



**Women's  
Leadership  
Conference**  
**2024**

The Era of Embracing Change:

**Dare to Be  
Extraordinary**

March 9, 2024

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Conference Participants,

Welcome to Adelphi University's seventh annual Women's Leadership Conference!

We are thrilled to have you join us, particularly at a time when so many industries are experiencing and responding to rapid changes. Higher education is uniquely positioned to develop solutions to today's workforce trends, from the rise of AI to remote work and a stronger emphasis on diversity initiatives. Our goal in hosting this conference is to discuss how women can use education to break down barriers, inspire each other to strive for greatness and maximize our value in every career field.



This year's theme—*The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to Be Extraordinary*—is a specific call to action. Through the many accomplished women who are here to share their stories, we hope to motivate you as aspiring leaders to elevate your voices and navigate us through industry changes today and beyond. I encourage each of you to take advantage of this opportunity to spend time with our guest speakers, learn from them, and expand your network. We are especially excited to bring you discussions on artificial intelligence, success stories of women of color, building equitable workplaces, the power of women in philanthropy, and more.

I'm grateful to all our panelists and moderators for their insight and commitment to mentorship. I also want to thank our Student Government Association, Division of Student Affairs, and Office of University Advancement and External Relations staffs for their planning, coordination and hard work in creating this outstanding opportunity for our community each year.

I look forward to sharing this experience with all of you today as we exchange ideas, ask meaningful questions and challenge each other to grow. Thank you for joining us!

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine".

Christine M. Riordan, PhD  
President

# 2024 Women's Leadership Conference



Schedule	Saturday, March 9, 2024
10:30 a.m.	<b>Check-In and Networking</b> <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center Lobby</i>
11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	<b>Welcome and Kick-Off Session</b> “Building Your Brain Trust” with Kendra Bracken-Ferguson <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, Thomas Dixon Lovely Ballroom, Second-Floor</i>
12:30 p.m.–12:45 p.m.	<b>Networking Break</b>
12:45 p.m.–1:45 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session I</b> Leading Inclusively: Building Diverse and Equitable Workplaces <i>Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall</i>  The Power of Women in Philanthropy: Leading for Impact <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First-Floor</i>
1:45 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	<b>Networking Break</b>
2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session II</b> Tech Trailblazers: Leading in the AI Age <i>Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall</i>  Breaking Barriers: Success Stories of Women of Color <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First-Floor</i>
3:00 p.m.–3:15 p.m.	<b>Networking Break</b>
3:15 p.m.–4:15 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session III</b> Empowering Leadership: Building Allies and Mentors <i>Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall</i>  Career Revolution: Embracing Your Path <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First-Floor</i>
4:15 p.m.–4:45 p.m.	<b>Networking Cocktails</b> <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, First-Floor Lobby</i>
5:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m.	<b>Awards Celebration and Keynote Dinner</b> <i>Ruth S. Harley University Center, Thomas Dixon Lovely Ballroom, Second-Floor</i>
<i>All speaker biographies can be found toward the back of the program.</i>	

# A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Dear Conference Participants,

Welcome to Adelphi's seventh annual Women's Leadership Conference.

For more than 127 years, our University has played a pivotal role in empowering women through education and service. This signature event continues that tradition by bringing together women leaders from Adelphi and beyond, creating a dynamic platform for learning, sharing and uplifting the next generation.

The takeaways from today's sessions will empower you to further refine your unique leadership style and potential. Exceptional leaders will share insights on navigating the ever-changing world of work and discuss the future for aspiring women leaders.

We are thrilled to feature Kendra Bracken-Ferguson, founder and CEO of BrainTrust, and Jennifer Hyman, co-founder and CEO of Rent the Runway, as our kick-off and dinner keynote speakers, respectively. They are trendsetters and leaders in their respective areas, and we eagerly anticipate hearing their inspiring stories.

Take full advantage of the resources available to enhance your career, such as professional headshots, roundtable discussions with industry leaders and consultations with professionals for career development guidance.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to our conference co-chairs, LeeAnn Black '83 and Humera Qazi '93, MBA, as well as our steering committee members and today's panelists for their commitment to supporting this inspirational annual event.

Thank you for bringing your enthusiasm and experience to today's Women's Leadership Conference at Adelphi University and for contributing to the celebration of women's history.

Dare to be extraordinary with us and enjoy the conference!



Thomas A. Kline, EdD

Vice President of University Advancement and External Relations



# 2024 CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP

## Co-Chairs

LeeAnn Black '83  
Chief Operating Officer, Latham & Watkins

Humera Qazi '93, MBA  
Managing Director, Morgan Stanley

## Steering Committee

Pawneet Abramowski '08  
Founder & Principal, PARC Solutions LLC

Lois Carter Schlissel, JD  
Of Counsel and Former Managing Attorney,  
Meyer, Suozzi, English & Klein, P.C.

Loretta Cangialosi '80  
Retired Senior Vice President and Controller,  
Pfizer, Inc.

Sharon Cunningham '90  
Managing Director/Senior Portfolio Management  
Director and Financial Advisors, The Cunningham  
Group, Morgan Stanley

Anita D'Amico, PhD '84  
President, Cotopaxi Consulting LLC

Renu Dalessandro  
Chief Marketing Officer, Jovia Financial Credit Union

Emily Dorko '13  
Associate Athletic Director for External Relations/  
SWA, Adelphi University

Donna Haynes  
Director of Corporate and Community Partnerships  
Adelphi University

Nicholas Iadevaio, MBA '00  
Vice President, Human Resources  
and Diversity & Inclusion Leader,  
L'Oréal USA

Judy Jackson, P '84  
President, JLC Ventures (Judy Loves Culture)

Kelly Ann Keenan  
Sr. Associate Director, Special Events,  
Adelphi University

Thomas Kline, EdD  
Vice President of University Advancement  
and External Relations, Adelphi University

Ashleigh Nixon-Joseph  
Assistant Director of Auxiliary and Event Services  
Adelphi University

Lisa J. Ortiz, P '25  
Senior Engineer, D&B Engineers and Architects, DPC

Laili Paksima  
Director of Advancement, Major & Planned Giving,  
Adelphi University

Lynda Perdomo-Ayala '78  
Administrative Department Head, Health Sciences  
Center School of Medicine, Stony Brook University

Barbara Porter  
Chief Operating Officer and Chief Technology  
Officer, Fragrance Net

Cari Quinn '87, RN, NEA-BC  
Senior Vice President for Pediatrics, Northwell Health  
and Executive Director, Cohen Children's  
Medical Center

Shawana Singletary  
Assistant Vice President, Chief Enrollment Officer  
Adelphi University

Megan Stewart  
Director of Alumni Relations, Adelphi University

Marc S. Strachan '81  
Principal and Chief Marketing Officer, Adgile Media  
Group; Founder Coach Marc Consulting, LLC  
Chair, Board of Trustees, Adelphi University

Derick Thornton  
Director of Advancement and External Relations  
Communications, Adelphi University

Deborah Viola '84, MBA, PhD  
Vice President, Office of Research and Grants  
Administration at Westchester Medical Center,  
a member of WMCHealth

Thomas Ward, Jr. '93  
Assistant Vice President for Career Development  
and Strategic Partnerships, Adelphi University

Chotsani Williams West, MA '07, EdD  
Assistant Vice President of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion  
and Belonging, Adelphi University

Kaitlyn Woods '12, MBA '15  
Director of External Relations and Special Events,  
Adelphi University

Maggie Yoon Grafer '98, MA '08  
Associate Vice President for External Relations and  
University Advancement, Adelphi University

Deborah Mochon Zawisza '80  
Senior Principal, Datos Insights

Anna Zinko  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs,  
Adelphi University



Co-Chair

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## **LeeAnn Black '83**

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Chief Operating Officer, Latham & Watkins

LeeAnn Black '83, chief operating officer, oversees the firm's global business operations, financial management, and strategic direction. Under Black's leadership, Latham has experienced considerable growth while maintaining the distinct culture that underpins the firm's success.

Latham has ascended to the top ranks of elite global law firms under Black's stewardship. She oversaw the firm's global expansion and the evolution of Latham's administrative structure to support the firm's substantial growth. She has also been a champion of innovation and a driving force behind the firm's early adoption of technologies that help Latham deliver efficient, market-leading client service.

Black is a certified public accountant who previously served as a Senior Auditor at Arthur Andersen & Co. She joined Latham in 1987 as the Accounting Manager for the New York office and later served as New York Office Administrator before becoming Chief Operating Officer in 1998. In overseeing all aspects of the firm's financial and operational management, Black draws on her public accounting background and three decades of leadership experience at Latham.

Black has earned broad recognition as a trailblazer in the legal sector, including by the *Financial Times*, which named her a 2017 Top 10 Innovative Individual in North America for her work to secure lower interest rates and debt relief for Latham associates.

Outside of Latham, Ms. Black serves as:

- Council member of Adelphi University's President's Advisory Council
- Chair of the Board of Trustees of The Chapin School, an all-girls K-12 school dedicated to academic excellence, personal integrity, and community responsibility
- Member of the Board of Directors of Pro Bono Net, an organization dedicated to increasing access to justice
- Member of Thomas Reuters' Transforming Women's Leadership in the Law (TWLL) initiative

**“Great leaders do good things when no one is watching.  
Don't underestimate humility.”**

—LeeAnn Black



Co-Chair

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## **Humera Qazi '93, MBA**

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Managing Director, Morgan Stanley

Humera Qazi '93, MBA is a managing director at Morgan Stanley, serving as Head of Wealth Management Operations' Client Services Group (CSG). The CSG is responsible for collaborating and partnering with WM Operations stakeholders and business partners to develop and execute strategies to deliver world-class service to internal and external clients. Before joining Morgan Stanley, she was a managing director in KPMG's Management Consulting practice.

Qazi is a vocal advocate for diversity in the workplace. She is the co-chair for Morgan Stanley's Women's Business Alliance—the largest employee networking group at Morgan Stanley—and co-led Americas D&I for Morgan Stanley Operations before that. At KPMG, she served as co-chair of KPMG's Network of Women for Long Island and launched the ATHENA Awards in the New York region. She is co-chair of the Women's Leadership Conference at Adelphi University and has served on the board of directors of the Women's Bond Club.

Apart from women's leadership initiatives, Qazi serves on the board of directors for Miracle Corners of the World, an organization dedicated to empowering youth leadership in Africa and around the world. She also serves on the board of trustees at her alma mater, Adelphi University.

**“As a leading institution of higher education, Adelphi's objective for our annual women's leadership conference is to continually elevate its purpose by examining the current and upcoming societal landscape and its impact on women. The theme and panel topics for this year have been carefully curated to provide an enlightening experience for all our attendees.**

—Humera Qazi

# KICK-OFF KEYNOTE | 11:15 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

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## BUILDING YOUR BRAIN TRUST

KENDRA BRACKEN-FERGUSON, AUTHOR OF *THE BEAUTY OF SUCCESS: START, GROW AND ACCELERATE YOUR BRAND* AND FOUNDER AND CEO OF BRAINTRUST

Ruth S. Harley University Center, Thomas Dixon Lovely Ballroom

“Happiness is amplified and heightened when we have a community, or brain trust, of people we trust to go through the good times and the bad times in business.” Kendra Bracken-Ferguson will take a deep dive into how creating your own unique brain trust will help support and champion you to recognize your gifts and your value and ultimately remind us of the beauty of our success. Pulling from her new book, *The Beauty of Success: Start, Grow and Accelerate Your Brand*, she’ll provide real-world examples that detail how building your own brain trust will be one of the most important things you can do as an entrepreneur and leader.

Keynote Speaker

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### Kendra Bracken-Ferguson

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Kendra Bracken-Ferguson is an internationally acclaimed thought leader. In demand for her strategic vision and attention to brands that want to grow to scale quickly and sustainably, she is a sought-after speaker and C-suite/board adviser. Kendra’s ecosystem of leadership is rooted in her global conglomerate, BrainTrust, including a global brand marketing firm, BrainTrust Founders Studio, the largest membership-based platform for Black beauty and wellness founders and the adjacent BrainTrust Fund. She hosts the *Business of the Beat* podcast, offering insights and behind-the-scenes stories from BIPOC senior executives and operators as they navigate the journey of building and exiting their companies. As one of the first 200 Black women to raise over \$1M in investment for her debut company, she is a trailblazing three-time founder with two exits. Her first book, *The Beauty of Success: Start, Grow, and Accelerate Your Brand*, launched on February 13, 2024, through Wiley Publishing.



Each conference participant will receive a free copy of Kendra’s book as part of your conference registration.



# BUILDING YOUR BRAIN TRUST

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Former First Lady Michelle Obama once said, “We should always have three friends in our lives- one who walks ahead who we look up to and follow; one who walks beside us, who is with us every step of our journey; and then, one who we reach back for and bring along after we’ve cleared the way.”

I have been fortunate to have someone in my brain trust at each position: the one who walks ahead, the one who walks beside, and the one who I reach back to bring along over the years. The beauty of this is that at any given moment, we may need a differentiated support system in our brain trust to support our needs.

My brain trust is ever evolving and expanding. When you think of your own network and building or rebuilding your brain trust, who are the three people who walk ahead, walk beside or walk behind that make up your brain trust today? I would encourage you to do the same exercise every six to eight months and see how your own growth impacts your brain trust.

When you think of your brain trust, having these three people in your life has helped you...

Who walks ahead of you, who do you look up to and follow? Why? What characteristics do they possess?

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Who walks beside you, who is with you every step of your journey? Why? What characteristics do they possess?

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Who are you bringing along? Why? What characteristics do they possess?

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# BREAKOUT SESSION I | 12:45 P.M.–1:45 P.M.

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## LEADING INCLUSIVELY:

### *BUILDING DIVERSE AND EQUITABLE WORKPLACES*

Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall

Inclusive leadership fosters a diverse and equitable workplace, comprising individuals from a variety of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, gender presentation, sexuality, geographic, cultural, age, abilities, and socioeconomic groups. Find out about the best practices employed by trailblazing organizations to cultivate a place of belonging, promote diversity, and champion equity at every level—and explore the critical role of empathetic leadership.

## Moderator



### **Cassandra Alvarez '09**

Chief of Staff & Chief Diversity Officer  
NYC Department of Veterans' Services (DVS)

## Panelists



### **Alex Gilbert**

Founder  
Cape-able Consulting



### **Channing Martin**

Chief Diversity & Social Impact Officer  
Interpublic Group



### **Jovi Stevenson '95**

DEIB Consultant

# BREAKOUT SESSION I | 12:45 P.M.–1:45 P.M.

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## THE POWER OF WOMEN IN PHILANTHROPY: *LEADING FOR IMPACT*

Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First Floor

This panel will focus on the extraordinary influence of women in philanthropy as you learn about groundbreaking initiatives, impactful strategies, and the profound effects of our panelists' work in leading efforts to make the world a better place.

### Moderator



**Marian Conway, PhD**

Executive Director  
New York Community Bank Foundation

### Panelists



**Alissa Desmarais**

Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer  
Financial Women's Association



**Mari Eva Mendes**

Chief Development & Communications Officer  
Girls for Gender Equity; Founder & Principal, MEM Consulting LLC



**Carrie Wen '17**

Financial Restructuring Practice Manager  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

# BREAKOUT SESSION II | 2:00 P.M.–3:00 P.M.

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## TECH TRAILBLAZERS: *LEADING IN THE AI AGE*

Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall

We are living in a new era of technology. Our expert AI panelists will discuss the transformative potential of artificial intelligence in a wide range of industries as you explore the ever-changing landscape of AI applications, gain key insights into cutting-edge developments, and uncover new strategies to help you leverage the power of AI.

### Moderator



**Anita D'Amico, PhD '84**  
President  
Cotopaxi Consulting LLC

### Panelists



**Linda Chan, MBA**  
Vice President, Information Technology  
Amphenol



**Kevin Goodman '00, MBA '02**  
Global Director, Go To Market  
LinkedIn



**Kees Leune, PhD '07**  
Associate Professor, Chair, Mathematics and Computer Science  
College of Arts and Sciences, Adelphi University

# BREAKOUT SESSION II | 2:00 P.M.–3:00 P.M.

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## **BREAKING BARRIERS: SUCCESS STORIES OF WOMEN OF COLOR**

Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First Floor

Our panelists will shed light on the challenges they have faced, the strategies they have employed, and the pivotal moments that propelled them to success. You'll learn how to break down your own barriers and forge a path toward limitless possibilities.

### **Moderator**



**Humera Qazi '93, MBA**  
Managing Director  
Morgan Stanley

### **Panelists**



**Bita Sultan Mir, MS '01**  
Certified School Psychologist  
Elwood Union Free School District



**Irene Quarshie '98**  
SVP Global Supply Chain & Logistics  
Target Corporation



**Jennifer Rosado**  
Chief Customer Officer  
JOOR

# BREAKOUT SESSION III | 3:15 P.M.–4:15 P.M.

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## EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP: *BUILDING ALLIES AND MENTORS*

Performing Arts Center, Clayton Westermann Stage, Concert Hall

Learn how to build a powerful community of allies and mentors, harness their collective wisdom, and leverage their guidance to foster personal and professional success. Our panel of mentorship advocates will help you grow your network.

### Moderator



**Marc S. Strachan '81**

Principal and Chief Marketing Officer, Adgile Media Group  
Founder, Coach Marc Consulting, LLC;  
Chair, Adelphi University Board of Trustees

### Panelists



**June Collison '81, MBA '84**

President  
Dignity Health-Community Hospital of San Bernardino



**Sharon Cunningham '90**

Managing Director/Senior Portfolio Management  
Director and Financial Advisors  
Morgan Stanley



**Eu'nice R. McCoy '14**

Director, Event Marketing  
National Urban League

# BREAKOUT SESSION III | 3:15 P.M.–4:15 P.M.

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## CAREER REVOLUTION: *EMBRACING YOUR PATH*

Ruth S. Harley University Center, Rooms 113-115, First Floor

Your academic major and current career plans won't necessarily define your future success. In this session, you will gain invaluable information from leaders who have paved their way to the top and can offer practical advice on leveraging your unique strengths, seizing unexpected opportunities, and embracing change as you chart a course toward a fulfilling, impactful career.

### Moderator



**Arianna Savoca '13, MBA '14**  
Human Resource Manager  
Grassi

### Panelists



**Barbara Boschert '89**  
Vice President-Executive Search  
Nielson Associates



**Cynthia Pong, JD**  
Founder and CEO  
Embrace Change



**Erika Stehl, MSW '94**  
President and Co-Founder, Growing Love Community of  
Manorhaven LTD; Co Founder, Ripple Creative LLC

# CAREER SUPPORT HUB

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**Commuter Student Lounge, First Floor, Ruth S. Harley University Center**  
**10:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.**

Stop by the Career Support Hub where you can consult with counselors and career professionals who will review resumes, assess LinkedIn profiles, conduct mock interviews, and provide general career and professional guidance.

No registration is required. Stop by for a quick visit or stay as long as you would like.

## CAREER CLOSET

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The Adelphi Career Closet is a new initiative for current students who can borrow dry-cleaned professional work attire for interviews, conferences, and other professional opportunities, all free of charge.

Conference participants will have a chance to drop off their donations at the conference, in the **Ruth S. Harley University Center Art Gallery**, located on the first floor.

The closet will be accepting ongoing donations long after the conference. Contact [engage@adelphi.edu](mailto:engage@adelphi.edu) for the most up-to-date information and for drop-off locations.

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

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**Ruth S. Harley University Center, Room 119**  
**12:45 p.m.–3:00 p.m.**

Attend one of these smaller roundtable discussions to get more information surrounding mentoring, financial literacy, work-life balance and/or time management. You will have the opportunity to visit all the tables or pick which one is most important to you. Each of these roundtable discussions will provide you with valuable takeaway information and allow you to meet with professionals from these areas to discuss one-to-one questions.



# TYPEFOCUS

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As part of your registration for the Women's Leadership Conference, you have access to utilize the TypeFocus Assessment. The TypeFocus will help you understand your unique behavior profile, identify areas of strength, and know your personal values. Instructions on how to complete the TypeFocus are as follows:

Before you start, watch this brief video on the TypeFocus:

<https://youtu.be/RWyqsx9TY3o>

Then follow each step below:

- Enter the site using the QR code below.
- Click the green REGISTER button and follow the prompts.
- You will create a password for your account.
- If the site asks you for an access code, use Adelphi2020.
- Once signed in, click the "Step 1: Self-Assessment" tab (left side of main page).
- Take the assessments in the order in which they appear: Personality first, Interests second, Skills, Values, and then Success Factors.



## PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOTS

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Ruth S. Harley University Center Art Gallery

10:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Your profile picture is a key element of your LinkedIn presence. Research shows that just having a picture makes your profile 14 times more likely to be viewed by others.

All participants will have the opportunity to take a professional headshot during the conference and will receive their photos approximately two weeks after the conference.

# MODERATED KEYNOTE | 5:00 P.M.

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## CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF RENT THE RUNWAY

Ruth S. Harley University Center, Thomas Dixon Lovely Ballroom

Keynote Speaker

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### Jennifer Hyman

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Jennifer Hyman is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Rent the Runway, a company that is disrupting the trillion-dollar fashion industry and changing the way women get dressed through the Closet in the Cloud, the world's first and largest shared designer closet. Jennifer co-founded Rent the Runway in 2009 and its mission has been the same ever since: to empower women to feel their best every day. The brand offers women the ability to subscribe, rent items a-la-carte and shop resale from hundreds of designer partners, driven by a two-sided discovery engine that connects deeply engaged customers and differentiated brand partners on a powerful platform built around its brand, data, logistics and technology. Under Jennifer's leadership, RTR made history as the first company to go public with a female founder/CEO, COO, and CFO.



Jennifer serves on the Board of Directors of The Estée Lauder Companies and Zalando, and also is a Founding Member of the NYSE Board Advisory Council, a Member of the Women.nyc Advisory Board and a Member of the Launch with GS Advisory Council for Goldman Sachs. She received her BA from Harvard University cum laude and MBA from Harvard Business School and lives in Brooklyn with her husband and daughters, Aurora and Selene.

# MODERATED KEYNOTE | 5:00 P.M.

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Keynote Moderator

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## **Anna Zinko**

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Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs  
Division of Student Affairs

Anna Zinko currently serves as the assistant vice president for student affairs at Adelphi University. In this role, she fosters student development and cultivates a strong sense of belonging for students through her oversight of areas including the Center for Student and Community Engagement, the Office of Residential Life and Housing, the Interfaith Center, and the Mindfulness Center.

With more than a decade of experience in higher education, she has provided leadership in areas such as student leadership, civic engagement and global learning. She earned her BA in Women’s Studies and English from SUNY Plattsburgh in 2009, followed by an MA in Higher Education and Student Affairs from New York University in 2011. Zinko is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration through New York University’s EdD program, focusing her research on supporting retention efforts for first-generation college students.

Zinko has received several regional awards for her contributions to higher education, including the W.E.B. DuBois/Nelson Mandela Commitment to Dialogue and Education Award in 2011 for her work at New York University. She volunteers in various higher education organizations, including NASPA Region 2 and the Long Island College Student Personnel Association, and regularly presents her work as a higher education administrator at regional and national conferences.

Excitingly, she is expecting her first child in April 2024 and eagerly anticipates adding the title “Mom” to her bio very soon.



# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **CASSANDRA ALVAREZ '09**

Cassandra Alvarez '09 currently serves as chief of staff and chief diversity officer for the New York City Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). As a key member of the Executive Leadership team, Alvarez oversees press, communications, partnerships, fundraising, grant administration, community events and citywide outreach. She also serves as primary liaison to City Hall leadership and the mayor's front-office team. In addition, she serves as a strategic adviser to the commissioner, deputy commissioner and other senior leaders. As chief diversity officer, Alvarez oversees the agency's minority and women-owned businesses outreach and contract spending in an effort to ensure the vendors the agency works with reflect the communities that DVS serves.

Prior to serving in her current role, Alvarez served as associate commissioner of policy and strategic partnerships for DVS. Under her leadership, DVS became a partner in the nation's first-ever veterans-focused Pay for Success project—Veterans CARE—which focuses on improving employment and health outcomes for veterans with service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Before joining DVS, Alvarez served as associate director of sponsorship and development with the Mayor's Office of Special Projects and Community Events, where she designed and launched the office's first strategic partnership program. Before joining city government, she launched an individual giving program and strategic plan for National Public Radio's StoryCorps. Prior to that, she worked in development at a number of different New York City nonprofit organizations, including the SS United States Conservancy, the Migraine Research Foundation and the Brooklyn Historical Society.

In 2015, Alvarez was named a Community Innovation Fellow by Re:Gender (formerly the National Council for Research on Women). She is a member of the Marine Park Community Association and the Adelphi University Alumni Council and previously served on the advisory board of the United War Veterans Council. She holds an MS in Nonprofit Management from the Milano School of International Affairs, Management and Urban Policy at The New School and a BA in Political Science from Adelphi University. Her 91-year-old grandfather is a proud Korean War veteran and her two great uncles served in the U.S. Army during the invasion of Normandy in World War II.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **BARBARA BOSCHERT '89**

Barbara Boschert '89 has been vice president, executive search, for Nielsen Associates since 2020. Nielsen Associates is a national executive search firm that specializes in placing professionals within the fields of human resources, finance and accounting, and marketing.

Boschert's extensive and successful career has been within human resources (HR) and management. She began her career as a human resource specialist for Revlon, Inc. Her HR career progressed throughout the mid-1990s, when she managed several HR functions. She worked for Philip Morris/Altria Group, Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase, and The NPD Group Inc.

After working seven years as an HR consultant and executive recruiter, she was recruited to lead Henry Schein's Talent Acquisition function in 2012. Following Henry Schein, she was global vice president of human resources at Drive DeVilbiss Healthcare, then head of HR at Summit Security Services.

Boschert specializes in executive recruitment, organizational development, executive coaching, employee relations, performance management and communications. She received a BS in Management and Communications from Adelphi University. She also attended the New York Institute of Technology and received her Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification; she later earned her Society of Human Resource Management Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP) certification.

## **LINDA CHAN, MBA**

Linda Chan is vice president, information technology at Amphenol Corporation. Amphenol is one of the world's largest providers of high-technology interconnect, sensor and antenna solutions. Its products enable the electronics revolution across virtually every end market, including automotive, broadband communications, commercial aerospace, industrial, information technology and data communications, military, mobile devices, and mobile networks.

Prior to joining Amphenol in 2020, Chan spent five years at Nature's Bounty in a number of high-level information technology roles, including vice president, digital and commercial solutions. Prior to working at Nature's Bounty, she worked for 14 years at Veeco Instruments, most recently as global senior information technology director. She also spent time as an adjunct assistant professor in the Department of Information Systems and Business Analytics at the Frank G. Zarb School of Business at Hofstra University. She has a Master of Business Administration from Hofstra University and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Binghamton University.

Chan's passion is to drive innovation and modern technology toward transformational change. Working in the information technology field and cybersecurity for her entire career, she has experience in a variety of industries in both the private and public sectors.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **JUNE COLLISON '81, MBA '84**

June Collison '81, MBA '84, has served as president of Dignity Health-Community Hospital of San Bernardino in California since 2012. As the leader of this 343-bed acute care hospital, she is working to meet the demands of healthcare reform and the challenges of the local economy.

Collison is no stranger to California's Inland Empire and understands the issues impacting its communities. She served in top leadership roles at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center in Colton, California, from 2000 to 2007, first as chief operating officer and then as chief executive officer. Since that time, she has served as chief operating officer at Olympia Medical Center in Los Angeles, California.

A seasoned senior health care executive with more than 35 years of experience, Collison's healthcare career began in finance, serving as a controller and chief financial officer. She has an MBA in Corporate Investment and Finance, as well as a bachelor's degree in banking and money management, both from Adelphi University. She has received many honors and awards, including Woman of the Year for the City of Pasadena, California. She is a former internationally ranked sprinter and was an Olympic contender in the 1984 games. She is also a former chairwoman of the California State Athletic Commission.

## **MARIAN CONWAY, PHD**

Marian Conway, PhD, is executive director of the New York Community Bank Foundation, which has provided a total of \$33 million dollars since 1997 to nonprofits on Long Island. Dr. Conway's bachelor's degree in writing and her Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, are from SUNY (State University of New York) Empire State College. She received her PhD in Public Policy and Administration—specializing in nonprofit management.

Dr. Conway's employment included major economic sectors: a corporation, the sole owner of a small business making custom car brake systems, Belmont State Park in New York, a family horticulture business, and then a nonprofit. She can tell you all about the germ rate of different grass seeds in a mix and name the components of your car's brake system.

Dr. Conway has been with the New York Community Bank Foundation for more than 21 years. She has lived almost her whole life in Lindenhurst on Long Island. She is a member of the Lindenhurst Economic Development Committee and past president of the historical society there. The bylaws of the New York Community Bank Foundation encourage the staff and board to be on other nonprofit boards to really see how they meet the needs of the community from the inside. Being a member of a variety of boards is an enriching part of her workday. The current list includes Cleary Foundation for the Deaf, Community Development Corp. of Long Island, SUNY Empire State Foundation, Long Island Arts Alliance, Queens Chamber Foundation, and the St. Johnland Nursing Center. It was particularly rewarding to be a member of the Unmet Needs Roundtable for Superstorm Sandy recovery, 2013–2017, at the Health and Welfare Council of Long Island. Dr. Conway is a member of the Energeia Partnership class of 2012 and participates on its advisory board.

Along with being a wife, mother and grandmother and a quilter, Dr. Conway squeezes in writing articles for *Nonprofit Quarterly* and teaching nonprofit and business courses as an adjunct professor at SUNY Empire State University.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **SHARON CUNNINGHAM '90**

Sharon Cunningham '90 has dedicated her entire career to providing highly customized life stage financial planning and investment growth strategies to individuals, families, organizations and nonprofits. Her approach includes a thorough planning process and a commitment to providing outstanding service and advice delivered with passion and integrity.

Cunningham has been focusing on women's financial issues since she began working as an advisor in 1990. Recognizing that women were often excluded from financial discussions, she set out to change the industry norm, and has dedicated much of her efforts to empowering women through workshops designed specifically for them. More recently, she is credited with creating the HER Way initiative at Morgan Stanley- a community providing women with access to financial education and lifestyle resources along with professional connectivity to help them live their best lives. She has also taken an active role through her philanthropic work in supporting women's organizations, such as Mothers2Mothers, Women for Women International, and the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York.

As a Senior Portfolio Management Director and fiduciary at Morgan Stanley, Cunningham places the best interests of her clients first when making recommendations and assuming investment selection responsibilities. Appropriate strategies are suggested only after she conducts a thorough assessment of a client's comprehensive financial picture and resources. As an Investing with Impact Director with the firm, she is keenly aware of the potential social and financial benefits of integrating Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) best practices into one's investment decision-making process. Her team has devoted significant time and resources towards understanding how investing with impact can drive social change and greater gender equality, while also improving financial outcomes for clients.

Over the years, Cunningham has been recognized for her commitment to her clients and the organizations she supports. The Cunningham Group, led by Cunningham, was named to the inaugural Forbes/SHOOK Research Best-In-State Wealth Management Teams list in 2023. In 2023 and over the past six consecutive years, she was named on the Forbes Best-In-State Wealth Advisors and Best-In-State Women Advisors lists which recognizes experienced Financial Advisors across the country who are setting the standard for professionalism, dedication, and exceptional client service. She was also recognized on the 2021 Forbes America's Top Women Advisors list, and by Working Mother Magazine & SHOOK Research's as a Top Wealth Advisor Mom from 2017 through 2021. This honor is given to a select group of women who, while pursuing careers as successful Financial Advisors, also juggle the responsibilities of having one or more children at home. At Morgan Stanley, her commitment to giving back, mentorship, and advancing women's issues earned her a spot in Morgan Stanley's MAKERS "Class of 2018", a platform celebrating the firm's trailblazing women. Cunningham was also the recipient of the firm's 2014 John J. Mack Leadership Award. This honor, named on behalf of Morgan Stanley's former CEO and Chairman of the Board, is bestowed upon individuals who are making a positive impact on their colleagues and communities.

Cunningham's career began in 1990 as a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ with the financial planning subsidiary of America Express. A graduate of Adelphi University with a degree in Business Management and Finance, she obtained her certificate in financial planning from New York University. She currently resides in Rye Brook, NY, with her husband, Brian, and their two children, Olivia and Griffin.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **ANITA D'AMICO, PHD '84**

Anita D'Amico, PhD '84, is an experimental psychologist who has built a career by applying her skills in research methods and analysis to the field of cybersecurity. She is both a researcher, with many internationally cited publications, and a successful business executive.

Dr. D'Amico is one of the few innovators who have completed the journey that starts with a novel idea, progresses to prototyping and early sales, and then completes the climb to a successful commercial product. As founder and CEO of Code Dx, she grew the business from a six-month research project into a venture-funded commercial supplier of B2B application security software and eventual acquisition by a large publicly traded company.

As a vice president at Synopsys, Dr. D'Amico led the products team, responsible for product management, engineering and research, behind a \$400 million-per-year application security product portfolio. She went on to lead Synopsys' software supply chain security business strategy, as well as the product strategy for the secure adoption of artificial intelligence in the software development life cycle.

Dr. D'Amico started Cotopaxi Consulting to offer services to other entrepreneurs and start-up investors who wish to commercialize nascent technology into usable and widely adopted products.

## **ALISSA DESMARAIS**

Alissa Desmarais is executive director and chief operating officer of the Financial Women's Association, a nonprofit organization that proudly supports and promotes the professional development and advancement of all women through education, mentorship, scholarships, networking and alliances across the financial community.

With 20 years of nonprofit leadership, Desmarais is a community-focused executive who accomplishes with integrity, innovation and efficiency. Her strengths include management, partnership building, strategic planning, analysis and fundraising. Her previous roles include those with prominent New York City institutions such as the High Water Women Foundation, the City Parks Foundation, Synergos and New York Public Radio.

Desmarais holds a degree in United States history from the University of Connecticut. A highlight of her education includes a summer in Israel for an archeological excavation. She and her wife, Kelly, live in Great Neck, New York, with their dog Gracie and cat Lucy.



# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **ALEX GILBERT**

Alex Gilbert is a New Yorker, a Mets fan, a speaker, a mom and a brunch enthusiast. She also has dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Gilbert's career in leadership development inspired her to become a career coach for adults with ADHD and dyslexia. Cape-able Consulting has since expanded to support adults with learning disabilities across the autism spectrum, bringing together her lived experience with a passion for supporting neurodiverse adults in their day-to-day lives so that they feel supported and are able to reach their highest potential.

Gilbert aims to change the stigma surrounding learning disabilities by showing people what they are "Cape-able" of in their work and personal lives.

## **KEVIN GOODMAN '00, MBA '03**

Kevin Goodman is the global director of Go To Market, at LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network and a division of Microsoft. Throughout his nearly two decades of corporate leadership experience, Goodman has driven revenue growth, innovation and business transformation for Fortune 100 and mid-market companies. Before LinkedIn, he was senior vice president of business operations, marketing and strategy at INAP, a global provider of hybrid technology infrastructure solutions. He also previously served as vice president of mergers and acquisitions portfolio integration and strategic innovation at NTT, a global technology services company. Goodman is also an executive coach, founder and adviser for start-ups and cryptocurrency initiatives. Elected to the Adelphi University Board of Trustees in 2022, Goodman was a member of the Adelphi University President's Advisory Council from 2019 to 2022. He earned his BS in Business in 2000 and his MBA in 2002 from Adelphi and is known among Panthers as having been co-captain of one of the University's most successful men's basketball teams.

## **KEES LEUNE, PHD '07**

Kees Leune, PhD '07, is an associate professor at Adelphi University. He currently chairs the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, and also serves the University as its chief information security officer.

As a manager of the IT leadership team, Dr. Leune has a strong interest in defensive cybersecurity, in risk management and in business continuity planning. As a researcher, his interest lands on the intersection of enterprise modeling, cyber threat intelligence and threat modeling. Dr. Leune has developed several graduate and undergraduate courses for Adelphi, including Digital Forensics, Cyber Threat Analysis, Applied Cryptography, and more.

Prior to coming to Adelphi, Dr. Leune was a senior cybersecurity consultant in the Netherlands, where he worked for clients in the utilities, telecommunications, healthcare and financial sectors. He received his PhD from Tilburg University in the Netherlands, where he played a pivotal role in establishing a university computer security incident response team in the mid-1990s.

As a self-described builder, Dr. Leune loves to face new technical challenges and embraces any chance to construct sustainable enterprise solutions.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **CHANNING MARTIN**

Channing Martin is global chief diversity and social impact officer at IPG (Interpublic Group). In this role, she is responsible for advancing IPG's diversity, equity and inclusion objectives and continuing to strengthen the company's progress toward being one of the world's most diverse and inclusive companies.

Reporting to the CEO, Martin leads IPG's strategy on all diversity-related matters, including the continued diversification of IPG's senior ranks and talent pipeline, collaboration and partnership with IPG's full network of agency brands, CEOs, and the diversity, equity and inclusion leadership community. In her role, she also supports the advancement of social impact strategies and practices in partnership with the leadership of IPG's integrated environmental, social and governance (ESG) team.

Prior to joining IPG, Martin was chief diversity and social responsibility officer at CSG, a global provider of consumer engagement and digital experience solutions. In this role, she worked across the company to promote and build effective strategies for equity, diversity and inclusion. She was also responsible for ESG initiatives, recommending investments, activities and programs focused on sustainable, socially aware business practices that incorporate diverse people and perspectives, voices and ideas.

Martin previously held the positions of diversity and inclusion manager at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, diversity lead and strategic planner for the U.S. Department of State, and diversity recruitment and assessment manager for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Throughout her career, Martin has developed and executed measurable diversity initiatives that amplify employee voices, build diverse pipelines of talent, mitigate bias in hiring and performance reviews, and strengthen community partnerships to reach new audiences.

Martin holds a BA in Economics from the University of Pittsburgh and an MS in Public Policy and Management from Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy at Carnegie-Mellon University.

Channing holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.S. in Public Policy and Management from Heinz College at Carnegie-Mellon University.

## **EU'NICE R. MCCOY '14**

Eu'nice R. McCoy is a passionate millennial community leader with more than 10 years of nonprofit experience. She currently works as director of event marketing for the National Urban League and is responsible for managing signature events and conferences. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Adelphi University and is a proud member of the Tau Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, in Harlem, New York City, and a member of the New York Urban League Young Professionals.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **MARI EVA MENDES**

Mari Eva Mendes, a seasoned fundraising and communications strategist with more than two decades of global experience in philanthropy, currently serves as chief development and communications officer at Girls for Gender Equity. She leads a growing team supporting gender and racial justice initiatives, while also coaching fundraising professionals through MEM Consulting, advocating for fundraising and philanthropic equity nationwide.

In India, Mendes founded Maya for Women, championing inclusion of lesbian, bisexual and trans women through a Global South feminist advocacy model. Her significant roles in New York City community-based organizations include managing advancement operations at Harlem United, a \$50 million public health nonprofit serving Black and Latinx residents experiencing homelessness. As the first fundraising equity director at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), she provided technical fundraising assistance to a national portfolio of environmental justice partner organizations with budgets ranging from \$3 million to \$30 million.

Lending voluntary expertise, Mendes played a key role in developing the 2023 Community Centric Fundraising strategic plan and is active in nonprofits democratizing technology and development data, such as NTEN.

Mendes is a fluent Arabic speaker who holds a triple-major Bachelor of Arts from Bangalore University and professional certifications in Counseling Psychology, Sexuality and Gender, Professional Fundraising, Women of Color in Leadership, and Restorative Justice Circles. She is based in New York.

## **BITA SULTAN MIR, MS '01**

Bitá Sultan Mir, MS '01 is a seasoned bilingual school psychologist with the Elwood Unified School District on Long Island as well as a consultant psychologist with Nassau BOCES, specializing in adolescence and supporting multicultural families and children. With 18 years of experience, she holds a bachelor's degree from Hofstra University, a master's degree from Adelphi University, and a certification in school psychology from St. John's University. Fluent in five languages, she fosters trust and understanding with diverse clients.

What sets Mir apart is her rich multicultural background, which has shaped her worldview and enhanced her ability to connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Having been exposed to various cultures and regions since childhood, she developed a profound appreciation for cultural nuances and the importance of cultural competence in her practice.

As the mother of two teenagers, Mir empathizes with familial dynamics, enriching her practice. She empowers families and children to navigate challenges and unlock their potential. Beyond her clinical work, she is actively engaged in professional development initiatives and community outreach efforts aimed at raising awareness about mental health issues and promoting inclusivity. Throughout her career, she has remained dedicated to empowering students to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Her holistic approach, blending clinical expertise with cultural sensitivity, allows her to create inclusive and supportive environments where students feel valued and understood.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **CYNTHIA PONG, JD**

Cynthia Pong, JD, is an award-winning career and leadership coach and speaker and the author of *Don't Stay in Your Lane: The Career Change Guide for Women of Color* (Embrace Change Consulting, 2020). An NYU-trained lawyer turned career coach, she founded her company, Embrace Change, to help women of color—and people of color—secure the money, power and respect they deserve. In 2023, the flagship leadership training program she created and launched—the Leadership Accelerator, which was 134 percent funded through one month of crowdfunding—won an Anthem Award. Graduates of the *Leadership Accelerator* have gone on to land prestigious fellowships at the White House, Harvard and Stanford, as well as paid speaking engagements, promotions and pay raises. Pong has been featured in *The Atlantic* magazine and on NBC, CBS and NPR. She has shared a virtual stage with Magic Johnson and is a LinkedIn Top Voice for Job Search and Career.

## **IRENE QUARSHIE '98**

Irene Quarshie '98 is senior vice president of global supply chain and logistics for Target Corporation. She leads the indirect, reverse and third-party supply chain functions, which include inventory management, transportation and warehouse operations. She also oversees e-commerce returns logistics and end-of-life product disposition strategies. She has general management accountability for Target's multibillion-dollar recommerce business.

Previously, Quarshie was vice president of product safety and quality assurance at Target, where she led a global team responsible for private-label manufacturing quality management. Throughout her 16 years at Target, she has held numerous leadership positions, including roles in enterprise risk management, government affairs, corporate responsibility and assets protection. Prior to Target, she spent five years in strategy and management consulting with Booz Allen Hamilton.

Quarshie serves on the board and audit committee of Fastenal Company, a publicly traded distributor of industrial solutions and services. She is also on the board of the Executive Leadership Council and Artspace.

She graduated from Adelphi University with a bachelor's degree in political science and earned a master's degree in public policy at American University.

## **JENNIFER ROSADO**

As Chief Customer Officer at JOOR—the world's premier digital wholesale software platform—Jennifer Rosado is responsible for creating, implementing and overseeing the strategy for the client services teams, with a focus on building brand awareness, sales and growth marketing, and retention. At JOOR, she oversees a team of 35 managers and individual contributors across the brand's operations organization. Rosado has 20 years of experience in sales, operations and marketing management in industries, including finance, beauty and media/technology. Prior to JOOR, she provided her operational expertise to companies such as JPMorgan, Estee Lauder - Bumble and bumble, and L'Oreal, and to large-scale consumer marketplaces including XO Group.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **ARIANNA SAVOCA '13, MBA '14**

Arianna Savoca '13, MBA '14, is a manager in the human resources department at Grassi, where she specializes in learning and development, campus and experienced hire recruiting, benefits, performance management, employee engagement, and resource groups. She is also instrumental in developing and implementing volunteerism and charitable giving programs to enhance employee engagement and maximize the firm's community outreach.

Since joining Grassi in 2019, Savoca has relaunched the Grassi Women's Council and formalized Grassi's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts to promote the equality and advancement of the firm's diverse workforce. She has also assisted in redesigning entry-level and firmwide technical and soft-skills training.

Before joining Grassi, Savoca worked in taxation at both a Big Four and a regional public accounting firm. She draws from her experience in client service, employee learning and tax to make strategic decisions about Grassi's professional development programs, employee engagement, staff scheduling, and other policies and procedures.

Her passion for equity, inclusion and community extends beyond the office as well. She is the Long Island Committee co-chair for the Financial Women's Association and a Moxxie Mentor for the Moxxie Mentoring Foundation, a nonprofit created to support and foster the career advancement and leadership development of young women through generational mentoring. She also volunteers with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and is chair of the Adelphi University Alumni Advisory Council.

A certified public accountant licensed in New York, Savoca is a member of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants (NYSSCPA) and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). She received her master's degree in accounting from Adelphi University and is a nationally certified Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) professional.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **ERIKA STEHL, MSW '94**

Erika Stehl, MSW '94, is President and Cofounder of the Growing Love Community Garden. GLCG was established in 2017 and officially opened in 2018. Erika has a Masters of Social Work from Adelphi and Certificate in Organic Gardening from Cornell Cooperative. She has lived in Port Washington for 24 years with her husband, Richard, 5 kids and 2 golden retrievers.

Erika Stehl is well known within the Port Washington community for making things grow. Not only has she raised five children (and two golden retrievers!) in town, she is also the founder of the Growing Love Community Garden of Manorhaven.

Her interest in gardening started while her children were in grammar school, when she received an Organic Gardening degree through Cornell Cooperative Extension and assisted with the gardens at St Peter's School.

After a stint volunteering at Island Harvest, she became interested in food insecurity issues on Long Island. The 46-bed Community Garden in the Manorhaven Preserver opened in 2018 for its inaugural planting year and has since added a Memorial Garden, a Vertical Garden that is harvested for food pantry donations, and a Children's Garden. The garden has proven to be fertile ground for connecting with like-minded businesses, nonprofits, and individuals interested in making a positive difference in their shared community – including the future founders of Ripple Creative.

Stehl received her BA in Urban Studies from Queens College and a graduate degree in Social Work (CSW) from Adelphi University; her previous career was in various medical fields including psychotherapy and discharge planning.

## **JOVI STEVENSON '95**

As a certified diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) practitioner, Jovi Stevenson '95 guides employers in building diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces, ensuring DEIB is ingrained in their organization's DNA. She uses her advocacy to champion inclusiveness and awareness across cultures in the financial services and nonprofit sectors.

Stevenson's professional experience includes 15 years as a marketing executive, where, for more than 10 years, she leveraged her expertise in brand management, storytelling and multicultural engagement into a career in DEIB.

She is exceptionally proud to be honored as a DEIB influencer and to have cultivated community partnerships that have led to award-winning recognition for diverse and inclusive hiring.

Stevenson has a BA in Human Resource Management from The Catholic University of America and an MBA in Marketing from Adelphi University. An Afro-Latina whose parents hail from Panama, she enjoys traveling, dancing, reading and, most importantly, engaging in practices that enrich her faith. She is the proud mother of two beautiful daughters and shares the joys of parenting with her husband of 17 years.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES | A-Z

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## **MARC S. STRACHAN '81**

Marc S. Strachan '81 has been elected chair of Adelphi's Board of Trustees. He joined Adelphi's board in 2017 and has served as Board Chair since 2022. A generous supporter of our University who established four multicultural scholarships in 2019, Strachan is now the first male African American chair of Adelphi's board. A senior level marketing and advertising executive, Marc is chair emeritus of ADCOLOR, an organization that celebrates and advocates diversity in the creative and technology industries. He previously held positions as executive vice president and chief client officer at Publicis Sapient, North America, and vice president of on-premise strategy and multicultural marketing, and director of brand marketing for Cîroc Vodka and Tanqueray Gin at Diageo, North America. In 2018, Strachan earned a Certificate in Strategies for Leading Successful Change Initiatives from the Harvard University School of Continuing Education. Strachan completed the University of South Florida's Muma College of Business' Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace program in 2021. He is founder and head coach for Coach Marc Consulting and principal and chief marketing officer of The Adgile Media Group, the nation's first data-driven truck-side advertising/media company.

## **CARRIE WEN '17**

Carrie Wen is president of PERIOD Downtown NYC Chapter and serves as financial restructuring practice manager at the elite global law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld. She founded PERIOD Downtown NYC in 2019 to serve, educate and advocate for menstruators and to remove the stigma associated with menstrual periods. Since its foundation, the Downtown NYC Chapter has rapidly grown to become one of the largest in the country, delivering tens of thousands of menstrual products to communities in need across New York City. Outside her work with PERIOD, Wen is a passionate advocate for women's causes and works closely with several nonprofits to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

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Adelphi University thanks the following sponsors for their commitment to leadership training and professional development.

Thank you for your generosity and for all that you do for the University.

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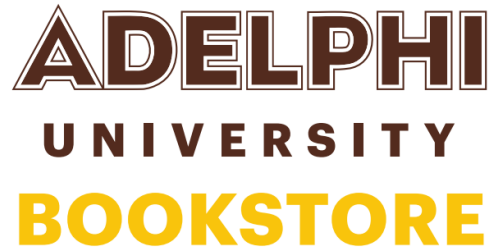
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Alpha Omega Chapter



# WIFI ACCESS FOR GUESTS

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Accounts and wireless access information for visitors of Adelphi University's campus and centers.

## How to Access WiFi As a Guest

1. Select the wireless network "adelphi-guest"
2. Input your information
  - Name
  - Mobile carrier and phone number  
(If your carrier is not available, you can leave this blank)
  - Email address
  - Accept terms and register
3. Your login information will be emailed/texted to you
4. Select "adelphi-guest" again and log in using the information provided.

Account access is good for one week.



Stop by our bookstore  
and receive 10% off as a  
thank you for attending the  
2024 Women's Leadership  
Conference.



# CONFERENCE LOCATIONS

**ADELPHI**  
UNIVERSITY  
NEW YORK



1 - Ruth S. Harley University Center

2 - Adelphi University Performing Arts Center, Concert Hall

## SENSORY ROOM

### **Ruth S. Harley University Center, Mindfulness Center, Third Floor**

The sensory room provides a calm space for students and others in the campus community who are neurodiverse and have sensory related needs.

This is a space for individuals to regulate themselves by utilizing tools should they experience hyper-stimulation or hypo-stimulation in their senses.

We would like to thank the Bridges to Adelphi Program for supplying the equipment to transform this space into a sensory room.

**KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND**  
NEW YORK



**UNITED STATES SENATOR**

March 9, 2024

Dear Friends,

It is a privilege to send greetings to all of you attending the Women's Leadership Conference hosted by Adelphi University. As we gather to participate in the meaningful conference, I would like to recognize the leadership of President Christine M. Riordan, the first woman president of Adelphi University, whose commitment to excellence and empowerment continues to inspire us all.

This year's theme, "The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to Be Extraordinary," resonates with the spirit that defines the America. It is this spirit that fueled my journey into public service, enabling me to enact meaningful change in my community and the state of New York. All of us possesses the capacity for greatness, to defy expectations, and to leave our mark on the world. The key lies in our willingness to embrace change, step out of our comfort zones, and dare to be extraordinary.

I would like to thank today's esteemed keynote speakers Jennifer Hyman, CEO of Rent the Runway, and Kendra Bracken-Ferguson, CEO of BrainTrust, whose remarkable achievements and insights will undoubtedly enrich today's discussions and inspire us to reach new heights of success.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to the success of this event. Your dedication and vision are instrumental in shaping a brighter future for women leaders across industries. Together, let us dare to be extraordinary, embrace change with courage, and empower each other to realize our fullest potential. Please accept my best wishes for a wonderful conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kirsten Gillibrand".

Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
THE CAPITOL  
ALBANY, NY 12224

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

(518) 776-2000

March 9, 2024

Adelphi Women's Leadership Conference  
c/o Adelphi University  
One South Ave  
P.O. Box 701  
Garden City NY 11530-0701

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all who have gathered for the Women's Leadership Conference hosted by Adelphi University. By being part of this special event, you are helping to further this distinguished organization's crucial mission.

Every year, more than 350 professionals, industry leaders, alumni, students, and community members unite for a day of influential connections, thought provoking discussions, and development opportunities at the Women's Leadership Conference. This year's theme, "The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to be Extraordinary", demonstrates that although many sectors do not take advantage of the value women bring to the workplace, barriers can still be broken. By inspiring each other to strive for greatness and exceed expectations, everyone can thrive in today's ever-changing world.

Once again, congratulations on this year's Conference. I am sure it will be a most enjoyable occasion. I wish all of the participants much continued success with their future endeavors.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Letitia James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LETITIA JAMES

**CHAIRWOMAN**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**COMMITTEE MEMBER**

ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

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MARTINEZ@NYSENATE.GOV

March 9, 2024

Dear President Riordan,

Today, Adelphi University welcomes over 350 innovators, leaders, and trailblazers to celebrate strength, resilience, and boundless potential during its 2024 Women's Leadership Conference. From the keynote addresses by Jennifer Hyman and Kendra Bracken-Ferguson, which epitomize the spirit of empowerment, to the women sitting beside you, each person here has a unique story to share, forged by navigating our way as women.

In "The Era of Embracing Change," this conference challenges each of us to "Dare To Be Extraordinary." As we embark on this transformative journey together, let us seize the opportunity to learn from one another, to amplify our voices, and to champion each others' successes. Look around this room and remember you are not alone. With one another's support, we are stronger, and we have the foundation necessary to make our way through this sometimes hostile and difficult world for women.

On this joyous day of insightful collaboration, I thank the Adelphi University campus community for once again hosting this conference and express my gratitude to each of you for being here today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. R. Martinez'.

Monica R. Martinez  
New York State Senator, 4th District



# New York State Assembly Citation

**COMMEMORATING**, *Adelphi University's Women's Leadership Conference 2024, themed "The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to be Extraordinary" held on March 09, 2024, at the Ruth S. Harley University Center on the campus of Adelphi University.*

**WHEREAS**, *It is the intent of Assemblyman Edward P. Ra to honor and acknowledge significant milestones and celebrate events of those institutions that contribute to the educational and professional success of the citizens of this Great State; and*

**WHEREAS**, *Adelphi University's premier Women's Leadership Conference is a powerful day of learning and networking, where more than 350 professionals, industry leaders, alumni, students, and community members will come together for a day of influential connections, compelling discussions and development opportunities; and*

**WHEREAS**, *This year's Keynote speaker is Jennifer Hyman, the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Rent the Runway, a company that is disrupting the trillion-dollar fashion industry and changing the way women get dressed through the Closet in the Cloud, the world's first and largest shared designer closet. Under Jennifer's leadership, Rent the Runway made history as the first company to go public with a female founder/CEO, COO, and CFO; and*

**WHEREAS**, *Adelphi University has been transforming lives with their unique approach to learning for more than 150 years. In 1929, Adelphi University became the first private, coeducational institution of higher education on Long Island and since that time, more than 100,000 students have passed through their doors, leaving their mark on the university and the world beyond; and*

**WHEREAS**, *Adelphi University was among the first institutions granted a coeducational charter by the New York State Board of Regents on June 24, 1896, and played a critical role in educating women and providing women leaders for our state and nation; now, therefore, be it*

**RESOLVED**, *on March 09, 2024, that I, Edward P. Ra, Assemblyman for the State of New York, 19<sup>th</sup> District, do hereby present this citation to:*

***Adelphi University President Christine M. Riordan, PhD.***

*Upon the occasion of Adelphi University's Women's Leadership Conference themed "The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to be Extraordinary." Best wishes for another successful conference.*

*Dated: March 09, 2024*

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto  
Set my Hand and Signature*

**EDWARD P. RA**  
**Member of Assembly**  
**19<sup>th</sup> District**



CHAIRMAN  
CONSUMER PROTECTION  
  
COMMITTEES  
AGRICULTURE  
FINANCE  
HEALTH  
JUDICIARY  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
RULES

NEW YORK  
STATE  
SENATE



KEVIN THOMAS  
SENATOR, 6<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

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thomas@nysenate.gov

March 9, 2024

Dear Friends:

Please accept my heartfelt greetings as you gather for the Adelphi University Women's Leadership Conference.

The theme of this year's conference, "The Era of Embracing Change: Dare to Be Extraordinary," resonates deeply with the values we hold dear in New York State. This conference serves as a testament to the importance of collaboration and dialogue in addressing the challenges and opportunities facing women today. By bringing together over 350 professionals, industry leaders, alumni, students, and community members, you are creating a platform for meaningful discussions and impactful networking that will undoubtedly inspire positive change.

I would like to express my appreciation to today's conference organizers, President Riordan, and all those involved in making this event possible. I encourage you to make the most of this invaluable opportunity to learn, connect, and grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Thomas', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Kevin Thomas  
New York State Senator  
6<sup>th</sup> Senate District







## Women's Leadership Fund



For more than 127 years, Adelphi has been preparing women for leadership roles in their workplaces and communities. Today, in collaboration with its philanthropic partners, Adelphi is committed to building on this legacy to ensure the next generation of young women have the opportunities needed to develop into leaders and the change makers of tomorrow.



*Scan the code to Empower Future Women Leaders*



The Women's Leadership Fund will support the annual Women's Leadership Conference, ensuring robust programming and underwriting the cost of attendance for Adelphi students, as well as providing leadership activities, professional development, and other opportunities that support the growth and empowerment of Adelphi women.

**ADELPHI**

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