street  
Binghamton, NY 13904  
Ph. (607) 772-8784  
Fax (607) 772-8786

Buffalo Office  
391 Exchange Street  
Buffalo, NY 14204  
Ph. (716) 852-7245  
Fax (716) 852-0889

## Why Does DEIB Matter?



**Janna  
Willoughby-Lohr**

When I became the chair of the DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) committee, I wanted to put the bulk of my focus on “Inclusion” and “Belonging” for our chapter. I had a few reasons for outlining this path. We were one of the first NAWBO chapters to have any DEIB focus and programming with our DEIB Taskforce that we started in 2020. Initially our goals were to increase the representation of women of color in our membership and in our leadership—which we have made significant strides towards equal representation. We’re not there yet, but we have consistently had at least 30% of the board as women of color since 2021. These goals were a great start, but as DEIB has had a rise and fall in social popularity, the “Inclusion” and “Belonging” have definitely taken a back seat to the “Diversity” and “Equity” monikers. I believe in the power of education and as “DEI” has unfortunately become an insult in some circles, I wanted to work to help our NAWBO members, and our community in Western New York, to understand more about what DEIB really stands for and why it matters so much.

Focusing on making sure that more types of people are included and feel like they belong in NAWBO has got to be central to our mission as a chapter. If people don’t feel welcomed, heard, respected and represented by our group, then they will choose to spend their time (and money) elsewhere. We all know that NAWBO provides so much value to us all as women business owners because of our genuine care and concern for one another’s lives and businesses. They don’t call it a sisterhood for nothing. And helping our NAWBO sisters to expand their view of the vast myriad of ways that women business owners are different—well beyond the color of their skin—is my mission as chair of the DEIB committee.

I am focusing primarily on our active inclusion of people of different abilities, income levels and backgrounds in order to make our chapter a place where all women business owners can come to learn, grow and support one another. As Lisha Bell said, during a DEIB roundtable event I attended recently, “Please prioritize marginalized people’s needs over others’ discomfort.” Remind yourself that if you don’t personally think a change or accommodation is worth the effort to implement, it’s likely that you have the privilege to not need it in order to participate. I think as our chapter works and grows to be more inclusive, we should all try to remember that we have a responsibility to serve our community in the ways they need in order to help all women business owners to thrive, and it’s harder to be what our people really need than what others may want us to be. ☺

**Janna Willoughby-Lohr is the owner of Papercraft Miracles.**

## Find Your People



**Aly Luccari**

When our President announced, “Find Your People” as her mantra for the 2024-2025 term, I thought, “Okay, that makes sense.”

When looking at broadening our membership base, “Find Your People” echoed in my head and my heart. I knew I would find “our people” in the beautiful villages throughout the Buffalo Niagara region. *Visiting Villages* was created. This is a small gathering of our members visiting brick and mortar locations, to connect with the owners and in most cases supporting them with mini shopping sprees. These opportunities have expanded my knowledge of women-owned shops, their needs and challenges.

When looking at adding true value to the woman-owned business community for those outside of the Buffalo Niagara chapter, *Open Office Hours* was created. This event is an opportunity for any woman owned business to connect with a respected professional for quality Q&A time.

Leave it to the creative energy of Janna Willoughby Lohr to come up with an additional event, *Business Panel for Creatives*. This idea led to a *Creatives Panel for Business*. Both “energies” have a lot to offer each other.

This is what NAWBO is about: learning, growing, and raising each other up.

That is what happens when you “Find your People!”

Being able to share these events with our members and all women business owners, brings our chapter great joy. ☺

**Aly Luccari is the owner of  
Bright Organizing Solutions, LLC.**



**Suzanne M. Novelli**

Registered Representative  
and Financial Advisor  
Park Avenue Securities



*Define Your Future*

600 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
cell 716.445-7442  
tel 716.817-7109  
1.800.777.3411  
fax 716.817-7117  
suzanne\_m\_novelli@glic.com

www.allianceadvisorygroup.com



**Your partner in finding  
solutions to business formation,  
contracts, disputes, dissolutions,  
and employment issues.**

716 849 8900  
hurwitzfine.com

**THRUWAY**

**Michele Jenkins**

PRESIDENT

P: 800.905.9411  
E: MJenkins@ThruwayInc.com  
ThruwayInc.com



**JS CURRY & ASSOCIATES, LLC**  
MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

**Schuyler Larkin VanSchoonhoven**  
Owner / President

716.877.6502  
1890 Niagara Street  
Buffalo, NY 14207  
sky@ingersollpainting.com

ingersollpainting.com



**THE MACKBARR GROUP**  
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS & ISSUE MANAGEMENT  
www.themackbarrgroup.com

**womanink** 2024/2025 Editor: Jeanne Hellert; Design/Layout: White Rabbit Design

**Articles**

Email submissions: info@nawbowny.org. Contributed articles must be original work; previously published works must be accompanied by publisher's authorization to reprint. *womanink* reserves the right to edit contributed articles for clarity and length, and reserves the right to refuse to publish any contributed article.

**Advertising**

**ANNUAL AD RATES AND SIZES:**

Ads run in 2 hard-copy issues (typically Fall and Winter)  
Full pg (7 1/2" x 10")\$1,000 Half pg (7 1/2" x 4 3/4") \$525  
Quarter pg (3 3/4" x 4 3/4")\$225 Business card (3 1/8" x 1 7/8") \$125

**Specs**

Please send your business card and a check (made payable to NAWBO) to: Jeanne Hellert, P.O. Box 1165, Orchard Park, NY 14127. For electronic submissions: PDF, eps, or tif. Email files or questions to: info@nawbowny.org.



## 2025 EVENTS

---

### **2025 Monthly Dinner Meetings**

**Wednesdays • 5:30 pm**

**February 12th**

**March 12th**

**April 9th**

### **2025 Virtual Chapter meetings & Networking**

**Monday, January 27th • 6:30 – 8:00 pm**

**Thursday, February 20th • 6:30 – 8:00 pm**

### **Mastermind facilitated by Lynn Tranchell • Third Tuesday at 12 pm on Zoom**

**January 21st**

**February 18th**

**March 18th**

**April 15th**

**May 20th**

**June 17th**

### **NAWBO Next Gen Network Now**

**Thursday, March 6, 2025** | Lessons in Rapid Relations

### **NAWBO Each One Reach One**

**Wednesday, May 14, 2025** Our premier event! A fabulous, one-of-a-kind networking mega mixer, presented by NAWBO Buffalo Niagara and sponsored by Bank of America.

### **NAWBO National Women's Business Conference**

**June 5-8, 2025**

**Wednesday, June 11, 2025** "NAWBO Buffalo Niagara Officer & Board Installation & Dinner"