



AWE

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

SUMMIT

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2021

A half-day professional development and networking event designed to educate, inspire and make connections that foster success to help you achieve your personal and professional goals.



THANK YOU TO OUR GRAND SPONSOR



AGENDA

9–9:30 AM › WELCOME KEYNOTE: BATTLING THE SHARKS: MY SHARK TANK EXPERIENCE › SPONSORED BY BIZLAUNCH

SHARMI ALBRECHTSEN – CEO & FOUNDER, SMARTGURLZ

9:30–10:15 AM › SESSION ONE

Getting What You Want By Knowing Who You Are: Self-Confidence vs. Self-Awareness

As women, we often don't realize our uniqueness, which can diminish self-confidence. We think too much about what we are lacking rather than determining and using our talents. This presentation will explore the tools to identify our talents, outline the ways in which to build confidence through awareness and elevate us to more powerful communication which eases the processes of negotiation and delegation, both vitally important to success.

Ann Rosser – Owner & President, Finding Resolution

Fireside Chat - Leading an Inclusive Organization: Identifying and Addressing Unconscious Bias

This interactive session will look at the U.S. business community's focus over the last year on diversity, inclusion and racial equality, following the deaths by police of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and others, and the nationwide protests that resulted. Karen and Whytni will discuss the role large and small businesses owned and run by women can play in this national movement. How do women leaders identify unconscious bias, support employees of color, ensure opportunities for advancement, set goals for improvement, and evaluate organizational efforts? How do we have open, honest conversations about these uncomfortable topics, and what can we all do to be allies in this important work?

Whytni Kernodle, Esq. – Founder & Principal, Global Goddess Enterprises & Co-Founder, Black Parents of Arlington and Arlington for Justice

Karen Bate – Founder of KB Concepts, P.R.

Work/Life Balance – Juggling Parenting and Your Career

Remember when zoom was the sound the toy car made when your kids “zoomed” it around the floor? Who would have thought that word would become a daily reminder that the world has changed? Juggling your kids and career was hard enough, now your juggling skills have really been put to the test. Join our panel of moms to discuss how they got through it, and how you can too.

Brooke Oberwetter – Head of External Affairs, Amazon

Ivy Horan – President & Founder, MGI Corporate Gifts LLC

Jess Owens – Founder & CEO, Greenlist

Monique Rizer – Executive Director, Urban Alliance, Greater DC Region

10:15–10:25 AM › COFFEE BREAK › SPONSORED BY LISA DAMICO PORTRAITS

Asya Haikin – 60 second breathing exercise

10:25–11:10 AM › SESSION TWO

Build a Brand of Conviction and Make a Living Doing What You Value

In an age where consumers have lost trust, it's no longer good enough to tell stories through campaigns. Brands of conviction are designing strategies around an issue rather than a product. For a brand to be meaningful, it must build a deeper, more valuable social connection by setting the agenda, taking a stand, and mostly being trusted. In this dynamic talk, we'll cover how certain brands are making cultural purpose the heart of what they do and who they are, not just a sidebar. We'll touch upon how you can create and construct a brand of conviction that champions an issue close to your heart and appeal to people's emotions – and to what the brand represents.

Evelyn Powers – Designer & Founder, Design Powers

Emily Krause – Web Designer, Design Powers

Take Care of You, So You Can Take Care of Business

It's fine. I'm fine. Everything's fine. How many times have you said that? How many times did you mean it? You're so busy taking care of everyone else, let our panel of wellness professionals teach you how to take care of yourself. It's the most important thing you can do for your family and your business.

Dr. Jelena Kecmanovic – Founder & Director, Arlington/DC Behavior Therapy Institute

Stephanie Mitchell – Owner & Trainer, Stephanie Mitchell Fitness

Noa Ariela – CEO/Managing Member, Noa Ariela Hypnotherapy

Fireside Chat - Authentic Leadership in Times of Change

Change is now the normal state of business. What leadership qualities are required to lead a team when people, in general, don't like change? How do you lead employees through change and help them thrive? Hint: being authentic and vulnerable is key. Listen in on this fireside chat to learn why, and hear the real struggles and successes that these executive women have encountered.

Mary-Claire Burick – President, Rosslyn Business Improvement District

Nicole Collier – Director of Policy & Public Affairs, Nestlé

11:10–11:20 AM › COFFEE BREAK

Kara Simon – 60 second breathing exercise

11:20 AM–12:05 PM › SESSION THREE

People Don't Buy What You Do, They Buy Why You Do It!

What makes people who make a difference in the world the way they are? How would you like to be remembered? What would you like your legacy to be? What is your purpose in life? This session will help you navigate the answers to these questions, while hearing Paty's own life experiences. Come learn how you can create wealth and prosperity in your business, and at the same time, create a positive impact on the world.

Patricia Funegra – CEO & Founder, La Cocina VA

A Mission to Build a Business and a Community

Sarah will discuss her experience in nonprofit leadership, and the transition to entrepreneur and business leadership. She'll share her knowledge of fundraising and advocacy campaigns, and how she applied that to marketing and sales. Hear how she did all of this while simultaneously creating a community that transcends product sales and empowers breastfeeding moms to meet their goals.

Sarah Wells – CEO & Founder, Sarah Wells Bags

Ask the Experts: Resources to Start or Run a Business

Do you know what tax forms you need to fill out for your business? Can you name your business the same as an existing business? What resources does Arlington County have to help your business? Where do you get money for a business? Our panel of experts can help you answer those questions and so much more in this lively question and answer forum.

Tara Palacios – Director, BizLaunch, Arlington Economic Development

Kandis Koustenis – Intellectual Property Attorney, Bean, Kinney & Korman

Christine Searle, CIA, CRMA, EA – Owner, Searle Business Solutions LLC

Jenny Shtipelman – Senior Vice President, National Capital Bank of Washington

12:05–12:30 PM › CLOSING REMARKS/NETWORKING

SPEAKERS

SHARMI ALBRECHTSEN

CEO & FOUNDER, SMARTGURLZ



Sharmi Albrechtsen is a robotics aficionado, educator, author and mom, CEO and co-founder of SmartGurlz, a fast-growing start-up company focusing on closing the gender gap in technology. SmartGurlz is the first robotics company focused on girls.

Sharmi began her career as an author and journalist and eventually spent the last decade in communication and consumer education in STEM companies focusing on health and wellness. She was the associate director of the Ida Institute, a non-profit organization whose mission was to empower adults and children to overcome hearing disabilities.

In 2015, Sharmi started SmartGurlz after she became frustrated when trying to find educational but fun toys for her daughter, Nina. She saw a world of opportunity with tech fun, coding and digital learning for girls and at the same time inspiring interest in STEM related subjects.

As CEO, she is the visionary backbone of the company, ensuring that the company develops, markets and sells innovative products. SmartGurlz Partners include: BlackGirlsCode, Girl Scouts of America and DigitalGirl Inc.

Sharmi was named AdWeek's 2017 Disruptor Award, in Championing Gender Diversity in Advertising and Tech. She was named Women Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 by the Asian Chamber of Commerce. She has been featured in Forbes, Huffington Post, Financial Times, Fox Business News, Fox and Friends and CNN.

SmartGurlz was featured on ABC's Shark Tank, November 2017, where Sharmi battled more than 40,000 companies to get placed. On air, she battled celebrity sharks including Richard Branson, Mark Cuban and closed a deal with Daymond John.

NOA ARIELA

CEO/MANAGING MEMBER, NOA ARIELA HYPNOTHERAPY



Ms. Noa Ariela is an Air Force Veteran and a former Federal Government employee turned entrepreneur. She has a thirteen year old daughter whom she considers the light of her life, and they reside in Arlington, Virginia. Ms. Ariela has a Bachelor of Science

from Duquesne University and a Master of Criminal Justice from Boston University. Her goal as a Hypnotherapist and Holistic Life Coach is to empower women and Veterans to heal and help them discover and embrace their own authenticity, vulnerability and authentic self.

KAREN BATE

FOUNDER, KB CONCEPTS, P.R.



Karen Bate, a former journalist and Congressional press secretary, founded KB Concepts P.R. in 2007. She and her team help companies and nonprofits strategize and strengthen their brands; achieve their mission and goals; garner key media placements; and

harness the variety of social media tools to tell clients' stories and inspire others to support them. Great Ideas for Good Causes is not just her company tagline; it is the guiding philosophy of her work.

Karen also co-founded Awesome Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) and is thrilled to be part of the Chamber/AWE Women in Business Summit this year. Karen passionately believes that collaboration, not competition, and women supporting women are the keys to success in business and in life.

MARY-CLAIRE BURICK

PRESIDENT, ROSSLYN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



Mary-Claire Burick, President of the Rosslyn Business Improvement District, works with local businesses, residents and government officials on the county, state and federal level to ensure that Rosslyn flourishes as an urban center. In her role, she helps to position businesses for success by building engagement, offering highly curated resources and leading change.

Previously, Mary-Claire was President of MC Strategy, a consulting firm helping leaders build healthy and effective organizations. She has also served as Vice President of Operations for Allbritton Communications, leading ABC-7, NewsChannel 8 and POLITICO. Earlier in her career, she helped launch the Fox News Channel, where she served as Operations Manager.

NICOLE COLLIER

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NESTLÉ



Nicole Collier is Director of Policy & Public Affairs for Nestlé based in Arlington, VA. Nicole has 20 years of policy and public affairs experience in Washington. Currently, she leads Nestlé's U.S. policy agenda and creates and maintains stakeholder relationships in the critical areas of Nestlé's business including sustainability policy. Before coming to Nestlé, she represented Mayors and City Councils while at the National League of Cities and soon after worked as a Senior Policy Advisor to Michigan Governor, Jennifer M. Granholm, focusing on critical legislative priorities for the State while working closely with the Michigan congressional delegation and other Governors' offices. She also worked for a lobbying firm for several years managing client teams and leading legislative strategies for Fortune 500 companies and large non-profit organizations. Nicole received her bachelor's degree from Hampton University and her MPA from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. She lives in Virginia with her husband and three children.

PATRICIA FUNEGRÁ

CEO & FOUNDER, LA COCINA VA



Paty Funegra is a social entrepreneur, activist, and advocate of businesses that are creating a positive impact in The United States and in the developing world. She is the Founder and President of Global Development Advisors, a hybrid nonprofit and for-profit consulting firm that drives economic development through social impact investing. The organization helps transform developing communities around the world by creating profitable businesses that are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Paty is also passionate about supporting others in reaching their highest potential through Purpose Reimagined, a consulting firm that partners with business owners, philanthropists, nonprofit leaders, and corporations to identify their purpose and apply it to their careers, companies, and philanthropic goals.

Paty has been the Founder and CEO of La Cocina VA since 2013, a vocational and technical education organization that supports workforce and small business development for people of color in Washington DC. She has worked tirelessly to educate and empower women, immigrants, and minorities by building a comprehensive support network to assure their success.

IVY HORAN

PRESIDENT & FOUNDER, MGI CORPORATE GIFTS LLC



Ivy J. Horan is the president and founder of MGI Corporate Gifts LLC, a woman-owned company specializing in sourcing and creating unique business gifts and awards, known for personal concierge service and the high-end experience. She is also a mother, wife, daughter, sister, cousin, friend, and active community member in Arlington, Virginia.

Prior to founding MGI Corporate Gifts, Ivy worked as a corporate buyer for Hecht's department store, then oversaw the Corporate Gift division at Tiny Jewel Box for more than a decade. These experiences helped Ivy hone a robust array of client service and business skills, delivering the realization that the ability to lead clients through the curation of right gift at the right price meets an important demand. MGI Corporate Gifts LLC was founded in 2019 and offers custom business gifts and awards for speakers, board members, clients, milestone events, anniversaries, conferences and more.

DR. JELENA KECMANOVIC

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, ARLINGTON/DC BEHAVIOR THERAPY INSTITUTE



Dr. Jelena Kecmanovic [Dr K.] is a clinical psychologist, the founding director of the Arlington/DC Behavior Therapy Institute (ABTI), and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. She is a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) expert with over 25 years of experience as a therapist, teacher, mentor, researcher, author, and presenter. Dr K. is a frequent contributor to The Washington Post, and her work also has appeared in the Chicago Tribune, Business Insider, and Salon, among others. She also writes a Psychology Today blog "From science to practice," and has been quoted and interviewed widely, from the New York Times to NPR.

WHYJNI KERNODLE, ESQ.

FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL, GLOBAL GODDESS ENTERPRISES



Whytni Kernodle is an attorney, political strategist, co-founder and president of Black Parents of Arlington, and co-founder and steering committee member of Arlington for Justice. She currently serves on Arlington's Human Rights Commission, Police Practices Work Group, Logo Review Panel, Arlington Civic Federation Task Force in Governance and Election Reform, Arlington County Council of PTAs, and APS Advisory Council on Teaching and Learning. Whytni earned her B.A. from Temple University and her J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania where she was an Editor on the Journal of International Law.

Whytni is also the CEO of Global Goddess Enterprises. Global Goddess was born out of Whytni's passion for human rights, travel, and immersive cultural experiences. Whytni is multilingual, with excellent command and highly proficient in spoken and written Spanish and French. Global Goddess leverages Whytni's experience and understanding of language and the law, and how to travel to various cultures based on her background and experience.

KANDIS KOSTENIS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEY, BEAN, KINNEY & KORMAN



Kandis Koustenis is a shareholder with Bean, Kinney & Korman focusing her practice on intellectual property strategies, protection, and enforcement. She helps clients manage complex brand and content-related issues including global brand portfolio development and management, licensing and other intellectual property transactions, advertising claims review, privacy compliance, and federal court and TTAB litigation.

Kandis has more than 25 years' experience advising clients from a variety of industries as in-house and outside counsel in New York City and, since 2013, here in her home state of Virginia. Her in-house experience as intellectual property counsel for Toys "R" Us/Babies "R" Us and Kenneth Cole augments her ability to provide practical, business and budget driven advice.

EMILY KRAUSE

WEB DESIGNER, DESIGN POWERS



Emily Krause is a graphic and web designer and does web development for Design Powers. Emily's easy-going manner along with her exceptional skills at teaching technical info to clients make her a favorite. Evelyn refers to her as the "Client Whisperer."

Emily is dedicated to helping clients visualize their business services and is obsessed with SEO, perusing google analytics and creating digital designs and marketing materials.

Emily holds a BFA from the Art & Visual Technology program with a concentration in graphic design from GMU. When not working she spends as much time offline as possible, preferably hiking in the mountains or out west.

Emily is incredibly honored to have won the 2020 Best Home-Based Business Award from Arlington Chamber of Commerce last year.

STEPHANIE MITCHELL

OWNER & TRAINER, STEPHANIE MITCHELL FITNESS



Stephanie Mitchell is the owner/trainer of Stephanie Mitchell Fitness, LLC. Her mission is to help create strong, mindful and feisty females. She specializes in women's fitness and has a BS and MS in health education. Stephanie has her personal training certification from NASM and is a Chopra Center Certified Meditation Instructor. Her previous professional experience includes managing health and wellness programs for Arlington County Government and Inova Health Systems. She also served as adjunct faculty at Marymount University.

Stephanie enjoys running and participating in triathlons. In 2015 and 2017, she completed the Lake Placid Ironman and has completed several half and full marathons. She believes that exercise should bring you joy and the strength and stamina to enjoy all the other parts of your life. Stephanie lives in Arlington with her husband and two kids and their dog, Ozzy.

BROOKE OBERWETTER

HEAD OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AMAZON



Brooke Oberwetter is the Head of External Affairs for Amazon, where she leads regional engagement with the community around Amazon's second headquarters in Arlington. As Amazon's primary liaison to local community, her work at Amazon includes outreach to area nonprofits, small businesses, community groups, and civic associations and ensuring that Amazon is a strong local partner to its neighbors at its new home in Arlington. Prior to joining Amazon in 2019, Brooke spent nearly two decades working at the intersection of public policy and technology, most recently as a member of the U.S. Public Policy team at Facebook.

Brooke serves on the Board of Directors of Chance for Life, a local nonprofit that raises funds for pediatric cancer research, and the Crystal City Citizens Review Commission. She is currently a member of the 2020-21 class of Leadership Arlington and the 2021 class of Leadership Greater Washington's Rising Leaders Program. She also has a deeply rewarding and not-at-all maddening temporary side gig as a first grade Zoom school facilitator.

JESS OWENS

FOUNDER & CEO, GREENLIST



Jess Owens is the Founder and CEO of Greenlist. Greenlist is a technology that enables peer-to-peer returns. Our returns SKIP the trip back to the store, warehouse, or landfill and go directly to a waiting consumer. Prior to founding Greenlist, Jess was the Director of Marketing at Arlington Strategy. Jess lives in Falls Church City with her husband, two daughters and dog Bluebell.

TARA PALACIOS

DIRECTOR, BIZLAUNCH, ARLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Tara Palacios is the Director of BizLaunch, Arlington's Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance Network in Arlington, Virginia. Ms. Palacios founded BizLaunch in 2002 to help entrepreneurs successfully grow and expand their businesses. Since its inception, BizLaunch has reached 60,000+ business owners through sponsored workshops, seminars, and one-on-one counseling sessions.

Ms. Palacios won numerous awards in the community for her work with small businesses and entrepreneurs. She holds a BA from UMBC with a degree in Political Science and Journalism, and a MS in Marketing Communications from Johns Hopkins University, and is a member of ODK and Leadership Arlington.

EVELYN POWERS

DESIGNER & FOUNDER, WEB DESIGNER, DESIGN POWERS



Evelyn Powers founded Design Powers based on a life-long dedication to great design and a mindful approach to web and print communications. Her work has always been about educating, entertaining, increasing revenue and inspiring people to take action. Clients say working with Design Powers is expert, efficient and fun. Evelyn is incredibly honored to have won the 2020 Best Home-Based Business Award from Arlington Chamber last year.

Evelyn also co-founded Awesome Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) and is thrilled to be part of the Chamber/AWE Women in Business Summit this year and is looking forward to being a speaker.

MONIQUE RIZER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, URBAN ALLIANCE, GREATER DC REGION



Monique is the Executive Director of Urban Alliance's Greater D.C. region, which serves nearly 800 high schoolers in six school districts with workforce readiness skill development and rigorous internships. She previously served as executive director of Opportunity Nation, where they developed a new Opportunity Index and provided platforms for two bipartisan bill introductions in the United States Senate. She also previously created and scaled an award-winning career program for military spouses. Her experiences on economic opportunity and workforce development have been featured in the Wall Street Journal, Black Enterprise Magazine, and Harvard Kennedy School, among others.

As one of the first class of Gates Millennium Scholars, she completed a B.A. from Gonzaga University and an M.S. from Syracuse University. Monique has three children; her eldest son graduates from college this May and serves as in the U.S. Army National Guard. She also has a high school-aged son and a stepdaughter in elementary school.

ANN ROSSER

OWNER, PRESIDENT, FINDING RESOLUTION



As a leadership development consultant, certified coach, mediator and facilitator, Ann utilizes her over 20 years of executive experience to improve the performance of organizations and individuals. Her focus is on improved and courageous communication to enable clients to address conflict and adapt to change.

By instilling confidence and courage, Ann partners with clients so that individuals clear whatever hurdle is blocking their future success; and organizations effectively embrace change, unify purpose/vision and breakdown silos.

Ann focuses on the specifics of goals, not generalities; on the power that attitude holds in success and the importance of self-awareness in becoming a good leader. She is an effective personal sounding board – responding to concerns with insightful feedback and asking questions to prompt self-examination.

Ann is a credentialed coach by the International Coach Federation, a certified mediator (Supreme Court of Virginia), Certified Facilitator (Association Talent Development), and a Gallup Strengths Coach. She is certified to conduct the following assessments: DISC, Values, and Gallup Strengths.

She is a graduate of Leadership Arlington, an active member of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, a former board member of the Northern Virginia Mediation Service, and a past Vice President of the Women Alliance for Financial Education. Finding Resolution Consulting is a (SWaM) Small, Women-owned & Minority-owned Certified Business. More information can be found at: www.findingresolution.net.

CHRISTINE SEARLE, CIA, CRMA, EA

OWNER, SEARLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LLC



Christine Searle, owner of Searle Business Solutions, LLC, is a tax professional and financial control expert with more than 30 years of income tax planning and preparation experience with individuals, businesses, and trusts. She also helps businesses and nonprofits get control over and understand their finances.

Christine is a Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), Certified in Risk Management Assurance (CRMA), and an Enrolled Agent (EA). She is a member of the National Association of Tax Professionals, Institute of Internal Auditors, and Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

JENNY SHTELPMAN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL CAPITAL BANK OF WASHINGTON



Jenny Shtipelman has been leading individuals and businesses in the Washington DC area to financial success for nearly 20 years. With a rare blend of marketing and operational strengths, Ms. Shtipelman has achieved noteworthy results and is recognized for her success in growing sales and profits. Her strategic approach is reflected in her work as a Financial Advisor/Advisor Coach at Ameriprise Financial, formerly American Express Financial Advisors, Citibank FSB and EagleBank. Currently a SVP, Commercial Relationship Manager at The National Capital Bank of Washington, she focuses on expanding and supporting the Bank's clients in MD, DC and VA.

Ms. Shtipelman received a BBA in finance and marketing from the George Washington University. She holds a Small Business Consulting Certification and a Financial Management Certification from Cornell University. DC Commercial Real Estate Women Association honored her with an Esprit de Corps Award for her contributions to the organization. Ms. Shtipelman was voted one of the Top 100 Bankers in the Greater DC area, where she resides.

SARAH WELLS

CEO & FOUNDER, SARAH WELLS BAGS



After the birth of her daughter, Sarah had her entrepreneurial "light bulb moment" and launched Sarah Wells Breast Pump Bags, based on a stylish and functional designer handbag that replaces the frustrating tradition of carrying a cheap vinyl breast pump bag or five separate bags for all a mama's "stuff." Since that time almost a decade ago, Sarah's business has become an internationally recognized brand in the baby products industry. Sarah is a mom, an entrepreneur and a women's health advocate. Prior to starting her business, she spent 15 years running national nonprofit organizations committed to achieving quality healthcare for Americans, with a personal passion to improve policies for girls and women.

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