# woman in Minter/Spring 2018



March 14, 2018

# VVNY's Largest

**Annual Networking Event for Women Business Owners** 

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### 2018 Programs

Programs are subject to change

Location Hyatt Place

Cost

Time

5020 Main St.

me 5:30 p.m. Networking

6:00 p.m. Dinner

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\$35 member • \$40 guest

RSVP

by noon the Friday prior to the event.

#### Make your dinner reservation online at: www.nawbowny.org

Include your full name, telephone number (guests include name of NAWBO member who invited you).

Mail pre-payment (check payable to NAWBO) to: NAWBO, P.O. Box 1165, Orchard Park, NY 14127.

We accept PayPal and major credit cards: log onto our website and follow prompts for payment.

Questions? Contact our chapter administrator, Jeanne Hellert at 238-2461 or info@nawbowny.org.

#### March 14, 2018

### Each One Reach One 2018

Our fabulous, one-of-a-kind event – the 8th Annual Each One Reach One networking mega mixer – presented by NAWBO Buffalo Niagara and our Event Sponsor, Thruway, is just around the corner. Our committee has worked really hard to make this event the best yet.

#### April 11, 2018

### #EmpowerYourself: Longevity

As business owners, we need to protect our business. Come listen to our panelists provide insight on what can kill your business ranging from insurance, finances, employees, certifications, and more. Come listen to their experiences, advice, best practices, and stories.

#### May 9, 2018

### #EmpowerYourself: Tomorrow

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#### June 13, 2018

### #EmpowerYourself: Party at the Park

Come join us for our annual board installation, reception, and networking at The Park Country Club.

### NAWBO Buffalo Niagara

NAWBO Buffalo Niagara is the premier organization for women business owners who aspire to accomplish growth, education, and connections.

#### **NAWBO**

The National Association of Women Business
Owners propels women entrepreneurs into economic, social, and political spheres of power worldwide by:

#### Strengthening

the wealth creating capacity of our members and promoting economic development within the entrepreneurial community

- **Creating** innovative and effective changes in the business culture
- **Building** strategic alliances, coalitions, and affiliations

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Patty Zimmerman, Vice President - 716.799.6966

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#### President's Remarks



#### The Power Of NAWBO

As president of this outstanding association I have had the pleasure and opportunity to meet a variety of knowledgeable and powerfully connected people in our community who understand the value of what we bring to our members and to Western New York.

Nick Sinatra, developer and founder of Sinatra & Company

Real Estate, understands that "NAWBO is doing such important work in our community, empowering women in a variety of fields, from non-profit to technology-centered. Their programming makes sure these women leaders are set up for success in both their professional and personal lives. Those NAWBO members that I have business dealings with really bring to the table a strong acumen and wisdom, but also a sense of community and mentorship based on their involvement with the organization."

I have also had the great fortune to meet with members to discuss what NAWBO Buffalo Niagara means to them, and how they get the most out of their membership. So many members have emphasized how this organization is a comfortable way to be part of a trusted network of women. Yes, our members are women business owners, but NAWBO provides opportunities to connect with other women and men in a professional role. Collaborating and learning from others makes us stronger and more empowered business owners.

This proved true with our "Start a Conversation" campaign, a collaboration with local high schools, to provide mentorship for female high school seniors. I applaud the superintendents, school officials, teachers, and everyone else who worked with NAWBO Buffalo Niagara to help these young women broaden their horizons and expand what entrepreneurship can mean to them. We had nearly 40 NAWBO members meet as mentors with 250 students during a five-week period. The campaign easily touched over 300 people in our community. Plus, this campaign will expand its reach: Niagara Falls High School will host a 30-minute segment featuring mentors and students that will be broadcast on Channel 21. "Start a Conversation" was so well received that more schools are inquiring about getting this campaign into their classrooms. And THAT is the power of NAWBO!

Enthusiastically,

Marcia Brogan, President NAWBO Buffalo Niagara Chapter

Marcia C Brogan

#### **Diamond Chapter Partner**

### Patty Zimmerman KeyBank

KeyBank is a full service bank that provides financial resources to assist businesses in starting up, growing and expanding their businesses. We have large bank capabilities delivered locally. At KeyBank we are focused on building client relationships and providing them with expert advice and exceptional customer service. We continue to grow and support our communities. In WNY alone, we built four new branches in 2010, another four in 2011 and completed over 30 branch remodels. We also acquired 26 HSBC branches in 2012 and converted them to KeyBank branches, expanding our presence throughout WNY and making banking with KeyBank more convenient than ever. In addition, 2013 marked the final year of Key's three-year commitment to lend \$5 billion to qualified small businesses as part of the SBA's Preferred Lender Program.

One of the areas that really sets KeyBank apart from our competitors is our Key4Women initiative. Key4Women is designed especially for women entrepreneurs and offers fresh ideas and creative financial solutions to "help women entrepreneurs reach their dreams." Key4Women provides women business owners with access to capital, customized service, educational content and networking opportunities; membership is free for Key clients. When Key4Women launched in 2005, Key committed to lend \$1 billion to women-owned firms within three years. Then we raised the goal to \$2 billion within five years. We met and exceeded that goal three years ahead of schedule, lending a total of \$3 billion. As a result, Key4Women planned to lend an additional \$3 billion to women-owned firms by 2012—a goal again achieved ahead of schedule. In the process, Key4Women has helped women business owners of every size access capital for a range of needs, including working capital augmentation, business expansion, purchasing equipment and real estate.

# KeyBank



Patty Zimmerman, Vice President 1930 Niagara Falls Blvd. • Tonawanda NY 14150 • www.keybank.com 716-799-6966 • fax 716-692-0294 • patricia\_zimmerman@keybank.com

# womanin k

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Patti Mancabelli (Mancabelli Law PLLC)

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#### Articles

Email submissions: abrackenridge31@gmail.com. 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.

WOMANink is an information service for the NAWBO Buffalo Niagara Chapter's members and other women business owners. Published in hard copy twice per year (typically September and February). Circulation: approximately 750.

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Ads run in 2 hard-copy issues (typically Fall and Winter)

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# Start A Conversation:

# NAWBO Members Mentoring Youth



Marcia Broga

This year, NAWBO had the wonderful opportunity to partner with local high schools (Niagara Falls, Buffalo Public Schools, Cheektowaga Sloan, and Mount St. Mary's Academy) for its first "Start a Conversation" campaign. This campaign allowed us to meet with female high school seniors to discuss

entrepreneurship and open their minds to the possibility of owning their own business.

I was pleasantly surprised how the concept was eagerly welcomed by the school administrators and teachers and how seamlessly they incorporated our NAWBO mentors into their class schedules. It was no easy task for them to secure dates, times, and locations but they were willing to go the extra mile to enable us to reach the young ladies. Plus, our membership was so eager to give of themselves that we had a tremendous outpouring of support and involvement! We had nearly 40 members give their time and talent to share their knowledge, experience, and advice. We have 15 members that want to participate again!

Our members/mentors visited over 10 high schools and reached close to 300 students, administrators, and teachers in a 6-week period! The Niagara Falls High School took it one step further and will be creating an infomercial that NAWBO Buffalo-Niagara and their school can use to showcase this collaboration. NAWBO will also be hosting a 30-minute talk show on Channel 21 during which members/mentors and students can share their experience with this campaign. The outreach this program will have is limitless! A special thank you to all NAWBO members involved for your servant leadership and for paying it forward to our future women entrepreneurs!

Marcia Brogan is owner of Marcia L. Brogan Ins. Agency, LLC



Member Mary Szabat with Niagara Falls students.



Amy Christieso

What a pleasure it was to be part of the NAWBO Buffalo Niagara Start A Conversation movement! For those of you who don't know what this movement is, it's an opportunity for NAWBO members to meet with groups of young women from various high schools across WNY. The platform for the "conversation" is to

share with the young women stories from our entrepreneurial journey and allow them the opportunity to ask questions about our career path, lessons learned, and philosophies.

My Start A Conversation experience was at Niagara Falls High School. In my group, there was a young woman that was extremely shy, uncomfortable shaking hands and very quiet. Aside from this, she was kind and willing to share her thoughts. I got one word answers at first, then a sentence or two, she shared with me her thoughts for the future, her likes and dislikes about her current internship through NFHS and how she has eliminated one of her future career choices and was now thinking about a different path.

After the session, I learned from a school administrator that this young woman said more to me in 45 minutes than she had said to anyone the entire school year. She shows up to class, but sleeps during class or puts her head on the table and doesn't interact with others. They put her in my group to see how she would respond and were thrilled that she interacted at all.

Each and every NAWBO member has their story from the Start A Conversation movement and together NAWBO Buffalo Niagara is making a difference in the lives of young women across WNY.

Amy Christieson is owner of Benefit Brokers of WNY



Niagara Falls students with NAWBO President Marcia Brogan.

# A huge THANK YOU to all those who have participated in the "Start A Conversation" program!

# **Niagara Falls High School:**

Superintendent: Mark Laurie Joe Bellonte: Teacher on Special Assignment & Career Coordinator

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Regis O'Connor Analytics | O'Connor Analytics LLC

**Dana Dee** Long Term Care Insurance | ACSIA Partners

**Emily Kuch** Financial Advisor | Merrill Lynch

# A Bright Future:

# Starting a Conversation at Bennett High School



Going into a high school when you're not even 10 years older than the girls you're talking to is both empowering and intimidating. Intimidating, because you go in thinking, "Will they like me? Will I stand out as a role model for them? Will I be able to show them that they can do anything they set their minds to?" Empowering, because

I was able to exhibit what only a short five years out of high school can do for your ability and your confidence.

The important part about "starting the conversation" is ensuring that, in the future, these young women are calling the shots for themselves and making their own decisions. It's also about giving them the confidence to do whatever they set their minds to. It's just so important for these girls to know that our NAWBO members believe in their worth and their ability. These girls showed me that they are ready to take on the world as they figure out their best path.

If we are able to instill that confidence in them now, what bright days are ahead as these young women lead by example. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for them!

Stephanie Kennedy is owner of Reach Digital Media Solutions



Stephanie Kennedy with students from Bennett High School.

#### Diamond Chapter Partner

### Mark Martin M&T Bank

Buffalo is fortunate to have many innovators, creative leaders and people unafraid to take ambitious risks. Driven by inspiration, tireless hard work and an entrepreneurial attitude, they are making meaningful and measurable impacts on our community.

That's one of the reasons my colleagues and I at M&T Bank support NAWBO. We understand how important it is to provide information and insights to local businesses, and to recognize the achievements of women entrepreneurs in the Western New York market.

At M&T Bank, we are dedicated to helping our neighbors succeed and our communities thrive. It starts with our commitment to understand what's important to our customers. We get to know them, their needs and their priorities in order to help them achieve their goals. We take a similar approach to serving our communities—working to understand what

matters most, so we can do our part to help Buffalo, and the entire WNY region, grow even stronger.

M&T Bank and NAWBO Buffalo Niagara share this community-focused mission. Together, we will make the future of Buffalo shine bright. M&T Bank is pleased to partner with NAWBO and its members to assist in promoting the success of women-owned businesses in our WNY community.



Mark L. Martin
M&T Bank, WNY Business Banking Regional Manager

# Who Represents Me?

# NAWBO Members Meet with Local Elected Officials

In a first of its kind local event, NAWBO Buffalo Niagara connected women entrepreneurs and the female elected officials who represent them. "This is the first step in engagement," said Sherrie Barr Mack, NAWBO Buffalo Niagara's Public Policy Committee Chair.

On January 29, NAWBO members had a unique opportunity to share their concerns with local leaders. The powerful women in politics from across the Western New York area who attended the event shared what inspired and motivated them, and how they hope to spark a change for women, men, and families.

According to the Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, only 25.1% of those serving in state legislatures and less than 20% serving in the US Congress are women. Across the country, there are only six women governors and 12 women lieutenant governors, including Kathy Hochul.

NAWBO is working to ignite a passion for politics in the hearts of women across the country and encourages more women to consider a run for public office.



City of Lockport Mayor Anne McCaffrey discusses issues with NAWBO members Sally Gower and Janna Willoughby-Lohr.



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Lcouzo@sunbeltnetwork.com www.sunbeltbuffalo.com

Lidia Couzo.CBI

Vice President / COO

Cell: 716-465-6275

# What is a Mentor?

"A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself." - Oprah Winfrey



**Katharine Smith** 

I've gathered together some of the most profound and helpful thoughts on mentoring that have affected me through the years.

"Giving your time, knowledge, understanding, empathy, and support to other people can have a huge ROI . . . Be especially vigilant for opportunities to help other women by being a

sponsor or mentor. This can lead to improved opportunities for both of you via reciprocity. Plus, it sets a positive example and is good karma. Helping other women claim their power and passion is always a sound investment. When the hands that rock the cradle join together, they really can rule the world."

- Dr. Nancy D. O'Reilly, Leading Women: 20 Influential Women Share Their Secrets to Leadership, Business, and Life.

"Everyone has a transferable commodity-knowledge. Sharing your unique expertise and making introductions for someone creates a lasting legacy."

- Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn, Tennessee

"Search for role models you can look up to and people who take an interest in your career. But here's an important warning: you don't have to have mentors who look like you. Had I been waiting for a black, female Soviet specialist mentor, I would still be waiting. Most of my mentors have been old white men, because they were the ones who dominated my field."

- Condoleeza Rice, U.S. Secretary of State for President George W. Bush

"Mentoring is as vital a training tool in the small business arena as it is in the corporate world. Established women business owners who share their knowledge and expertise with the next generation of women entrepreneurs are providing them with real-world experience that simply cannot be taught in the classroom or a textbook."

- Sheila Wellington, former president of Catalyst, a global nonprofit working with some of the world's most powerful CEOs and leading companies to help build workplaces that work for women

"Not to put a lot of pressure on those who have the opportunity to work in a mentorship relationship, but you really can make a difference. Working in an office, on a farm, in a school, or on a basketball or swim team are all opportunities to mentor. These opportunities to broaden horizons and direct people to healthy decisions are much like watering the garden."

- Cathy Moore, registered dietician, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County. Excerpt from Watertown Daily Times article, June 3, 2017.

"Think about what you need to learn. Seek out mentors who can help you learn it. Let's say you have a small catering company specializing in weddings, parties, and family reunions. You'd like to expand into the healthcare conference arena but know nothing about the field. You might reach out to someone who plans such conferences and offer to trade services perhaps cater an upcoming event for free or for a greatly reduced price - in exchange for the chance to learn and get a foot in the door.

You're not asking for something for free. You're also bringing something to the table. Who knows: The other entrepreneur's clients may love your fresh approach, and it could result in the two of you starting a whole new venture."

- Dr. Nancy D. O'Reilly, Leading Women: 20 Influential Women Share Their Secrets to Leadership, Business, and Life.

"Small business, you can give them capital, but what they often need as much is mentoring, advice, and help with their business plan."

- Karen Mills, administrator of U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for President Barack Obama

"Get away from these two types of people: the ones who think you can only go as far as the situation you were born into; and the ones who think you can only go as far as the current situation you are in."

- Dee Dee M. Scott, author, playwright, film producer, and entrepreneur ®

Katharine Smith is the founder of White Rabbit Design. Katharine is a NAWBO founding member and has been a member since 1994.









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"Lisa Coppola has been our attorney for more than a dozen years. She's attentive to our needs and quickly responds to our calls. For my growing business, it's important to have a responsive and intuitive attorney. Whether it's a contract issue, a human resources challenge, or something more complicated, I trust Lisa's practical and efficient problem-solving."

-Sharada Varanasi CEO, Healthcare Solutions WNY



# Do You Need A Mentor Or A Sponsor?

What's the difference?



It has been said that a great mentor will guide you to the right doors, and a great sponsor will help knock them down for you.

#### **MENTORSHIP:**

Mentorship is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less

knowledgeable person. The mentor may be older or younger than the person being mentored, but he or she must have a certain area of expertise or wisdom. Mentors act as a sounding board, offering advice as needed and support and guidance as requested. Mentors coach. Mentors counsel. Their experience and perspectives are key for helping a mentee to learn how to navigate within the organization.

In today's business world, mentoring processes can be formal (more structured) or informal (built on relationship), and generally include:

- · Voluntary pairing of experienced with less experienced
- · Mutually-agreed goals/expectations
- · Significant relationship building
- The mentor offers knowledge, insights, perspective and wisdom
- The mentoree realizes steps to potential, answers to questions
- · Involves commitment to listening and learning

Recognize that mentoring is not a "buddy system" for onboarding a new person in an organization or a business. It is much deeper than that. It is a one-to-one connection that provides new perspectives for on-going learning, and a safe place where questions and concerns can be shared and discussed within a trusting relationship. Often, a lessexperienced person, recognizing she needs some good guidance, will seek out a person with knowledge, expertise, or perceived wisdom and respectfully ask for an on-going mentoring relationship.

#### SPONSORSHIP:

Often, talented women need more than just the advice and encouragement of a professional mentor. Sponsors are those people in an organization or business who can better position women to advance in the workplace-a powerful person to open doors for you. Unlike a mentor, a sponsor is someone who not only can advise you on your career, but can actively help advance it. They can use their credibility to advocate for you. Having an advocate in a key position in the organization - to go to bat for you, or to introduce stretch assignments that will advance your career - is important.

According to a 2011 Harvard Business Review, sponsors not only advise their charges, they promote, protect, prepare and push them. They provide a broad perspective when they give critical feedback. While mentoring is a gift, a sponsorship is more transactional. A senior person is not going to go out of their way unless you have proven your worth. Sponsors are vested in their protégés, offering guidance and critical feedback because they believe in you. Sponsors find ways to provide growth experiences, challenges to prepare for the next level, and give you an opportunity to shine and prove your value. (You don't want to let your sponsor, or yourself, down.)

Jane Porter, who wrote, Hit the Ground Running for FAST Company, advises several strategies to develop a relationship with a sponsor to fundamentally shift your career. Here are a

- · Join networks filled with influential people look for networks you have access to that have more senior people involved. Make yourself visible. Go the extra mile.
- Build a rapport with a potential sponsor that makes them confident not just in your abilities, but also in your loyalty to them. Seek out several sponsors, male and female. When it comes to women's advancement, men matter the reality is that men occupy 80% of senior business roles in the U.S., so cultivating relationships with male colleagues is also important. We need a push and pull for moving female leaders up the ladder.
- Turn a mentor into a sponsor. Identify someone who could be a great sponsor, and first ask that person to mentor you. Over time, once you've developed a solid rapport and have proven your talents and abilities, the relationship can move into more of a sponsorship dynamic.
- · Understand that sponsors are gatekeepers. You have to keep your best foot forward, inspiring confidence in them that you can handle what's put in front of you. It is a relationship built via one proven step at a time, through one gate at a time.

Should you have both a mentor and a sponsor? Why not? Sylvia Ann Hewlett, female economist and author of Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor (2013) notes that while it is good to have an important, meaningful and successful mentor relationship, a sponsorship is harder to come by - yet the sponsorship can make a much more tangible difference in your career. With a little strategizing, together with strong work performance, and clearly making yourself valuable and visible, you can benefit from finding a powerful person to help open doors for you. So what is the next door that you need to have opened? And what can you do, right now, to start strategizing in that direction?

You seek out mentors and sponsors because you know your own value, because you want to continuously grow and develop and because you know that your contributions to the organization will be even greater as you work to climb the beckoning career ladder. You also know that it is hard to do it alone.



At M&T Bank, we understand that small business is the lifeblood of any thriving community. Which is why we are committed to providing our support and keeping our lending decisions local. See what we can do for your business at your neighborhood branch or mtb.com today.

**Marcie Hartung Business Banking Relationship Manager** 716-839-6848



# Why I Joined NAWBO



NAWBO Buffalo Niagara brings a very specific solution that all women business owners need as we strive for success in all areas of our lives. We share a mutual perspective: we may be business owners, but we are also wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters . . . and our clients mean just as much to us as our families do. As NAWBO

members, we share the same issues of balancing life while striving for achievement in our businesses. NAWBO's strength is in the support and encouragement that our members share with each other, making us that much more successful in our businesses.

Through my NAWBO membership, I've gained confidence and respect from the business community. NAWBO helps its members reach maximum heights; we are recognized and supported for our accomplishments from men and women alike. This organization has given its members a seat at the table in Buffalo and across Western New York.

I am proud to be a NAWBO Buffalo Niagara member and I am proud we are as one voice for our community. @

Gwendolyn A. Bork is a Wealth Advisor with Custom Wealth Strategies.







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