TIAW is proud to announce the recipients of this year’s TIAW World of Difference 100 Awards

Since their creation 10 years ago, the World of Difference 100 Awards have recognized 600 women and men who have supported the economic empowerment for women in the following categories: entrepreneurship, corporate, non-profit, education, public service/government, young women leaders and champions.

Past award recipients include:
- Cherie Blair, Founder of the Cherie Blair Foundation
- Madame Penehupifo Pohamba, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia
- Viviane Reding, Luxembourg, Member of the European Parliament

This year’s recipients cover a wide range of activities on six continents, and TIAW is proud to be able to recognize the vital work that they do.

This year, nominations were received from 54 different countries and provided a vivid look at the inspiring work that women – and men – around the world are doing to support the economic empowerment of women.

The recipients cover a wide range of activities on six continents and we are proud to be able to recognize the vital work that they do, often with few resources and many obstacles.

Congratulations to all the recipients who are making all the difference in the world!

2015 World of Difference Special Award Recipients

Lifetime Achievement Awards

TIAW’s prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes one woman of distinguished, longstanding achievements towards economic empowerment for women.

This award has been bestowed upon global trailblazers such as:
- Selima Ahmad, Bangladesh (2015)
- Melanne Verveer, USA (2013/14)
- Candace Johnson, France (2012)
- Amanda Elis, New Zealand (2011)
- Virginia Littlejohn, USA, (2010)
- Barbara Annis, USA (2009)
- Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Arab International Women’s Forum (2008)
- Riane Eisler, USA (2007)
- Laura Liswood, USA (2006)
- Sally Armstrong, Canada (2005)
- Andrina Lever, Canada (2003)

Selima Ahmad, 2015 World of Difference Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Selima Ahmad, Founder of Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Vice Chairperson of Nitoi-Niloy Group is the developing world’s personification working for the private sector development for last 28 years. With her deep understanding of business, she focused on developing entrepreneurial talent, organizing financial and marketing resources to enable women get over hurdles. She founded BWCCI in 2001 to empower women into businesses and developed more

Diane Morris, 2015 Mandy Goetze 21st Century Award Recipient

A graduate of the London School of Economics for whom she was the inaugural Chair of the Female Alumni Network, Diane has a marketing background, originally working in consumer magazines and advertising for IPC Women’s Magazines and Gillette in the UK, moving into international business media with BBC World, TIME and Fortune Magazine during the ten years she spent in Asia. She moved into conferences with DNMe Strategies who were the producers and managers of the BusinessWeek

read more
Fatema Abdulwahed M Al. Ahmed, Bahrain, Public Service/Government

Mrs. Fatema has dedicated her career to developing nursing as a profession of choice for women in Bahrain. Given Bahrain’s cultural challenges and conservative community, she worked with passion to encourage Bahraini women to join nursing. She visited high schools, social clubs, community groups and student societies giving lectures and sharing her experience as a female Bahraini nurse to promote nursing as a noble profession that contributes to healthy communities. When she started this

Miranda Abrahams, UK, Corporate

Miranda Abrahams is Head of Emerging Markets Loan Syndicate at Barclays. She is responsible for managing all aspects of underwriting, pricing, syndication strategy and liquidity for loans in the CEEMEA regions. She is also passionate about diversity and supporting women. Miranda is an Executive Director on the Board of Women in Banking & Finance and Head of the Women on Boards Program. Miranda is a driving force behind the appointment of more Women on Boards and has led

Olajumoke Adenowo, Nigeria, Non-Profit/NGO

Mrs. Adenowo is a multiple Award winning, Chartered Architect with a BSc. (Hons) and MSc in Architecture. She is an alumnus of a number of prestigious institutions including the Lagos Business School Chief Executive Program (2002) and The IESE Business School, University of Navarra, Barcelona, Spain (2005). She is the CEO of AD Consulting, an award winning boutique architectural firm and an NGO -Awesome Treasures Foundation which seeks to create awareness and empower its

Muna Al Gurg, UAE, Corporate

Muna Al Gurg is one of the UAE’s most prominent women in business, and was named Businesswoman of the Year at the 2013 Arab Woman Awards. She is Director of retail at Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, and sits on several company boards, often being the only woman on the team. She instigated the launch of the Al Gurg Women’s Empowerment Forum to offer both training to female employees, but also to enable women to share their opinions to people at the board level within the Easa Al Gurg organization.

Rohini Anand, USA, Corporate

Dr. Rohini Anand is Senior Vice President and Global Chief Diversity Officer for Sodexo, a leading provider of Quality of Life Services with $20 billion or 13.4 billion euro in annual revenue and nearly 420,000 employees in 80 countries. In her current role, Dr. Anand is responsible for the strategic direction, implementation and alignment of Sodexo’s integrated global diversity and inclusion initiatives, as well as Sodexo USA’s sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.

Julie Ankers, Australia, Education

Julie Ankers, an outstanding woman leader who has led Women Chief of Enterprises International (WCEI) as their president through a particularly difficult period, guiding the organization back from the brink of financial disaster. Her successful style of leadership is in understanding the need for good communication, dedication and compassion, working hard within the network of remarkable women that is WCEI, to facilitate its recovery. Julie is Managing Director of E&S Training and Development

Pamela Jeffery, Canada, Entrepreneurship

Pamela Jeffery, founder and CEO of WXN (Women’s Executive Network) conducts business in both Canada and Dublin, Ireland. In 1997, Ms. Jeffery envisioned a ground breaking format to empower and profile Canadian business women by brilliantly conceiving the now established list of Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100. Since then, hundreds of women have been celebrated, empowering many of them to market their brand, describe their accomplishments and most importantly to inspire

Dorothy Kanduhuksye, Uganda, Entrepreneurship

At 30 years of age, Dorothy Kanduhuksye is an extraordinary development/community worker and business management professional. She has actively served the enterprise education movement in Uganda with a selfless approach to community service, focusing primarily on helping women access business opportunities by coordinating their efforts and helping them grow capacity to exploit opportunities available to them. She has worked with the media to highlight the challenges that women

Maha Khatib, Jordan, Non-Profit/NGO

Maha Khatib was the Director General of the Jordan River Foundation JRF. In seven years, Maha was able to transform JRF to become the most successful NGO in Jordan, with a portfolio of over 100 million dollars of development programs across Jordan. While JRF targeted underprivileged groups of all backgrounds, special focus was put on supporting women economically. Under her leadership, JRF helped thousands of women receive training, funding, and guidance to become economically

Shulamith Koenig, USA, Non-Profit/NGO

In 1998, Shulamith Koenig founded, PDHRE: People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning (formerly Peoples Decade for Human Rights Education) www.pdhre.org. She has worked since 1989, with civil society leaders in over 100 countries and visited 60, facilitating grassroots discussions between women and man of all ages evoking critical thinking and systemic analysis, invigorating social responsibility, promoting equality without discrimination, and deciphering between symptoms

Rano Kosimova, Tajikistan, Non-Profit/NGO

Mrs. Rano Kosimova has played an important role in improving women’s access to education, health and economic resources to help them become active participants in developing their families and society. In 1996, she established a non-governmental, public organization, ‘Parastor’ (in English Care) with women from the Zargar community of Dushanbe City. She was elected as a chief executive at the general meeting of the organization. The organization works on poverty alleviation in the communities
Meaza Ashenafi, Ethiopia, Entrepreneurship

Meaza Ashenafi is one of the prominent women leaders in Ethiopia. Lawyer by profession, she established and managed the most successful national women's rights advocacy organization the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association. She was very instrumental in working on reforms, amendments and additions on existing laws affecting women's rights. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association helps African women with legal aid when their rights have been violated. They also provide workshops to support women in achieving their professional aspirations, surveys, a multilingual web platform and e-newsletter.

Marsha Bailey, USA, Entrepreneurship

Marsha Bailey is the founder and CEO of Women’s Economic Ventures (WEV) and the Small Business Loan Fund of Santa Barbara. Marsha has been developing educational programs and services for women since 1983 and is the primary author of WEV’s self-employment training curriculum. From Vision to Venture. Under Marsha's leadership, WEV has grown from a small organization with two employees and an annual budget of $75,000 to a nationally recognized women's business development organization that promotes the corporate engagement of women, Avil is a well-known behind the scenes volunteer for organizations that are focused on the advancement of women economically, so they can lift themselves, their families and their communities.

Stephanie Baric, USA, Non-Profit/NGO

Stephanie Baric, Executive Director of the AHA Foundation, has long been a champion for gender equality and women's empowerment generally and economically. With more than 20 years of experience empowering women and girls around the world through her work with Child Fund, CARE, Counterpart, the United Nations and the AHA Foundation, Stephanie has led and implemented initiatives that advance women economically, so they can lift themselves, their families and their communities.

Julie Barker-Merz, Canada, Corporate

Julie Barker-Merz joined BMO Financial Group in 1996 and has served in various roles including in an executive capacity since 2011 and was appointed to her current position as President, BMO InvesteLine and Head of Direct Investing Wealth Management for BMO Financial Group in 2014. Julie has been a tireless advocate for women and has been passionately involved in various committees, boards and groups both internally and externally that have been instrumental in promoting the empowerment of women through government policies and programs. Status of Women Canada (SWC), a federal government organization that promotes full participation of women in the economic, social and democratic life of Canada, has had a Minister responsible since 1971. However, it is under Minister Leitch's leadership that this agency consists of annual Forums in Brussels and Paris (conferences attended by hundreds of women with high-profile speakers on a wide range of topical issues), workshops to support women in achieving their professional aspirations, surveys, a multilingual web platform and e-newsletter.

Avil Beckford, Canada, Entrepreneurship

Avil Beckford’s life is spent investing her knowledge, experience and vast intelligence in the service of advancing others, predominantly women, along their respective career paths. Currently President of Elevate (Toronto Chapter), an organization that promotes the corporate engagement of women, Avil is a well-known behind the scenes volunteer for organizations that are focused on the advancement of women. Specifically, many years of service to the then Canadian Women in Communications (CWC) and in conjunction with friends from Uganda, she founded Northstar Success Academy, which has now crossed borders in more than ten countries in Africa and Asia. Over 60% of her business partners are women from all walks of life, many older than her yet.

Ida Beerhalter, Germany, Corporate

Ida Beerhalter is Co-Head of IOME, a Multi Single Family Office and Private Investment Partnership formed by women Principles from the Gulf Region. Ida has also been working with women in Saudi Arabia and tirelessly supporting women entrepreneurs. Her inspiring, courageous, tenacious efforts have culminated in establishing the all-women Principles head office in Riyadh, KSA. Her successful involvement with various for profit and not for profit organizations around the Globe (Astia USA).

Elaine Belleza, USA, Entrepreneurship

Elaine’s work and vision for the last 20 plus years has been about transforming and supporting the work of African and other country's leaders in Ethiopia. Lawyer by profession, she established and managed the most successful national women's rights advocacy organization the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association. She was very instrumental in working on reforms, amendments and additions on existing laws affecting women's rights. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association helps African women with legal aid when their rights have been violated. They also provide workshops to support women in achieving their professional aspirations, surveys, a multilingual web platform and e-newsletter.

Dr Kellie Leitch, Canada, Public Service/Government

As Canada’s Minister of Labour & Minister of Status of Women since July 2013, Dr. Kellie Leitch is in a unique position to influence the economic empowerment of women through government policies and programs. Status of Women Canada (SWC), a federal government organization that promotes full participation of women in the economic, social and democratic life of Canada, has had a Minister responsible since 1971. However, it is under Minister Leitch’s leadership that this agency consists of annual Forums in Brussels and Paris (conferences attended by hundreds of women with high-profile speakers on a wide range of topical issues), workshops to support women in achieving their professional aspirations, surveys, a multilingual web platform and e-newsletter.

Isabella Lenarduzzi, Belgium, Entrepreneurship

Isabella Lenarduzzi is a European social entrepreneur who founded her business, JUMP, in 2006 with the aim of advancing economic development by empowering women and promoting gender equality. The business today consists of annual Forums in Brussels and Paris (conferences attended by hundreds of women with high-profile speakers on a wide range of topical issues), workshops to support women in achieving their professional aspirations, surveys, a multilingual web platform and e-newsletter.

Chin Mei Lu, Taiwan, Non-Profit/NGO

Ms. Chin Mei Lu is the 14th and 15th president of Taiwanese Women's Entrepreneurs Association (TWEA) in Taiwan. During her days in office, she has successfully brought spotlight onto Taiwanese women entrepreneurs by leading them into the global community and helping her country in diplomatic affairs. Under her leadership, many friendship treaties have been signed between women entrepreneurs associations of other countries and the TWEA, fully demonstrating women's strength.

Mariam Luyombo, Uganda, Education

Mariam started a girls-only school over 20 years ago with the theme “Education with a Difference.” The young girls were treated as individuals and encouraged in all aspects of life. Girls who had been written off that they cannot succeed because they had performed very badly were given a chance in her school, many performed very well and were molded into very good citizens and are now successful in their careers. Her teaching methods were recognized by other schools and she was asked to train.

Ms. Kalairasi Manikam is a Malaysian, an electrical engineer by profession, with a Masters in High Voltage Engineering. She however chose to be an entrepreneur, in E-network marketing/ distribution with a global company called Qnet. In 2002, in conjunction with friends from Uganda, she founded Northstar Success Academy, which has now crossed borders in more than ten countries in Africa and Asia. Over 60% of her business partners are women from all walks of life, many older than her yet.

Marian Matar, UAE, Public Service/Government

Iwona Kozera, Poland, Non-Profit/NGO

Iwona Kozera is the Founder of the Women Leadership in Business Foundation. EY Partner, Capital Market Group Director for the EMEA Region. She has been working for EY (formerly Ernst and Young) since the beginning of her professional career in 1992. Ms. Kozera is an active participant in the transformation of the Polish financial sector, providing advice to the biggest Polish and global financial institutions. She graduated from Warsaw University of Technology and completed management
artisans, into products that shine with love and joy and are marketed locally and globally. Artisans whose creative work would be invisible and lost if she was not the conduit to global markets. In 2002 she birthed her own business Mia Mali in West Africa; she supported and inspired a group of artisans to transition away from selling small items.

**Ameera Bin Karam, UAE, Non-Profit/NGO**

HE Ameera Bin Karam, is Chair, of the Sharjah Business Council for Women. In 2012, Ameera was awarded the UAE’s “Humanitarian of the Year” by the Arab Women Award, an organization whose jury she has since been invited to lead. She also serves on the board of Education for Employment, a non-profit organization dedicated to youth employment across the Middle East and North Africa. Her Excellency Bin Karam is an ardent advocate of women’s participation in economic activities; is a senior leader. Her current projects include leading global influencers at read more

**Paola Bonomo, Italy, Entrepreneurship**

Paola Bonomo is an independent Board member, angel investor, and advisor in the technology space with over 20 years of experience. Since 2009, Paola has participated in Italian Angels for Growth, Italy’s most prominent angel group, where she focuses on screening investments and supporting entrepreneurs in the digital space. She has actively recruited women to the group, which has more than doubled its share of women members from 4% to 9%, and has recently lead the group’s first read more

**Claire Braund & Ruth Medd, Australia, Education**

Claire Braund and Ruth Medd, have worked tirelessly since founding their company, Women on Boards, in 2006 to improve the gender balance on Australian boards. Claire is the Executive Director and Ruth is the Chair. They are a truly dynamic duo, bringing a wealth of experience and knowledge to the boardroom. They partner with the private, public and non-profit sectors to hold events, run programs, create opportunities and coach and mentor women into career and director roles. They carry out frequent research (Claire wrote a report on Gender Balance in Global read more

**Sonia Brown, UK, Entrepreneurship**

Sonia Brown is the Founder and Director of the National Black Women’s Network (NBWN) and sits on the boards of several UK government agencies. She is a top networker and mover and shaker dedicated to the empowerment of women in business. Sonia is passionate about supporting personal achievement and professional development for women and was awarded an MBE for her work. NBWN is a non-profit organization founded by Sonia in 1999, dedicated to raising the status and position of black read more

**Ineke Bussemaker, The Netherlands, Corporate**

Ineke Bussemaker has been working for more than 25 years in the international banking. In the various countries where she has lived and worked, she is an active member in business networks (Member of the Board, American Chamber of Commerce Denmark) and business women’s networks. Ineke is a global ambassador of TIAW (The International Alliance for Women) and a member of the Rosenblatt Committee. It is thanks to Ineke and Sybilla Dekker, past TIAW award winner who led the Rosenblatt read more

**Donnetta Campbell, USA, Entrepreneurship**

Donnetta Campbell is a social media innovator for the “digital influencer” age. She has created a unique social media architecture and methodology that delivers authentic social engagement for causes, brands, institutions, and senior leaders. Her current projects include leading global influencers at read more

Margareth Chacha, Tanzania, Corporate
Ms. Margareth Mataba Chacha is the Managing Director of the Tanzania Women’s Bank Ltd. She has over 28 years of experience in senior managerial positions including Operation’s Manager, UNDP Tanzania, Budget Officer – UN Mission Sudan, Director of Banking – CRDB Bank and Compliance Manager – NPF (NSSF). Margareth is a member of Global Women Banks Association, President of Women in Agri-Business in Sub Sahara Africa Alliance (WASAA). Margareth is a woman of many firsts:

Nadererh Chamlou, USA, Corporate
Mrs. Nadererh Chamlou is an International Development Expert and Former Senior Advisor to the Chief Economist for the MENA Region at the World Bank. Mrs. Chamlou is a valued Board Member of the Arab International Women’s Forum. Nadererh is originally Jordanian and has dedicated a lifetime of work towards empowering women in the international labor market. In her three decades with the World Bank, she has held various managerial and advisory positions across the World Bank in areas such as:

Maria Helena deFelipe Lehtonen, Spain, Entrepreneurship
Maria Helena de Felipe Lehtonen founded an organization in Spain which serves as a platform for international projects that promote gender equality in the marketplace. Bearing in mind that in the Mediterranean area, there are religious stereotypes and inequality she founded and became President of the Association of Organizations of Mediterranean Businesswomen (AFAEMME) in 2002. Over the years, AFAEMME has expanded and is comprised of 36 women entrepreneur organizations from 21

Ruth DeGolia, USA, Non-Profit/NGO
Cleveland native Ruth DeGolia began working with artisans in rural Latin America in 2002 while studying at Yale University. She worked with NGOs and rural indigenous communities in Guatemala on a range of local development initiatives, including community health, education, and income-generation projects. With a start-up grant from Echoing Green, Ruth founded Mercado Global in 2004 to provide sustainable income opportunities to one of the region’s most economically, socially and exposure to the world of possibilities the internet brings. Realizing that the main barrier was of a religious nature, Dana spoke to religious and community leaders to explain the positive impact of girls’ empowerment on the entire village. These leaders

Dana Derani, Syria, Non-Profit/NGO
Dana Al Derani’s development work empowering girls and women has included managing a Syrian project that integrates technology in the education system. In one village, girls at a primary level were not allowed to access the internet for fear of fear of

Marcia Dyson, USA, Entrepreneurship
Marcia L. Dyson is a social entrepreneur who companies include Women’s Global Initiative, M and M Dyson, LLC, and Global Alliance. She was the first chief of staff for Rev. Jesse Jackson’s International Trade Bureau. Public Information Officer for the City of Chicago where she promoted her hometown as “the world by the lake.” Dyson has worked tirelessly for women globally for most of her professional life. As a consultant to the Clinton Foundation, Dyson worked with women in Haiti to create a gender

in the East African Legislative Assembly since 2009. Odette was born in 1958, where she was 17 in a family of 21, including nine sisters and two mothers, in which girls were not well valued. In 1999, her home was destroyed and family cattle slaughtered resulting in poverty. Despising poverty, Odette

Yaneek Page, Jamaica, Entrepreneurship
In running her company providing access to justice for Jamaicans lacking resources to navigate the legal system, Yaneek Page observed how entrepreneurship could drive economic growth in Jamaica so she expanded her focus to entrepreneurship and has combined this with her passion for women’s economic empowerment. Yaneek is a regular contributor to the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper, with a column devoted to providing advice to answer the questions of entrepreneurs and is the founder of

Claudia Parzani, Italy, Community
Claudia Parzani is a Capital Markets partner in the Milan office and co-head of the global Consumer sector group at law firm Linklaters. She specializes in capital markets and public M&A transactions. Claudia is Chair of the corporate association Valore D and was the co-creator of “In the Boardroom,” an initiative she developed in 2012 with GE Capital and Egon Zehnder to provide training and skills to prepare women for boardroom positions. Over 100 women have graduated from the program, and

Lyne Patterson, USA, Entrepreneurship
Lyne Patterson is the Co-Founder and Director Emerita of Pro Mujer, a leading women’s development organization providing women in Latin American with the vital services necessary to become financially independent, healthy leaders in their communities. Founded in 1990 in Bolivia, Pro Mujer now transforms the lives of low-income women and their families in Bolivia, Nicaragua, Peru, Mexico and Argentina.

Joyce Phekani, Malawi, Non-Profit/NGO
Joyce Phekani is a tireless advocate for women and children suffering from domestic abuse, especially in addressing the lack of financial empowerment faced by women. Joyce is Executive Director of the Centre for Alternatives for Victimized Women and Children (CAV/WC) in Blantyre, Malawi, ensuring that women who suffer from sexual, physical, financial or psychological abuse

Lisa Marie Platske, USA, Entrepreneurship
Believing there is no “magic formula” for success, award-winning leadership expert, Lisa Marie Platske, devotes her life to economically empowering women entrepreneurs. Fifty percent of her clients have doubled or tripled their bottom line. The tools she provides last a life-time, not merely responding to the newest economic trends. Successful, like-minded women learn to connect

Linda Resnick, USA, Entrepreneurship
A life-long innovator and advocate for women’s economic empowerment, Linda Resnick heads an executive search firm, CEO Resources. An entrepreneur who “gets” entrepreneurs, Linda wrote a guide to finding a job in a small company. A Big Splash in a Small Pond, 1994 and has used her own business experience to further women’s economic empowerment. In 2007 she co-founded Women International Leaders of Greater Philadelphia (WIL)

Denise Restauri, USA, Entrepreneurship
15 years ago after a 25-year career in sales and marketing, Denise Restauri left her corner-office job as VP of Sales at USA TODAY to empower girls and women. She founded AllyKatzz.com, the first-ever safe social networking
Meryam El Ouafi, Morocco, Non-Profit/NGO
Meryam El Ouafi, a VV GROW Fellow, founded her business ten years ago at the age of 20 by competing on a national television show for the best entrepreneur in Morocco. After participating, Meryam established ChemSAYour, a tourist complex which offers dinner shows, weddings, catering, and conferences while employing more than 60 people from the community. Meryam has ambitious plans to grow ChemSAYour in the coming years, reaching new customers all while building the internal systems.

Rima El-Husseini, Lebanon, Entrepreneurship
Vital Voices first became acquainted with Rima El-Husseini in 2012 when she was selected to participate in a prestigious mentoring program, the FORTUNE/U.S. State Department's Global Women's Mentoring Partnership, implemented by Vital Voices. As the Co-Owner of Blessing, a successful fine chocolates business in Beirut, Rima was focused on continuing the growth of her business. Following the program, it became clear that she had a deep interest in giving back to other

Patricia Ellis, USA, Non-Profit/NGO
DC Patricia Ellis is the founder of the Women's Foreign Policy Group (WFPG) an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational membership organization that promotes global engagement and the leadership, visibility and participation of women in international affairs. WFPG's in-depth global issues programs feature women leaders and highlight their contributions and voices. The organization also hosts leadership development activities to promote the next generation of women leaders. WFPG is instrumental in successfully advocating with the government of Nepal to grant

Gladys England, Sierra Leone, Entrepreneurship
Gladys England BSc. is the Managing Director of Oasis Juice Bar & Cafe, an enterprise which she started in February 2011. Gladys is a sterling example of an entrepreneurial woman who has not let typical ongoing challenges or the recent Ebola crisis in the Sierra Leone business world stand in her way of success. She has encountered and overcome the stigma of women's role in society as homemakers only; she runs her enterprise singlehandedly with a complement of 15 staff of which 80%

Denise Evans, USA, Corporate
Denise Evans has served as Vice President of Market Development for the IBM corporation since 2012. In this capacity she empowers women entrepreneurs globally. Her focus has been to use social media, (Podcasts, webinars, text, email, face book, twitter and Skype) to connect women business influencers around the globe. Throughout her tenure, Ms. Evans has mentored a small health company in New Jersey, served on the Board of the Better Business Bureaus, and many other achievements too.

Stephanie Foster, USA, Public Service/Government
Stephanie Foster has focused on women's economic and political empowerment over 25 years of domestic and international policy advocacy, government affairs, program development and training and law. Currently Senior Advisor, Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI), U.S. State Department, she reports directly to the Ambassador-at-Large, playing a pivotal role in a wide range of policies and programs central to the work done by S/GWI, including women's economic empowerment.

Farah Foustok, UK, Corporate

Pramila Acharya Rijal, Nepal, Non-Profit/NGO
Pramila Acharya Rijal is Founder and President of the South Asian Women Development Forum (SAWDF) and Immediate Past Chairperson of SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneurs Council. SAWDF is an independent, not-for-profit organization with the aim of pursuing sustainable development. Pramila has been instrumental in successfully advocating with the government of Nepal to grant

Linda Scott, UK, Public Service/Government
Linda Scott, DP World Chair for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Oxford has worked to develop and test market-based means for empowering women economically, especially poor women in developing countries. In these projects, she engages multinational corporations, such as Wal-Mart and ExxonMobil, global NGOs, such as CARE and Oxfam, and intergovernmental agencies, such as UNICEF. (read more)

Veronika Scott, USA, Young Woman Leader
25-year-old Veronika Scott, founder and CEO of The Empowerment Plan, has built an organization in which homeless women are paid to learn how to produce coats for the homeless. The coat is self-heated, waterproof, and transforms into a sleeping bag at night. That idea has now transformed into a system of empowerment in which homeless women are paid to learn how to produce coats for people living on the streets.

Diane Sears, USA, Non-Profit/NGO
Founder and president of DiVerse Media LLC, Diane Sears helps people become published authors in her business and worked to support women entrepreneurs as a not for profit leader. A career journalist, Diane knows how to leverage her expertise and her networks to advance economic empowerment for women. She is the former founding editor-in-chief of Venture Woman, a national magazine for women business owners. (read more)

Beena Sebastian, India, Non-Profit/NGO
Beena Sebastian is the creator and director of the "Cultural Academy for Peace." A true Gandhian, she has devoted her life to the principals of non-violent conflict resolution and empowerment of abused and oppressed women in her community. The academy has two shelters: one devoted to victims of domestic and sexual abuse, the other to young victims of the sex trade. In both shelters, residents participate

Alicia Sierra, Mexico, Non-Profit/NGO
Alicia Sierra has been Program Manager of WEConnect International (WECI) in Mexico since November 2012. Her passion and conviction about women
Margot Franssen, Canada, Non-Profit/NGO
Margot Franssen has a saying that she uses often and which sums up her approach to life and business: “If you are looking for the starting point to unlock prosperity, look no farther than changing the life of a woman.” Margot co-founded The Body Shop Canada with her husband and together they built it into one of Canada’s 50 best-managed private companies and one of the 100 best companies to work for in Canada, known for its ethical approach to business practices. Integral to her success was a passion to enrich herself but to empower the weak and the marginalized, including the peasants, fishermen, laborers, women, children, and urban/rural poor. She became the President of the Naga City Council for Women where the position is an elective post without salary, honorarium, or bonuses from the government. The Council itself is a policy recommender.

Joanne Gassman, Canada, Corporate
Joanne Gassman was a driving force for the economic empowerment of women throughout her four decades with BMO Bank of Montreal, retiring as Senior Vice President, Personal & Commercial Banking for BC and Yukon Division. Joanne’s positive impact on women has been so strongly valued by BMO, that she is now SVP, Women’s Market (in retirement)!. Thus, Joanne continues to promote BMO’s focus on women entrepreneurs by improving the business and financial information available.

Malli Gero & Stephanie Sonnabend, USA, Non-Profit/NGO
The idea for 2020 Women on Boards (WOB) grew out of co-founders’ Stephanie Sonnabend and Malli Gero, work on women’s leadership issues. As the President and former CEO of an international hospitality company, Stephanie Sonnabend sits on two public boards and is a member of a number of women’s leadership organizations. Malli Gero, a public relations consultant, has worked on women’s leadership issues for over a decade. They were frustrated with the slow progress made in increasing the number of women on public boards and as such, the idea for WOB was born.

Maria Leonor Gerona-Robredo, Philippines, Public Service/Government
Maria Leonor Gerona Robredo, Representative of the Third District of Camarines Sur, is a lawyer by profession. She isn’t using her legal profession to enrich herself but to empower the weak and the marginalized, including the peasants, fishermen, laborers, women, children, and urban/rural poor. She became the President of the Naga City Council for Women where the position is an elective post without salary, honorarium, or bonuses from the government. The Council itself is a policy recommender.

Nicole Still, Italy, Entrepreneurship
Not yet 40, Nicole has had an amazing professional journey from award winning journalist to senior corporate positions to launching three companies, earning numerous awards including Australia’s Top 40 Under 40 along the way. She is also the founder of Viajiyu srl in Italy. The name refers to the road less traveled by today’s women. Viajiyu produces high end custom shoes for women and recently men in Italy.

Marilyn Skony Stamm, USA, Education
By her mentoring and philanthropic work, Marilyn Skony Stamm has helped at least hundreds (and possibly thousands) of businesswomen and women students to reach success and personal economic empowerment. As CEO of Stamm International Corp., Marilyn employs over 400 people in 40+ countries, with female branch managers, female local CFOs and women working on the shop floor.

Sevi Simavi, UK, Entrepreneurship
Sevi is a global expert on women’s entrepreneurship. She has undertaken primary research on the investment climate as part of her work with the World Bank Group. This research has enabled the World Bank Group’s engagement in this space to be done in a gender aware manner. Since taking the helm of the Cherie Blair Foundation, she has expanded the work around financial access for women entrepreneurs.

Joanne Gassman was a driving force for the economic empowerment of women throughout her four decades with BMO Bank of Montreal, retiring as Senior Vice President, Personal & Commercial Banking for BC and Yukon Division. Joanne’s positive impact on women has been so strongly valued by BMO, that she is now SVP, Women’s Market (in retirement)!. Thus, Joanne continues to promote BMO’s focus on women entrepreneurs by improving the business and financial information available.

Farah Foustok is the CEO and Senior Executive Officer of Lazard Gulf Ltd. (Dubai). She began working in the investment field in 1994. She has risen up the ranks to become one of the few women in her position in the Middle East. In April 2014 Farah completed her accreditation with Mudara, Institute of Directors, to become only the 4th female certified board director in the Gulf region. When not working in the Boardroom, where she is often the only woman, she works tirelessly on projects to support the continued economic empowerment of women throughout the inequalities of women in business. She is a dynamic entrepreneur who established the first annual national business awards program for women how to start a sustainable business from feminine way to do business, in 2000, which was simultaneously published in the U.S., UK and the English-speaking world as the first book to teach women how to start a sustainable business from the grass roots. Subsequently published in Germany, Japan, Brazil and China, SEED (Sustainable Enterprise and Empowerment Dynamics) became a mixed-media learning business empowerment program for women, delivered in diverse formats across countries.

The idea for 2020 Women on Boards (WOB) grew out of co-founders’ Stephanie Sonnabend and Malli Gero, work on women’s leadership issues. As the President and former CEO of an international hospitality company, Stephanie Sonnabend sits on two public boards and is a member of a number of women’s leadership organizations. Malli Gero, a public relations consultant, has worked on women’s leadership issues for over a decade. They were frustrated with the slow progress made in increasing the number of women on public boards and as such, the idea for WOB was born.

Maria Leonor Gerona-Robredo, Representative of the Third District of Camarines Sur, is a lawyer by profession. She isn’t using her legal profession to enrich herself but to empower the weak and the marginalized, including the peasants, fishermen, laborers, women, children, and urban/rural poor. She became the President of the Naga City Council for Women where the position is an elective post without salary, honorarium, or bonuses from the government. The Council itself is a policy recommender.

Dr. Yvonne Thompson, CBE, is widely recognized for her tireless capacity building work relating to the inequalities of women in business. She is a dynamic entrepreneur who established the first annual national business awards program for minority women, which is patronized by national and international politicians. The awards have officially recognised over 1,000 women business owners and entrepreneurs.

By her mentoring and philanthropic work, Marilyn Skony Stamm has helped at least hundreds (and possibly thousands) of businesswomen and women students to reach success and personal economic empowerment. As CEO of Stamm International Corp., Marilyn employs over 400 people in 40+ countries, with female branch managers, female local CFOs and women working on the shop floor.

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Nicole Still, Italy, Entrepreneurship
Not yet 40, Nicole has had an amazing professional journey from award winning journalist to senior corporate positions to launching three companies, earning numerous awards including Australia’s Top 40 Under 40 along the way. She is also the founder of Viajiyu srl in Italy. The name refers to the road less traveled by today’s women. Viajiyu produces high end custom shoes for women and recently men in Italy.

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Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, New York, has been an advocate for women for many years. Since her days as a lawyer taking on pro bono cases defending battered women, to working with Hillary Clinton to encourage women to enter politics and leadership, Gillibrand has always taken a strong stance towards the advancement of women and girls. Her story is told in her book ‘Off the Sidelines: Raise Your Voice, Change the World’. Gillibrand’s office released Women’s Economic Empowerment Summit, a research location change. During her time in India, Caroline oversaw the build-out of Barclays Operations in Chennai and Mumbai. Caroline has directed her change and communications experience to establish Diversity and Inclusion frameworks and run Diversity read more

Pamela Heilman, USA, Entrepreneurship
Pamela Heilman, partner at Hodgson Russ law firm, has devoted substantial time to the development of cross-border business relationships and the promotion of women in international business. She helped found the firm’s first Canadian office in 1989, focusing her practice on cross-border business and charities law. She regularly counseled Canadian organizations and businesses considering expansion into the United States. Pam recently served as a director of TIAW, which acts as the umbrella

Tanya Hine, UK, Entrepreneurship
Tanya Hine has supported women in a variety of fields and endeavors and in all cases has had a major impact upon their lives. Without her influence, WCEI would not be a member of the Association Les Femmes Chefs D’Entreprises Mondial (FCEM). After completing her education, Tanya joined the Royal Air Force and in addition to her Supply and Accounting Branch duties, she acted as interpreter for United Nations Forces. being fluent in English, German and Russian. After many years serving in

Hind Hobeika, Lebanon, Entrepreneurship
Hind is the founder and CEO of Instabeat, an award winning startup based in Beirut, Lebanon developing a heads-up display for swimmers to monitor their performance. Hind is the brainchild and inventor who coined this innovative idea while training with the American University of Beirut’s swimming varsity team. Her background is in Mechanical engineering which helped her put the first prototype together. Fast forward only three years and she has a team of nine engineers shipping her

Thanan Hok, Cambodia, Entrepreneurship
Thanan Hok is an inspiring woman whose social enterprise, Kravan House, is providing livelihoods for some of the most vulnerable women in Cambodia; disabled women, their families, and women who have been affected by land evictions. Her venture was founded in 2003 and coordinates the work of more than 30 expert silk and cotton weavers and seamstresses, from both city and rural areas. Kravan House, located in Phnom Penh, helps artisans sell their wares through its shop and by accessing export

Ling-Hsiang (Sunny) Huang, Taiwan, Public Service/Government
Since 1997, Ling-Hsiang (Sunny) Huang has been Vice Director of the Foundation for Women's Rights Promotion and Development, Taiwan. The Foundation serves as a bridge for dialogue between the government and the private sectors to build a centre of resource and information exchange

Growing up in India, Dr. Rashmi Tiwari defied the gender bias faced by most women and girls by pursuing an education. However, she recognized her experience was rare and that two decades later there has been little progress made for girls in India. In a Washington Post op-ed, Rashmi decried the status of tribal girls: “With no one listening and no support in their fight for survival.

Myra Leigh Tobin, USA, Corporate
Myra Leigh Tobin has been a leader of, mentor to, and role model for corporate women for 50 years. Myra was one of the first women to enter the professional ranks of the commercial insurance industry. Throughout her career she marked a long series of firsts: first woman hired with an M.B.A. (1970), first woman managing director (1982), first “Head” of any gender — of the Chemical/Pharmaceutical Insurance Committee

Brenda Trenowden, UK, Corporate
Brenda Trenowden is one of the key champions in the UK today pushing women’s economic progress and empowerment both nationally and far beyond through an extraordinarily wide variety of very high profile channels. She was president of City Women Network from April 2012 to April 2014 and prior to that chaired its professional development committee for a year. She has been an instrumental part of the success

Yasemin Tumer, The Netherlands, Entrepreneurship
Yasemin has spent her entire career focusing on women’s empowerment. After University she started a community center to assist migrant women who arrived in The Netherlands totally unprepared, followed a few years later by a vocational training center for women re-entering working life, introducing women to ICT in the late 1980s. The concept was so successful the Dutch Ministry took the total package

Katarzyna Twarowska, Poland, Non-Profit/NGO
Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the Women Leadership in Business Foundation. She graduated from Warsaw University of Technology. She is an EY Director in Assurance, Central and South East Europe Real Estate Assurance Leader, senior auditor, recently CEO of family business ProfiLAB. Global Ambassador of TIAW (The International Alliance for Women) in Poland. She has been working for EY (formerly Ernst & Young) since the beginning of her professional career in 2003.

Josefina Urzaiz, USA, Entrepreneurship
Josefina is a Social entrepreneur, co-founder of Hammock Boutique and Fundacion Cielo. A native of Yucatan, Mexico. Josefina holds a Graduate degree from Georgetown University and worked as an Investment Banker in New York. But she wanted to give back and decided to apply her skills in business as a social Entrepreneur. She developed the concept for SHE Network: Sustainable Holistic Empowerment Network.

Cristina Vicini, Italy, Non-Profit/NGO
Cristina Vicini is an international senior executive and board member with companies and charities in Europe and North America. Cristina is also the Honorary President of the Professional Women International Network in Brussels and, together with Candace Johnson, one of the co-founders of the Global Board-Ready Women Initiative, a global grass-roots movement originating in Europe with the support
Despite a difficult and challenging childhood, Marieme has turned her life around. Marieme never attended school until the age of 16. She combined her studies with her job to support herself and her family. Her determination and resilience allowed her to complete her education and pursue a career in social work.

Marieme is the founder of Spark of Hope International, a non-profit organization that provides education and support to women and girls in Africa. She has dedicated her life to improving the economic status of women and girls. In 2013, Clara formed the non-profit, Global Women’s Initiative for Advancement and raised funds to start three projects in Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia. Diago helped Clara make contacts on the ground to work.
World of Difference Champions

For some time, TIAW has recognized men as champions for outstanding individual contribution and effort to organizations, and achievements in the corporate world, which support the economic empowerment of women.

**Ved Arya, India**

Mr. Ved Ayra is a social entrepreneur committed to rural development. In 1997, he founded SRIJAN to enhance ‘poor peoples’ access to natural resources and build their capacity to manage them in a sustainable manner. A non-profit organization, SRIJAN works at the grass roots level in the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka. Mr. Arya and his team work directly with farmers to design and implement water resource management and livelihood projects. The essential components of its livelihoods program include improving access to water and its management, improve soil health, bring appropriate technology to the poor, improve access to finance, markets and consumers; and build a community institution with a focus on women. Mr. Arya has been instrumental in securing livelihood for over 15,000 poor, rural families. He also established the Education for Employability Foundation, an organization that trains rural school drop outs in marketable skills. Mr. Ayra serves on committees at the World Bank, IMF, and the Planning Commission, Government of India. In 2014, SRIJAN was selected as a winner in the Emerging Non-Profit category for the ICCI Foundation and CNBC TV 18’s Inclusive India Awards.

**Paul Bainsfair, UK**

Paul Bainsfair is the Director General of the IPA, the trade and professional body for UK advertising agencies. For two years, the IPA has run the Women of Tomorrow competition within the advertising sector to nominate its rising female stars. In that period, over 260 women were nominated and 20 extraordinary women were shortlisted. The initiative caught the imagination of the trade magazine, Campaign to get involved and the ‘who’s won’ story reached 19 million on social media. Paul Bainsfair as IPA Director General has supported this competition as sponsor, mentor, and judge ensuring these women of tomorrow receive the support and profile they need.

**Waswa Balunya, Uganda**

Processor Balunywa is the Principal, Makerere University Business School (MUBS). He is a prominent researcher, consultant and trainer in different disciplines and as the Board of Trust Chairperson for the Kinawataka Women initiative, has shared his expertise to mentor, support and build networks for the organization. At MUBS, he established Entrepreneurship, Leadership, ICT, and Micro-finance outreach centers which have specific programs for women. Professor Balunywa founded an empowerment program for young women preparing them for leadership roles in both the corporate and political worlds. Finally he also established the Balunywa Foundation to train vulnerable women in rural communities to start or enhance small businesses.

**David Chavern, USA**

David Chavern is executive vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and president of the Center for Advanced Technology and Innovation (CATT). He was founder and president of the Center for Women in Business, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation which promotes and empowers women business leaders to achieve their personal and professional goals by increasing opportunities for women to serve on corporate boards and in the C-suite; mentoring women at every stage of their career and building networks for women entrepreneurs to encourage peer networking, education, and professional growth.

**Moctar Mamadou Diallo, Mauritania**

Moctar Diallo has dedicated years to facilitating and leading international programs to create export market opportunities for Mauritanian women entrepreneurs in the United States and globally. In 2002, he led the first ever delegation of dozens of Mauritanian women entrepreneurs to attend the Business Women Network Conference in Washington DC. He envisions that when women are succeeding in earning an income, they are able to contribute to sustaining the family, to fully participate in democracy and human rights, and contribute to Mauritania’s development. He is presently the coordinator of Focal Point of the Civil Society of Mauritania, an umbrella network of non-governmental organizations, local, state and international partners where he continues to facilitate women economic empowerment programs. His work has earned him several awards including in 2012, the ONU award in Senegal for Excellence in Governance and Leadership.

**Tung Do, Vietnam**

Tung Do is the founder of XO Tours, the first all-female motorbike tour company in Vietnam voted number one by Trip Advisor. Mr. Do has created has created an unique company utilizing the motorbike
culture of the country as an entrée for women into the tourism industry. Recruiting over 100 female drivers, XO Tours has created financial security for Vietnamese women enabling them to continue their education, provide for their families, and contribute to the country’s economy by helping to develop the tourism sector.

Bart Egnal, Canada

Bart Engal is the President and CEO of the Humphrey Group, a premier North American leadership communications firm which has made a significant difference in teaching women how to fully project their leadership qualities through their diversity and inclusion programs aimed at women. In 2011, the Humphrey Group made this program available to women entrepreneurs and non-profit organization leaders in British Columbia through a strategic partnership with the Women’s Enterprise Centre. As a result hundreds of women have become strong, confident leaders able to speak with strength on any stage.

Umar Kasule, Uganda

In 2003, Dr. Kasule introduced to Uganda a global e-commerce business. He has built an organization of over 30,000 business partners (55% women), stretching the entire, country, region, and Africa. Women of all backgrounds have gained enormous benefit from his vision and grown into strong entrepreneurs. The Northstar Success Academy has a vision of creating a family of one million households in Sub Saharan Africa with the ability to earn at least $500 per month through the business he introduced.

Hayden Majajas, Hong Kong

Hayden Majajas is a leader in building gender equality into business strategies across Asia through four areas related to gender inequality: Unconscious Bias, Sponsorship, Navigating Politics, and Engaging Men. He launched the ‘Leading Women’ initiative in Hong Kong and Singapore engaging 100 women in those locations from across all industries to create a forum for women with influence to address gender issues. Mr. Majajas actively partners with organizations around the globe supporting regional gender issues.

Akira Matsumoto, Japan

Mr. Matsumoto is the Representative Director, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Calbee, a leading company in the snack food sector in Japan. After taking the helm in 2009, he included diversity and inclusion in his change management agenda along with consistent messaging that organizations which do not implement diversity are not sustainable. Due to his diversity drive, the number of women in management at Calbee has grown from 5.9% to 14.3% while the national average remains at 6.6%. In 2014, Calbee received the ‘NADESHIKO’ award, given by the Japanese Cabinet to organizations which have shown superior progress in driving women’s diversity.

Jinsar Hussain Soomro, Pakistan

Mr. Hussain is the Provincial Coordinator of the Pakistan Kissan Ittehad, a network for small farmers. He has 14 years of experience in the community and social development fields and has established and developed vocational training centers for women, a micro credit rural development program that has benefitted over 1600 rural women, established schools enrolling 2245 girls, provided awareness and advocacy for the rights of women, and installed 550 hand pumps to access safe drinking water benefitting over 2500 men, women and children.

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