



SPEAKERS

2020 WOMEN IN BUSINESS CONFERENCE



Elaine Hand

President, InnerView LLC

Innerview Inc. owned and operated by Elaine, has been in business since 1995. She works within organizations on Human Resource Management as well as Leadership and Management Development. Her seminars have proven over and over again the philosophy that all companies have two major concerns: Systems and People. No matter how much money an organization spends on top of the line, high quality systems, the organization is only as good as the people who own, operate, manage, and work for them. She has facilitated workshops and conducted seminars on management, strategic planning, generational diversity, internal and external customer service, time management, team building, leadership, motivation and employment assessment strategies. She has spoken at national, regional and local conferences.



Julie Mueller

Campus President, Universal Technical Institute-Lisle

Julie Mueller is the president of Universal Technical Institute (UTI) in Lisle, IL, a position she has held since 2010. Mueller began her career in UTI's student services division. She has focused on strong employment outcomes for graduates, partnering with local employers and providing education that serves industry's needs. In addition to her role as campus president, Mueller is actively engaged with the community. She participated in the DuPage County Workforce Development Division's "Breaking Boundaries" series, which helped expose women to high paying, in-demand careers that are in typically male-dominated fields. She participates in the School District 203 Business Partnership Council as well as 4 different chambers. Mueller also leads partnerships with local middle and high schools to help with college and career pathway initiatives and works to increase awareness about trade school education. Mueller holds a B.S. degree from Purdue University & a Master's in Social Work from Loyola University.



Zaldwaynaka (“Z”) Scott
President, Chicago State University

Zaldwaynaka (“Z”) Scott was unanimously voted by the Board of Trustees’ to serve as the 12th permanent president of Chicago State University and assumed the role on July 1, 2018. Under President Scott’s leadership, CSU has a renewed focus on growing student enrollment, building the school’s regional and national reputation for scholarship and academic research, improving the resources and opportunities available to the student body, and increasing alumni and community engagement.

Prior to her current role, President Scott spent more than 16 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of Illinois where she served as Chief of the General Crimes Section. She also served as Illinois’ first Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Governor and Public Universities. In this role, she created an independent executive branch state agency from its inception, developed the United States’ first statewide ethics training platform for state government employees, and created a protocol for the investigation of claims of misconduct, waste, fraud, and abuse. President Scott holds a law degree from Indiana University Maurer School of Law and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.



Najiba Benabess
Dean of Tabor School of Business, Millikin University

Najiba Benabess serves as Dean of the Tabor School of Business at Millikin University in Decatur IL USA. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and Master’s degree in Economics from Western Illinois University. Prior to Millikin, Dr. Benabess served as the Director of School of Business and Management in Norwich University in Vermont. Her areas of

expertise include Industrial Organization and International Economics. She has presented in various conferences nationally and internationally; and published a variety of papers in Peer Reviewed Journals. In summer of 2018, she was honored with receiving the Academic Global Business Association (AGBA) Fellow Award in Bangkok Thailand, the highest honor bestowed to an academic/scholar leader recognizing a person’s globally acclaimed professional accomplishments. In addition to her deanly duties, Dr. Benabess serves as a peer reviewer for Higher Learning Commission, and serves the Decatur, IL community as a board director of Hickory Point Bank & Trust, the workforce Development, and of the Macon County Community Foundation.



Kathleen Caldwell
CEO of Caldwell Consulting Group LLC and Founder ThoughtLeader Women Institute

Kathleen Caldwell is CEO of Caldwell Consulting Group, LLC and founder of the ThoughtLeader Women Institute™. She is a credentialed and certified leadership coach, professional speaker, and author who has mentored and advised thousands of entrepreneurs, executives, leaders and business teams around the world to greater success. Ms. Caldwell has received numerous awards and honors including a

SHAW Media Woman of Distinction, Daily Herald/Business Ledger Women of Distinction and Entrepreneurial Excellence designations and was recently honored as a Crystal Lake Chamber Foundation GEM – Generous, Enthusiastic and Motivated leader in the community. Ms. Caldwell serves on several boards and committees including the United Way of Greater McHenry County. Awards, aside, Ms. Caldwell is known best as a connector and influencer and is excited to bring her alliances and

new business strategies from “The League”, a group of 7 figure earning women CEO’s and the C-Suite Network Thought Council to support women’s business and career success.



Cheryl McKinney

VP, Strategy and Portfolio, BP Fuels, North America

As a member of the leadership team of one of BP’s largest refining and marketing businesses, Cheryl McKinney is accountable for strategy, investment, and business development across North America. Her remit includes the BP refineries in Toledo, Ohio, Whiting, Indiana, and Bellingham, Washington, as well as the BP U.S. Pipelines business, and the BP North American Sales and Marketing businesses, which carry both the BP and Arco/ampmbrands. Cheryl serves as President of the holding company for the BP-Husky joint venture at the Toledo Refinery and an Executive Committee Member for the Advance Biofuels Association. She serves as executive sponsor for BP’s corporate relationship with the Society of Women Engineers, and the BP Chicago Women’s business resource group. Cheryl supports the University of Akron as a member of the Presidential Advisory Council and Women in Engineering Industry Advisory Council. Cheryl holds a degree in chemical engineering from the University of Akron, Ohio and has more than 30 years of experience with BP including 20 years in-plant refining experience. Her background includes production optimization, business development, and performance management. She currently calls Naperville home, where she lives with her husband, Danny Hart.



Ericka Perkins

Assistant State Director, Illinois Small Business Development Center

Ericka Perkins is the Assistant State Director of the Illinois SBDC Network and oversees the day to day operations of 38 locations throughout the state. Ms. Perkins has worked for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the host of the Illinois SBDC Network, since 2000 in various roles.



Janice Christiansen

President and CEO, JC Schultz Enterprises Inc., The FlagSource

Janice Christiansen is the only woman president of a full line flag and banner manufacturing company in the U.S.A. She graduated from Michigan State University and attended DePaul Law School for two years while working in the notes receivable department of Walter E. Heller Commercial Finance. Janice began her flag manufacturing career at J.S. Schultz, and worked in various positions including outside sales, marketing, and purchasing. She received a Certificate of Business Administration from UIC. After the unexpected death of her husband at age 40 in 1985 and departure from the business of her brother-in-law in 1989, Janice was elected president of the company in 1990. At this time, the company was in a loss position and deeply in debt. Janice, with the help of her team, was responsible for turning the company around, retiring all old debt, and leading the company to a stable and growing operation.



Donna Stevenson

President, Stevenson Crane Service, Inc.

Donna Stevenson founded Stevenson Crane Service, Inc. in 1989. Since that time, Stevenson Crane has grown from its first truck crane to over 200 pieces of cranes and specialty equipment. By investing in the newest equipment, technology, and safety procedures available, Stevenson has put her company on the national scene, employing more than 90 men and women serving customers in 22 states. Stevenson Crane was named the 32nd largest crane company by *American Cranes and Transport* in 2009, and is the only woman-owned company in the world to own the Manitowoc 18,000, an 825 ton capacity crawler crane with a maximum lift height exceeding 600 feet!

Donna holds positions on the Board of Directors with the Plainfield Community Bank, Women Construction Owners and Executives, Chicagoland Construction Safety Council, and the Operating Engineers Certification Program. In addition, she serves as the Women and Minority Liaison to the International Union of Operating Engineers. Donna is also a member of The Committee of 200, Hispanic American Construction Industry Association, Association of Subcontractors and Affiliates, Federation of Women Contractors, Three Rivers Manufacturing Association, Illinois Road and Transportation Builders, Fox Valley Association of General Contractors, and the Contractors Association of Will and Grundy Counties.



Leslie Bowman

Owner, Interior Designer, The Design Bar

Leslie Bowman is a high-end luxury interior designer and owner of The Design Bar, located in Burr Ridge, Illinois. Recently named one of Chicago's top 30 Interior Designers by Powerhouse Smart, Leslie's effortless style is just the right mix of classic + modern. Having recently completed the design of over eight different custom luxury homes in the Western Suburbs, she is regularly sought after by builders and homeowners alike to help streamline the building process. Leslie, who serves as the Design Director, oversees each project from inception to completion, always putting her client's needs first. She works closely with each client bringing their vision to reality while adding her signature flair into each project. Her love for mixing organic and glamorous elements can be seen in all her work.

Leslie began her career in Public Accounting before switching paths to pursue her passion of interior design. Upon earning her Master's of Interior Design from the prestigious Harrington College of Design, Leslie created The Design Bar whereby clients can design, build and decorate their homes effortlessly. The Design Bar is an upscale design center for homeowners building or renovating their home and is also home to a retail showroom which serves clients and consumers alike where they can shop for one of a kind furniture, accessories, textiles and artwork all under one roof.



Victoria Vanderschaaf

Associate, Litchfield Cavo LLP

Victoria concentrates her practice on employment defense. She has considerable experience representing clients in both federal and state courts and in agency matters. Victoria prides herself on her successful record of winning dismissals and securing positive outcomes on her clients' behalf.

Prior to joining Litchfield Cavo LLP, Victoria was an EEO Investigator for the Chicago Transit Authority's approximately 10,000 employees. In this position

Victoria conducted internal investigations, drafted employment policies and administered anti-discrimination/anti-harassment trainings. Victoria uses the unique perspective she gained from working with CTA employees and managers to effectively counsel her clients on their employment law related inquiries.

Victoria studied law at Loyola University of Chicago School of Law where she was a Junior Staff Editor for its Children Legal Rights Journal, earned a public interest certificate, her juris doctorate and graduated *magna cum laude*.



Jennifer Hammer

President, JW Hammer, LLC

Jennifer Hammer is a lawyer, lobbyist, consultant, wife, mom to three kids, and outdoor aficionado. She runs her own solo practice firm, wherein she draws on vast experience in the areas of law, policy, and regulation to provide results driven consulting and legal guidance. J W Hammer, LLC is also an Illinois and Missouri certified BEP (Woman Owned Business/Business Enterprise Program) vendor. She also currently serves on the board of a mutual insurance company.

Most recently, Ms. Hammer served as the first confirmed female Director of the Illinois Department of Insurance, a gubernatorial cabinet level position. With more than a decade of experience in health care law, policy and regulation, she remains a well-recognized expert on the Affordable Care Act. Prior to this role, she served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy in the Office of the Governor, as Special Counsel to the Governor, and Policy Advisor for Healthcare and Human Services. In these roles, she assisted with management and oversight of the 50,000 member workforce and \$73B budget. While in this role, she gave birth to her third child and truly learned the art of multi-tasking, efficiency focused task mastering, and embraced "work hard, play hard". Prior to these roles, Ms. Hammer served as the Executive Director to the Illinois Chamber of Commerce Healthcare Council. She also spent significant time in private practice and still donates her legal services to victims of domestic violence and expungement of criminal records.



Patricia "Patty" Schuh

Former Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications

Currently retired and consulting when needed, Patty has been a mainstay in politics for more than three decades. Before retirement, Patty served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications under former Governor Bruce Rauner. Previous to working for Governor Rauner, she worked as the Assistant to the Leader and Spokeswoman for the Illinois Senate Republicans spanning from former leaders James "Pate" Philip, James Watson, Christine

Radogno and the current Senate Republican Minority Leader Bill Brady. Greg Hinz, Political Columnist for Crain's Chicago Business, wrote of her talents, "She earned a reputation as someone who knows her stuff and certainly can stand her ground, but can work with anybody." She is married and is a proud mom to a successful son.



Leslie Geissler Munger

Former State Comptroller and Deputy Governor, State of Illinois

In 2015, Leslie Geissler Munger was appointed State Comptroller by then Gov. Bruce Rauner and led the office responsible for maintaining the state's financial accounts and making all state payments. In 2017, Munger was appointed Deputy Governor, and in 2018, she added the role of Acting Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity to her responsibilities. As Deputy Governor, she served as a senior advisor to the Governor and led efforts to drive economic development throughout the state. She oversaw the expansion of Intersect Illinois, the state's economic development organization. She led the state's effort with City of Chicago leadership on the Amazon HQ2 bid. She worked closely with the University of Illinois leadership to advance the Discovery Partners Institute Initiative. She guided the Illinois Bicentennial Commission efforts to execute a statewide, yearlong celebration in honor of the state's 200th birthday. Prior to serving in state government, Munger was a brand management executive with Helene Curtis/Unilever where she led the US Hair Care business. Before that she worked at Proctor & Gamble and at McKinsey and Company, Inc. Munger is a 1978 graduate of College of ACES at the University of Illinois and she received her MBA in 1982 from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.



Kim Brown

Speaker, Author, Consultant, Centrally Human

Kimberly Weisensee Brown is a highly accomplished growth executive and nationally-renowned speaker, author and consultant with over 15 years of proven success. She founded Centrally Human to focus on empowering the people in this very technology-first world. She has a background with companies such as GE, Acxiom, Hyatt and American Family Insurance and has her bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University. As a professional coach and consultant, she helps individuals and corporations transcend technology and find human-centric success. Her upcoming book is titled "Centrally Human: Harness the Soul of Your Brand for the Future of Your Company". Kim developed the human-centric model, which helps brands embrace their true identity with Radical Transparency, Simplicity and Transparency to be relevant and achieve measurable business goals in today's 1:1 and highly connected world. She is an active leader in the Chicago community as the founder of TechHive, a university lecturer, and expert advisor at 1871.