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TO BUSINESS

JULY/AUGUST 2015

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# PATH TO EXCELLENCE JULY/AUGUST 2015

# CONTENTS



8



10



12



18

## FEATURES

<b>Veronica Cool: Celebrating girl power.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Working mothers balance roles .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Kimberly Neal: The truth about balance.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Cover Story: Mentoring program helps grow women-owned businesses.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Murthy is second woman to lead Md. chamber's board .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Study: Majority of women aspire to hold top roles .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Creating Opportunities: Pathway to Leadership.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Hastler elected president of MLA.....</b>	<b>33</b>

## IN EVERY ISSUE

<b>Publisher's Letter .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What's in your purse? .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Movers and Shakers .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Q&amp;A: What was your path?.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Dress to Impress .....</b>	<b>34</b>



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Claudia Towles, owner of aMuse Toys on the completion of the ATHENAPowerLink® program: *"It's given me the confidence to forge ahead. I was trying to light the way with a match, now I have a powerful LED helmet and am no longer making decisions in the dark."*

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# Welcome to Path to Excellence



**Suzanne E. Fischer-Huettner**  
Publisher, The Daily Record

For the first time, there are four unique generations of women all in the workplace together—all bringing very different beliefs, experience and skills to their organizations. In my role as publisher of The Daily Record, I have the opportunity to meet many of these women, and they are leading businesses across Maryland, creating change, mentoring the next generation of leaders and setting the standard for excellence professionally, at home and in the community. I learn from these women every day and hope to carry on their legacy.

The Daily Record wants to give all of our readers the opportunity to learn from them as well through the Path to Excellence magazine that you can read in print or online nine times a year. Welcome to the first issue.

The mission of the Path to Excellence magazine is to give our readers the opportunity to read about successful women of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs and learn how they define success. To share lessons learned, goals, networking and leadership opportunities and to have personal conversations with women who are making a difference.

I was fortunate to start at The Daily Record as a salesperson in 1996 and two days later I attended the very first Top 100 Women celebration at the Camden Club. Over the past two decades, I have had the opportunity to meet many of the women who paved the way for me to excel in my career and have doors open that were not open to the women in generations before me. Many of the women The Daily Record has honored were the ones who broke down barriers and demanded to be accepted as an equal player in the business world. They had to fight to be respected and create change while still balancing all of the other things that women have always balanced in their lives – family, friends, personal responsibilities and pushing past stereotypes.

This year, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Top 100 Women program. To date, The Daily Record has honored 1,252 Top 100 Women and 271 have been inducted into the Circle of Excellence after winning the award for a third and final time. There is no shortage of incredible women leaders in this state since annually we receive more than 400 nominations.

In 2010 for the 15th anniversary of Top

## The Daily Record's commitment to recognizing women leaders



**February 22, 1996**

First Maryland's Top 100 Women event takes place at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. The expected crowd of 300 turns out to be close to 700, and the room is so loud, few people are aware a ceremony even takes place. State Sen. Delores Kelley presents a citation on behalf of the city of Baltimore.

**March 21, 2000**

The Circle of Excellence is established to permanently honor three-time Top 100 Women honorees for sustained achievement. Once named to the Circle of Excellence, those women are no longer eligible for the annual award because they have been recognized at the top level of the program.

**May 6, 2003**

Event moves out of March to avoid the annual challenges of snow, spring break and the legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly. The Daily Record's Circle of Excellence scholarship is established. Elizabeth Huntley, of University of Maryland, College Park, is the first recipient.

**May 18, 2005**

Maryland's Top 100 Women program celebrates its 10th class. Past honorees participate on stage for induction of 2005 honorees. Maryland's Top 100 Women Retrospective is displayed on the second floor of the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. Nancy Sloane, who launched Top 100 Women, is inducted as an honorary member of the Circle of Excellence.



100 Women we launched the Leading Women program honoring women 40 years old or younger for their incredible accomplishments at a young age. We know these women will be the next generation of Top 100, but competition is tough so why not identify their outstanding leadership at a younger age so they can start to connect with the Top 100 Women and build mentoring relationships to help them excel in their careers. What some of these women are accomplishing in their 30s the rest of us can only hope to accomplish in a lifetime. They are truly incredible.

In 2011, The Daily Record launched the Path to Excellence series of networking events where Top 100 Women and Leading Women come together to discuss a topic that is important in their lives and to meet in a personal setting and talk openly. The publication you are holding right now is an extension of that event.

The Daily Record is committed to identifying outstanding women in Maryland, helping them make connections to advance their goals and recognize their accomplishments. For the 20th anniversary, we surveyed our winners and asked

what they would like to see as a next step for this event. The answer was clear — more face-to-face time with winners in different parts of the state and more content directed to professional women. The Daily Record heard you loud and clear and we agree.

Over the next year, our team will be traveling to nine Maryland counties to host networking events partnering with Top 100 Women in various counties. The first event is scheduled for Aug. 26 at the Ground Floor in Harford County, hosted by Top 100 Women Karen Holt, Content McLaughlin, Mary Hastler, Mary Teddy Wray, Denise Carnaggio and Tamera Rush.

Each event will have a nonprofit component since we know giving back is core to your mission and some events will have a learning component as well. Most importantly women will have the opportunity to come together with other influential women and build business partnerships, mentoring relationships, ask questions and gain advice. Isn't this what we thrive on as women — innovation, creativity and making an impact?

In addition to the exclusive content in the

magazine and the face-to-face networking and awards events all dedicated to honoring influential women, The Daily Record is committed to increasing its content in our daily print and digital products to provide more news for women in business and law and highlight excellence.

I have seen a great deal of change over the past 20 years of honoring Maryland's Top 100 Women, but there is still a great deal of change yet to happen. We still live in a world where pay between men and women is not equal. Only 14.2 percent of corporate board seats in Maryland are held by women and the stereotype still exists that women have to be everything — the caregiver, homemaker and business leader. Progress has been made, but there is still so much more growth to happen. Please attend the Path to Excellence events, read the magazine and nominate outstanding women leaders for Top 100 Women and Leading Women. Only through working together and supporting women leaders can we truly build a world that is equal for future generations of women.



May 2010

On the 15th anniversary of Top 100 Women, The Daily Record Publisher Suzanne Fischer-Huettner announced a new event: Leading Women, Maryland's Future. Leading Women identifies 50 women ages 40 or younger who are making a significant impact on their professions, the community and the state of Maryland.



July 2011

The Daily Record launches Path to Excellence networking series. These events give Top 100 Women and Leading Women the opportunity to come together and listen, learn and share at Path to Excellence speaker panels and networking events.



June 1, 2015

20th anniversary celebration where The Daily Record announces broader coverage of women's business and professional issues. The coverage will be paired with networking opportunities for all Top 100 honorees in various regions in Maryland.

Aug. 14, 2015

The Daily Record publishes the first Path to Excellence magazine. The magazine will publish nine times a year. The Path to Excellence networking series also kicks off later this month in Harford County.



# Celebrating girl power, despite the ‘double bind’

By **Veronica Cool**

Special to The Daily Record



Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

From left, Lauren Son, Veronica Cool, Content McLaughlin and Carla Nelson celebrate at The Daily Record's Maryland's Top 100 Women event.

Aggressive, bossy, obnoxious.... Even the B-Word is used to describe assertive women. But today, we will begin to change the dialogue by becoming positive and strategically supporting and promoting one another.

Whether it's upbringing or expectations, men comfortably self-promote, where women shyly sit back. As inherent nurturers, we are comfortable promoting others, just not ourselves. What better way to celebrate the success and achievement of women than with The Daily Record awards, including the Top 100 Women and Leading Women?

Distinctive in the awards world, where sponsorship, influence and name recognition drive the honoree selection, the Top 100 awardees are selected by a panel of previous honorees, who hold these candidates to tremendously high standards, seeking top performers professionally, legitimate mentors and generous community supporters.

When I was first recognized as a Top 100 Woman in 2006, my brand and visibility grew; folks were so impressed they eagerly reached out to connect and celebrate.

But the biggest benefit was the public recognition of years and years of effort and accomplishments—from graduating college in three years (we didn't have money to pay for a fourth year) Summa Cum Laude to becoming one of the youngest regional managers leading 300 people to participating in some stellar experiences: The White House, transition teams and international trade missions. Are you rolling your eyes? I'm obviously bragging and this is not very appropriate. For a woman.

Should that last paragraph be authored by Victor Cool, it would have been better received.

Actually, you would be impressed.

This is the “double bind effect”—tested by New York University professors Frank Flynn, Cameron Anderson and Sebastien Brion.



They presented a Harvard Business case to their graduate students, where half of the class received the case under a female name and the other half under a male name — the rest of the information was exactly the same (accomplishments, education, experience).

The male case was praised and complimented for his skills and assertiveness, while the female case was rated much lower, perceived as less kind and more power-hungry. The double bind is that in order to be a competent leader, one needs to be assertive, but if you are a woman then you are judged harshly. And this opinion came from men AND women.

By leveraging the tips below, we can drive internal change while acknowledging how judgmental we tend to be towards our own gender:

- Toot your own horn, directly, indirectly and anyway in between, particularly during salary negotiations. Emphasize your impact to the organization. And celebrate and develop other women.
- Raising your hand and leaning in. Sheryl Sandberg wrote the manual for today's feminist, "Lean In." READ IT. And READ IT AGAIN. Supported by case studies and real life scenarios, she calls

attention to the daily behavior, external influences, biases and expectations that derail women. And considering women comprise more than 50 percent of the workforce, the book is a highly effective resource for men as well.

- "Fake it until you make It." One of my lessons from "Lean In" is that men apply for a job when they perceive they have 50 percent of the qualifications; whereas women will only apply when they have 100 percent of the listed qualifications. Let's start reaching, ladies! By these disparate standards, women will always lag in career advancement and development.

Assuming we have the confidence to pursue the promotions, projects or opportunities, the next gigantic hurdle is being paid comparably. Take Mika Brzezinski, who addressed the United Way's Women's Leadership Council recently, on her television come-back and struggles to achieve pay equity after learning her co-host was earning 14 times her pay. FOURTEEN TIMES! In her book "Knowing Your Value," she openly shares her epic failures from demanding an increase, crying, getting emotional, acting like a man and then a

victim. In the end, by knowing her value, being organized and prepared, she was able to negotiate a comparable increase.

This special publication of The Daily Record intends to provide tools and motivation like those of Sheryl Sandberg and Mika Brzezinski, with our own local talent and perspective. By reading the journeys of Content McLaughlin, Dr. Mary Teddy Wray and Sheela Murthy I'm inspired and encouraged.

We women need to know our value, self-promote and learn how to negotiate, as well as acknowledge the value and contribution of fellow women. And My Brothers, you men need to be aware of disparate treatments and begin (or continue) to recognize women's expertise and contributions in your organization.

Enjoy this special issue and kindly share your own successes with me — I'm always eager to celebrate Girl Power!

*Veronica Cool is founder of Cool & Associates LLC, a business management firm specializing in financial wellness and diverse segment marketing. She is a Leading Woman and a member of the Top 100 Women Circle of Excellence.*

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# WHAT'S IN YOUR PURSE?

In each issue of Path to Excellence, we'll ask a successful woman,  
"What's in your purse?"

To launch the series, we thought it would only be right to ask that question of Patricia McHugh Lambert, a member at Pessin Katz and a member of the Top 100 Women Circle of Excellence.

Lambert also is the one who suggested the idea to The Daily Record. It makes sense, she said, all women carry them, and wouldn't it be great to take a look inside a powerful woman's purse!

As the guinea pig for this experiment, Lambert said she gave herself two rules, she could clean up her purse a bit but she could not remove anything or add anything.

She did point out that even the purse itself has a story. The turquoise Michael Kors is the first designer purse she has ever owned.

Lambert and her daughter, Michele Lambert, who just completed her first year of law school at the University of Baltimore, bought matching bags together.

"My daughter said, you work too hard not to have a nice purse," Lambert recalled.

We also asked Lambert whose purse she would like to see inside of. She mentioned a few powerful women, including Tammy S.J. Schneider, of Glass Jacobson. Schneider -- and her purse -- will be featured in this space in next month's issue.







- Vacation brochure
- Envelope with notes from an American Heart Association event
- Recipes and an article about what to do in Baltimore
- Lottery ticket
- New Macy's credit card









Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

Laurie Wasserman, of Tydings & Rosenberg LLP, balances a successful legal practice with raising her two children, Evan, 6, and Maya, 4, with her husband, Andy.

# Working mothers balance roles

## Study: Children benefit when mom works outside of the home

**By Kate S. Alexander**

Special to The Daily Record

Laurie Wasserman's morning routine did not slow down during the summer.

Each morning her husband, Andy, left for work early, while Wasserman got her 6-year-old son, Evan, and 4-year-old daughter, Maya, ready and out the door to their summer day camp by 8:05 a.m.

One recent morning, Wasserman was busy feeding her children breakfast, packing their book bags and finally slathering them with sun block before putting them on the bus that picks them up in her north Baltimore neighborhood.

"It hurts," Maya said, reacting to the cold lotion.

Then, Wasserman remembers something she left inside.

"Oh, lunches," she says, before running back inside as the bus pulls up.

There's time for kisses and hugs and Wasserman waves to her children as they board the bus before she heads for work at Tydings & Rosenberg LLP in Baltimore where she is a partner.

"I feel good about my decision," Wasserman said from her Pratt Street office building.

After all, she loves her job and spent years building a successful career in law. "I love spending time with my

children, but I also love going to work."

Like many working moms, Wasserman does get the occasional pang of "mommy guilt" and questions whether she is doing what is right for her children.

"It's a constant guilt," said Jessica Kartalija, an anchor and reporter for WJZ-TV in Baltimore and mom to 4-year-old Drew. "It's a constant feeling of 'I should really be there and if I didn't work, I could be there.'"

Yet, a recent Harvard University study found children actually benefit from their mother working outside the home.

The study, led by Kathleen L. McGinn, a professor of business administration at Harvard Business School, found that women whose mothers worked outside the home are more likely to have jobs themselves, more likely to hold supervisory responsibility at those jobs and earn higher wages than women whose mothers stayed home. Additionally, the study found men raised by working mothers are more likely to contribute to household chores and spend more time caring for family members.

"The study validated what I've known all along: I'm providing a benefit for my children," Wasserman said. "I see my daughter when she plays mommy; she plays mommy who



goes to work.”

Wasserman said by working she can not only provide for her family, but also show her children the importance of helping others see the possibilities for their futures are limitless.

Kartalija said she worked hard to get where she is and believes it is imperative for her son to see that women have careers and dreams as well.

“It’s something I want him to grow up with, that mom works very, very hard and loves her job,” she said. For Drew, Kartalija said having a working mom is teaching him to be more flexible.

Just as important as seeing mom work, is seeing dad, Brian Anecharico, take on responsibilities around the home and know that parenting is a team effort, she said.

Christine Britton, house counsel attorney with the Progressive Group of Insurance Companies and mom of children ages 1, 3 and 5, said being a working mom helps teach her children that you have to work to get what you want.

“I think it’s really rewarding to see them already starting to appreciate that you have to give up something to get something,” she said. “I really don’t believe you get something for nothing. I believe hard work and dedication is what gets you anywhere.”

**“I’m providing a benefit for my children. I see my daughter when she plays mommy, she plays mommy who goes to work.”**

**– Laurie Wasserman, partner at Tydings & Rosenberg LLP**

Britton said being a working mom is very doable with time management and organization.

Also important: a strong support system of family and friends, said Wasserman.

“You can’t do anything alone,” said Veronica Cool, founder and CEO of Cool and Associates LLC and mother of Isabela, 13, and Jonny, 11.

“I think that we’ve [moms] become more accepting of help, more desirous of helping,” she continued. “There used to be a certain amount of weakness in not being able to drive your kids to school, or pack the lunch from scratch or show up at the field trip and volunteer.”

But now, working moms are developing external support systems to ensure their children are taken care of, when they cannot



Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

Laurie Wasserman kisses her daughter, Maya, goodbye.

do it themselves, she said.

While Cool said women can in fact have it all – the job, the success, the family – having it all requires prioritizing and that means, not everything makes the cut. Not all the dishes will be done, shoes polished and lunches perfectly balanced.

“And that’s OK,” she said. “That’s totally OK.”

A working mom will not always be able to pick up her children from school or be on the sidelines of every game, but she can be a constant presence so her children know she is there for them, Britton said.

“I had a working mom, and I never felt for a minute that my parents weren’t supportive,” she said. “You can only be at one place at one time so, you know, be in the moment. If you are at work, be at work. If you are at home, be at home.”

Keeping a written schedule can help with juggling work and family.

A method Britton learned from a Baltimore City judge who was also a mom: have your children write their activities on your schedule.

“If it’s on the schedule, mommy will be there,” she said. But if there is something already on the schedule for that day, it is important for children to know that means mommy is busy,” she explained.

Despite the flexibility that many companies and technology now provide for working outside the office and outside

typical business hours, regrettably, there still remains a double standard for working mothers, Cool said.

Cool said she has been there when working fathers are praised for needing to be late because of responsibilities with their children. But for the working moms, that praise and accommodation is not always available. Women are expected to “move heaven and earth” to make it work, she said.

“It’s the elephant in the room,” she said. “If we don’t address our history it doesn’t change.”

Discussing openly the challenges and benefits of working moms sheds light on a subject not always seen as kosher but one that, when tackled, can improve the work environment and the lives of women, she said.

“Until we have an environment that is more welcoming, more tolerant of flexible schedules, we’re going to see the challenges, we’re going to see the guilt trips, we’re going to see the stress and the anxiety of ‘Oh my God, how am I going to be two places at one time?’” she said.

For moms who still question what effect their job could have on their children, Cool’s daughter, Isabela, assures working moms their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

“I would like to thank all the mothers out there because they do so much,” Isabela said. “Plus their jobs, and they take care of us – they’re so amazing.”



# Who Reads the Record?

**“**The Daily Record gives me access to the information I need to make decisions. As President & CEO of Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc., I rely on information to help our stores grow and to be aware of policies that affect the individuals we serve. The content is timely and a part of my daily routine.**”**

**Lisa Rusyniak**

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# The truth about balance

By Kimberly Neal

Special to The Daily Record

*I wrote the article below for a Maryland State Bar Association publication in January 2013. I came across it recently and was both amused and inspired as I read back over my perspective at that stage of my life. I decided to mark up this article today (July 8, 2015) to share what I have learned in the last 2.5 years and to reiterate that balance is an ever-evolving, yet important goal. Updated information is in brackets in the essay.*

Recently, I was asked to speak at a women's symposium on the topic of Balance. Although flattered by the invitation, I had to wonder what on earth I could competently contribute to the panel. For example, on the day of the request, I had been back at work from maternity leave for all of about 3 weeks (which felt like 3 seconds) and was desperately trying to (1) prepare for a deposition, (2) remind my husband that I had a board meeting that night (which meant he was on "baby duty"), (3) hop on a conference call with our YLS Exec Committee, and (4) figure out when I was going to be able to clean my house (since we had visitors arriving the following weekend). And that's just what I can recall upon brief review of my calendar... Admit it: you've been there. [Almost nothing about this paragraph has changed. The pulls in various directions haven't stopped, but in some ways have increased. I feel more "important" in most of my roles: my 3 year old can now verbalize that he misses me, I am President of the referenced Board, the conference calls and committee work seem endless, and we've moved to a larger home: more to clean.]

Like most of us "Type A" attorneys, I have difficulty saying "no," and I quickly found myself accepting the speaking opportunity. I also found myself wondering when I would find time to prepare for the symposium and oh, by the way, miss about ¾ of a day of work the week before a big motion was due. Sigh. [Breaking news: I now say "No!" Well, sometimes. But once you decline an invitation or "opportunity" once or twice, it does become easier.]

However, I went to the symposium and not only contributed, but learned a lot as well. While complete balance may or not be achievable, I do think we can achieve a

semblance of balance if we look it in the eyes and recognize its truths. We're now in a New Year, and everyone wants to start fresh and learn some good practices, so read on if you're interested and you may find these tips helpful as well!

**Truth #5:** Balance is not the same for everyone. Do not try to keep up with the Joneses. (Besides, the Joneses may not be as perfect as you think that they are!) [Amen!] Determine what goals/ organizations/ events/ tasks are most important to you and your family, and work on balancing those. Just because Mrs. Jones is President of the PTA does not mean that you must be. Maybe there are other ways to be involved with your child's school, or maybe you want to focus on just being home at dinner time and to help with homework. And remember, not everything has to happen this year or even next year... I have had to remind myself of this, particularly as a young lawyer and young mother. We want to do everything possible to build our practice, perfect our legal skills, and still not miss a minute of time with family and friends, but we know we can't actually give everything 110%. So one evening, I sacrifice the bedtime routine with my son for a networking event. The key is making sure that it's a networking event that is worthy of my time. And then another day I take a long lunch and go to my son's daycare to watch him crawl through the tunnels and laugh like nothing could possibly be more fun. In both scenarios, I miss something else, but I don't let myself worry because I feel that I am doing the right thing at the right time. You have to figure out what works for you. [I stand behind this Truth. Because I chose not to succumb to "Mommy Shaming" and still carved out time for my career, my personal business development has flourished. The practice of law is a business – essentially, Sales. And it is a slow sell. The contacts you make today may not need your services for a year or more, but if you choose networking opportunities wisely and stay top of mind, the phone will ring and you will have a new client. Or 10.]

**Truth #4:** Balance suggests stability, but it takes fluctuation to get there. While our overarching priorities might be "set," balancing those priorities in the real world

may not be the same from one day to the next. If I have a trial coming up, I know that I will need to spend more time in the office the week(s) before, such that the scale tips in favor of work during that time. As all litigators should know, I will also need to balance the rest of my workload during that time in order to meet the needs of other clients, while still fully and carefully preparing for trial (wouldn't it be nice if we could have just one case at a time?). So even though I have determined that my family – and especially my 9 month old – is Priority #1, my work and clients will necessarily take priority on certain days and at certain times. And it's OK. [Yes. Last August, we took our first family vacation with our son. I chose to "unplug" for 6.5 days. I deleted social media outlets from my phone and only responded to truly urgent work emails. I didn't think I could do it, but I realized that there was nothing more important that week than my family. It was the best week of my life to date. Sure, I was incredibly busy upon my return to my office (and, frankly, the weeks prior to my vacation), but it was worth it. I look forward to doing the exact same thing next month as well.]

**Truth #3:** Balance requires support, so don't be afraid to lean on others. The key is finding the right "others." Be it your spouse, your best friend, your secretary, or your colleague, surround yourself with those who will help support you as you navigate through your day, your week, your life. In order for me to prepare for the trial referenced in Truth #4, I need my husband to take on a little more at home. I will also appreciate when my best friend texts me a friendly "hang in there," my secretary helps keep me organized, and my colleague ensures that a filing is made. The reality is that the other tasks are still there, and while they are not Priority #1, they are certainly priorities. Since we can't be 15 places at once, we need to know that others can bear some of the weight. [I am so thankful to have a loving and supportive husband who shares and understands my career and family goals. But over the past 2.5 years I did make a decision to change firms and change the nature of some friendships, because I decided to follow this truth and build my best support



Photos submitted by Kimberly Neal

Left Photo: Kimberly Neal (left); Caleb Neal (center) and Neal's husband, Aaron Neal, an attorney at McNamee Hosea in Greenbelt.  
Right Photo: Kimberly Neal and her son, Caleb Neal.

Team. The challenges of a young working mother are real and constant, and there is probably no way to prepare other than through experience. However, as long as you focus on what is best for your own life, day-by-day, you will realize what support you need and who cares enough to provide it. Quality relationships win the day. And one more thing – always reciprocate and let the Tried and True know how much they are appreciated!]

**Truth #2:** Balance has a silent “T” in it; if you don’t take time for yourself, you can never achieve balance. This is definitely a truth that cannot be ignored. When I was on maternity leave, as soon as my doctor cleared me to exercise, I promptly hired a babysitter to come every Wednesday morning from 8-12 so that I could go to the gym, stop by Starbucks for breakfast, buy groceries, and get home in time to (quickly) straighten the house and shower. I was actually questioned by a well-meaning friend who simply could not believe that I would sacrifice 4 hours once a week from my child while I was on maternity leave in order to – gasp – do something for myself! My polite response was that I viewed maternity leave as a time to not only care for my child, but also do what I needed to do to “balance” (there’s that word again) my own sanity. How could I go back to work without being physically and mentally ready? That would not do anyone any good, including and especially my precious baby boy. So, again, for ME personally, this was very necessary, and I continue to carve out time for myself now. It’s not selfish. It saves my sanity, and probably the sanity of those around me too! [I have found a need less time alone, although I still believe this truth is very important. I think this is because the definition of my Self has changed

tremendously in the last 2.5 years. I now truly view myself as a Mommy; when I first wrote this article, I was just barely getting started in that role. Today, my child encompasses a great deal of my Self and thus my priorities have changed. “Me Time” is just as easily dinner with my son at Chick-Fil-A as it is during my morning (solo) run. While my percent of alone time has diminished, I don’t neglect myself. My well-being remains a top priority.]

**Truth #1:** Balance doesn’t mean that you opt to walk on the thinnest rope, grasp the tiniest thread, or wear the highest stiletto (no matter how cute they may be). Balance can be two feet firmly planted on the ground. You don’t have to balance 15 things at once. At least not all the time (Truth #4) and not all by yourself (Truth #3). And you’re not balancing anything if you do nothing well. In my relatively short time on this earth as an attorney, and as a daughter, sister, niece, friend, wife, and mother, I have learned that there is no satisfaction in taking on a lot of tasks and doing none of them well. We hear that we should not bite off more than we can chew, but we don’t often practice

it. But if we want to achieve a balance that actually makes us feel in balance, we have to understand what we want in life, what it takes to get there, and the best path to follow. We won’t feel balanced every day, but there is a calm in knowing that our decisions are made in an effort to find balance. [I have had many moments of unbalance in the last 2.5 years. I have also changed what I want in life, and thus the plan on how to get there. That said, I believe that my focus has improved because I routinely forgive myself. I am less concerned with perfection and more concerned with happiness.]

**The Bottom Line:** Good luck. Balance is difficult, ongoing, and ever-changing, but if you recognize these truths and persevere, I do think it is attainable. [Balance is attainable to a degree, on a given day/ week/ month. Set your goals and expectations, but recognize that you will sometimes miss the mark. Every day is a new chance to start fresh, so seize the opportunity. Take time to prioritize, perhaps in writing, and plan accordingly. You don’t really need luck; you need perseverance.]

*Kimberly Neal is an associate at Pessin Katz and a Top 100 Woman and a Leading Woman.*





# Mentoring program helps grow women-owned businesses

**ATHENAPowerLink's first Baltimore graduate says year-long program helped her reach next level of success**



Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

Laura Gamble, left, regional president of PNC Bank and a member of the governing body for ATHENAPowerLink, poses with Claudia Towles, the program's first graduate.

**By Kate S. Alexander**  
Special to The Daily Record

Browse the boutique aMuse Toys in Fells Point or its sister store in Quarry Lake and chances are it looks much as it did a year ago.

Wooden shelves are still stocked neatly with well-designed, developmentally appropriate toys that stimulate a child's imagination, staff still help customers and programs still run in #thelab.

But ask owner Claudia Towles and she will tell you that behind the scenes, her business has changed significantly, thanks to the ATHENAPowerLink women's business mentoring program.

"I don't think the business itself has changed so much as the process behind it, the ownership and the vision," she said. "Before there was a lot of gut – this feels right, don't necessarily have the data, don't necessarily understand why it feels right. We had muddy waters before in terms of the back end of the business."





Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record  
Shoppers browse in aMuse Toys in Fells Point.

Now, her business is managed in what she sees as a more professional, effective and outcome-based way.

Intuition might have gotten Towles and her husband, Tom, from their start in 2006 to the successful business they run today, but they needed help to take aMuse Toys to the next level, said Laura Gamble, regional president of PNC Bank and member of the governing body for ATHENAPowerLink Baltimore. PNC Bank is the founding sponsor of the Baltimore chapter.

Started in Pittsburgh in 1992, ATHENAPowerLink provides guidance to female business owners through a panel of experts who help owners meet their goals and objectives to achieve the next level of success.

Towles was the first Baltimore business owner mentored through the year-long program and she said it showed her just how much of what she didn't know she didn't know. The Baltimore chapter launched in 2013.

"I had the moon and the stars," Towles said of her expectations entering the ATHENAPowerLink program. "And truth

be told, the first three months were really hard."

Towles said she applied to the program because, while aMuse Toys is a recognized brand with loyal customers, it is a mom-and-pop shop and she needed help with systems, scalability and other aspects of the business that neither she nor her husband had a background in.

With the help of a panel of eight advisers from the accounting, finance, marketing and retail industries, Towles was able to improve the behind the scenes of aMuse Toys to plan for the future. Among the benefits, she cites learning to delegate and empower her employees, to better manage finances, to ask the questions that get the right answers from other professionals, and to have the confidence and ability to ask those questions.

ATHENAPowerLink was created to address a lack of access to valuable advisers and mentors for women entrepreneurs. According to Athena International, its premise was simple: panels of volunteers willing to advise female business owners on important issues could help those owners achieve greater success.

"I think there will always be challenges to owning a business, whether you're a female or not," Towles said.

Towles added that there is room to improve things such as access to capital for women entrepreneurs in Baltimore and Maryland-wide.

"But I think that when you're as passionate as I've been in my industry, you find ways to make things work," she said.

For an owner, at times it can feel as if she is going it alone, Towles said. Once you've experienced the accountability and access to the expertise that a program like ATHENAPowerLink provides, you're hungry for it and for the feedback, she said.

Graduates of the ATHENAPowerLink program have questioned what's next, Gamble said.

"I think we might need to figure that out as a community: what is the next step," she added.

How to keep those businesses moving forward after the mentorship ends is a question the local chapter also grapples with, Gamble said. To help address that gap, the governing body of the chapter visits its





Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

Claudia Towles, owner of aMuse Toys, says her business has changed significantly due to ATHENAPowerLink women's business mentoring program.

**“I don’t think the business itself has changed so much as the process behind it, the ownership and the vision. Before there was a lot of gut – this feels right, don’t necessarily have the data, don’t necessarily understand why it feels right. We had muddy waters before in terms of the back end of the business.”**

**- Claudia Towles, owner of aMuse Toys**

participants one year after completing the program.

Taking smaller, entrepreneurial businesses to the next step can give the economy a huge boost and female-owned businesses are among the fastest growing.

Despite the boon ATHENAPowerLink provides to a business owner, Gamble said the organization is struggling to find owners who want to be part of the program.

“I was worried I would not get enough panel members,” she said. “Truly, the biggest shortage is applicants. Every chapter I’ve talked to has said it’s the same thing: it’s getting the applications, getting women to apply. And you wonder: ‘How can that be?’”

There is a second business currently participating in the program, and that panel will conclude by the end of the summer.

Gamble, a two-time member of the Top 100 Women, said there’s often a hesitancy on the part of women to ask for and accept help

and to grow their business, she said.

“One of challenges is women business owners tend to think they will have more control over the business if they keep it small and manageable, when in fact their lives would a lot better if the business was bigger,” she said.

As Towles explained, “we almost create our own barriers.”

For Towles, she felt it would be easier, faster and cheaper to do everything herself. But just as keeping a business smaller does not necessarily provide more control, doing it all is not always easier, faster or cheaper.

“The truth is you can do so much more with more hands, with more heads in the game,” she said.

Towles said she applied to the program with a desire to get help for her business, knowing it could be better.

Before ATHENAPowerLink, she said running her business felt as if she were

trying to pedal a bike while carrying a very heavy backpack. Now, having graduated, she said running her business is more like riding a scooter with a headlamp and a couple handbags.

“I can actually see forward,” she said. “Those muddy waters are no longer muddy waters.”

While the waters are not always crystal-clear, the view forward for aMuse Toys is much clearer, she said.

“Raise your hand,” she said, encouraging others to apply. “You don’t know what you don’t know.”

**For details about  
ATHENAPowerLink or to apply, go to  
[www.Athenapowerlinkbaltimore.org](http://www.Athenapowerlinkbaltimore.org)**



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# Murthy is second woman to lead Md. chamber's board

World-renowned immigration attorney brings energy, expertise to state organization

Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record

Sheela Murthy, owner of Murthy Law Firm, recently was named chairman of the board of directors of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce.

**By Kate S. Alexander**

Special to The Daily Record

There is an energy in Sheela Murthy's voice as she talks about her new post as chairman of the board of directors of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce.

After all, it took her years to get to this point.

And she is only the second female in the chamber's 40-year history to hold the position and the first woman of color to do so.

Additionally, the chamber is several years into leading the Maryland Competitiveness Coalition, a collaborative effort of 60 business, employee and related interest groups working to help strengthen Maryland as a regional, national and global economic leader.

"We have downplayed our strengths," Murthy said. "It's just our turn now to showcase and put the spotlight on the incredible strength that Maryland brings."

But like many in-demand professionals,

Murthy was hesitant when approached several years ago about starting on the path to chairman of the chamber, a process which involved serving first in other leadership roles.

"My first reaction was 'Oh. No, no no. I don't have time,'" said Murthy, a member of the Top 100 Women Circle of Excellence.

A sought-after attorney, respected philanthropist and dynamic public speaker, Murthy is the founder and president of the internationally known Murthy Law Firm, a leader in immigration law.

In addition to running her firm, Murthy sits on the boards of other organizations including the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland and, together with her husband, Vasant Nayak, runs the MurthyNAYAK Foundation, which supports socially transformative projects that change the world, one person at a time.

Yet Murthy was persuaded to join the board's executive committee by then-president and CEO of the chamber, Kathy Snyder, who noted

## Sheela Murthy

**Education:** BA (Stella Maris College, Chennai), LLB (University Law College, Bengaluru) & LLM Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass.

**Career:** Founder and president of the world's pre-eminent U.S. immigration law firm, Murthy Law Firm

**Boards:** Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Stevenson University, The Indus Entrepreneurs

**Community Service:** Asha for Women, JHPIEGO, Pratham DC, MurthyNAYAK Foundation

**Advice for other women:** Act, behave and believe your way to success.

Truly give yourself permission to dream and believe in your own happiness and success!

that it is not often women are asked to lead the statewide chamber.

"I saw a person who had achieved the American dream," said Snyder, who is now retired, but served as the first female president and CEO of the chamber. "She's a great role model for anybody who is an entrepreneur, who wants to start a business. She challenged herself to overcome many difficult odds in order to be successful in business."

Murthy became chairman in May.

The chamber represents 700 members with about 400,000 employees, said Brien Poffenberger, current president and CEO of the chamber.

Therefore, the chairman needs to be smart, engaged, get the chamber's vision and be a problem solver.

"Sheela has all of that in spades," Poffenberger said.

Eligibility to be chairman also requires holding a position such as president or CEO of a major company in the state.

While Murthy Law Firm doesn't employ thousands, "it is a global player," Murthy explained.

Murthy's firm was not always a global force. It once was just her working solo to represent clients through the immigration process.

In the 21 years since she hung out her own shingle, she has built her firm into an international brand, with offices in Maryland, Seattle and Chennai, India. Between the three offices, her firm employs more than 100 people and her website [murthy.com](http://murthy.com) is the world's most popular legal website offering free and readable information on U.S. immigration law, she said.

Just as few women have served as the chamber's chairman, few attorneys have held the role, Murthy said.

But it was not only that Murthy was a woman or an attorney that drew the attention of the board's nominating committee, Snyder said. Rather, it was also Murthy's success and unique story, Snyder said.

"She is a high energy person and we

felt a number of years ago that she'd be a great example to lead the chamber board of directors to show the Maryland Chamber and state of Maryland is comprised of different people with different backgrounds all working together to help Maryland be a better place," Snyder said.

Born in India, Murthy pursued a career in law, eventually coming to the U.S. in her early 20s to obtain a Masters in Law at Harvard

**"We have downplayed our strengths. It's just our turn now to showcase and put the spotlight on the incredible strength that Maryland brings."**

**– Sheela Murthy,  
chairman of the board of directors for the  
Maryland Chamber of Commerce**

University. She went on to work for several U.S. law firms before striking out on her own in immigration law, a change she credits to her personal experience working through the system with an attorney who did not seem to care.

In the three to four years it took get a green card, she said, she couldn't recall her attorney talking to her except to say he needed to increase his fee.

If her attorney could treat her that way – a fellow lawyer, Harvard educated – Murthy said she questioned how he treated others going through the immigration process.

Rearrange the letters of the word file and you get life, she notes. Life, that is how Murthy sees each client: Not as files, but as lives, as families wanting to participate and share in the American dream.

Like most immigrants, Murthy said she

has a love affair with the United States that gives her a fresh perspective and vision to see endless possibilities for the state of Maryland.

With that she also brings a directness, an honesty, a boldness to confidently speak her mind and an ability to encourage others.

"I get our vision, I get our mission, I get our values, I get our promise," she said, adding she has the strength to keep the chamber focused on its goals and to encourage the staff to feel that passion.

She also is committed to bringing more women into the chamber's leadership and onto the path to chairmanship. Currently, two other women serve on the executive committee.

For the chamber, having a woman of color as chairman is a significant statement, Snyder said.

Murthy reflects on the diversity of Maryland's residents and its businesses.

"It's important for the average person whether in Baltimore or in Montgomery County or in Southern Maryland or in Ocean City or in Deep Creek Lake, to see the leaders of the Maryland Chamber look like them, act like them, be aware that the state has different needs in different regions," Snyder said.

Murthy has worked hard to not only live the American dream, but further the vision to make Maryland open for business so others can live that dream.

"This isn't about each of us carving out our own territorial ground," she said. "If we are going to be successful as a state, we need to do this all together."

"It's not about us and our egos, we just happen to be in this position at this time and have a very important role and vision," she continued. "We believe it's our role, our responsibility to pull everything together to really help Maryland thrive."





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# **Study: Majority of women aspire to hold top roles**

## **Many find it difficult to see themselves as leaders**

**Submitted by KPMG LLP**

A majority of women aspire to hold top leadership and board roles, but often find it difficult to see themselves as leaders, according to a recent women's leadership study released by the professional services firm KPMG LLP. The survey, which polled more than 3,000 professional and college women in the United States, identified confidence building and leadership training, along with the ability to network with women leaders, as key elements to expanding women's leadership in the years ahead.

"Every organization is stronger when its leadership has diverse perspectives and experiences to draw from. It is critically important for the business community to look at the challenges women often face in the workplace and take action to clear the path for talented and dynamic leaders to rise and inspire new generations," KPMG Global Chairman John Veihmeyer said.

"The insights from female professionals across the American business landscape, as well as women on the cusp of entering the workforce in our study, offer valuable lessons about moving

BARRY GLASSMAN  
County Executive



KAREN HOLT  
Director

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more women into leadership roles. We're looking forward to discussing many of the most critical issues from the study when we gather together with current and future women leaders at the KPMG Women's Leadership Summit," he added.

According to the study, six in 10 women said they aspire to be a senior leader of a company or organization and more than half aspire to serve on a board. But six in 10 also said that they find it hard to see themselves as a leader when sharing how they perceive themselves and 56 percent of working women said they were more cautious about taking steps toward leadership roles.

"It's vital that leadership teams reflect the diversity of the modern world. In a business landscape of continuous change, success is often going to depend on having a range of experiences and perspectives around the boardroom table," KPMG U.S. Chairman and CEO-elect Lynne Doughtie said. "We are seeing in these responses a number of opportunities to strengthen connections with high-performing women at the critical points on their career paths, so they are prepared and encouraged to step into leadership roles."

### Leadership lessons start early

Three-quarters of women expressed the desire to have learned more about leadership while growing up, as well as having more opportunities to practice leadership. "School

and academics" was identified as the area where they most felt like a leader growing up and professional working women chose "smart" as the leading descriptor for themselves at this stage of their lives.

When asked what training and development skills were needed to help move more women into leadership roles in the future, women cited leadership training (57 percent), confidence building (56 percent), decision-making (48 percent), networking (47 percent) and critical thinking (46 percent) most often.

Professional working women believe it is critical for companies to support a woman's development in her 20s (80 percent) and career advancement in her 30s (61 percent).

### Confidence is key

Confidence is an attribute respondents identified as most essential to leadership success. Throughout their professional careers, women struggle with a lack of confidence; fewer than half of all respondents personally identified as confident in the study. Sixty-seven percent of women said they need more support in building confidence to feel like they can be leaders.

The lack of confidence affects an array of activities tied to becoming leaders: nine in 10 women said they do not feel confident asking for sponsors (92 percent), with large numbers also lacking confidence seeking

mentors (79 percent), asking for access to senior leadership (76 percent), pursuing a job opportunity beyond their experience (73 percent), asking for a career path plan (69 percent), requesting a promotion (65 percent), raise (61 percent) or a new role or position (56 percent).

"This is an area of opportunity for organizations to identify and develop factors that help women gain confidence to lead at work," Doughtie said. "Reinforcing confidence can go a long way in helping to bridge the gap between the aspiration to lead and ultimately becoming a leader."

### Building networks

Another key finding was the importance of support from other women leaders. Two-thirds of women said they have learned the most important lessons about leadership from other women. In addition, 82 percent of working women believe access to, and networking with, female leaders will help them advance in their career.

A discrepancy was found between the importance of engaging other women and the realities of who is doing it. While seven in 10 working women feel a personal obligation to help more women advance in the workplace, only one-third of working women have learned to leverage and support other female employees.

## WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS

90

Number of women holding  
corporate board seats  
in Maryland

2,383  
(57.55%)

Number of women employed at Wells Fargo  
in Maryland out of 4,141 total employees.

13

Number of women of color  
holding corporate board  
seats in Maryland

Number of female attorneys working in the  
Maryland Attorney General's Office out of  
468 total attorneys.

24

Number of companies with  
no women on the board in  
Maryland

256  
(54.7%)

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# MOVERS & SHAKERS

Each issue of Path to Excellence will feature women on the move.

Please share your promotions, new positions and other professional milestones at [thedailyrecord.com/movers](http://thedailyrecord.com/movers).



**Ann Marie Andrew | IST  
MARINER BANK**

Ann Marie Andrew has been named vice president of private banking at 1st Mariner Bank, the largest independently owned bank in Baltimore.



**Traci Barnett |  
NETWORK 2000**

Network 2000, a statewide nonprofit organization in Maryland composed of professional women and men, elected Traci Barnett as president. Barnett is president and CEO of the National Kidney Foundation of Maryland.



**Karen Cook | AACC**

Anne Arundel Community College has named Karen L. Cook, J.D., as the new dean of its School of Business and Law. Until her appointment, Cook was director of AACC's Legal Studies Institute, professor of law and the college's federal compliance officer. As director, some of her key initiatives were creating the continuing legal education program for attorneys, paralegals and mediators statewide; forming partnerships with external organizations and agencies; ensuring that the Paralegal Studies programs were approved by the American Bar Association; managing the Law and Jurisprudence pre-law program and expanding the legal studies internship program. From April 2013 to December 2014, she took administrative leave to serve in the administration of Anne Arundel County Executive Laura Neuman as chief administrative officer where she managed the county day-to-day operations. Cook is on the executive committee of the AACC Foundation and the Anne Arundel Bar Association board of directors.



**Deidra C. Crews |  
HOPKINS SCHOOL OF  
MEDICINE**

Deidra C. Crews, MD, ScM, a nephrologist at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, was elected to the National Kidney Foundation of Maryland board of directors. Her core research addresses disparities in the care and outcomes of chronic kidney disease. She has examined the contribution of social determinants of health, including poverty and access to healthful foods, to disparities in kidney disease. Her work in end-stage renal disease includes studies of the optimal timing and setting of dialysis initiation among vulnerable groups, and patient preparation for the start of renal replacement therapy. NKF-MD previously honored her with its Greater Baltimore Community and Patients Service Committee All-Star Award.



**Sonal B. Deshpande |  
NORTHROP GRUMMAN**

Sonal B. Deshpande has been appointed vice president of mission assurance in the Linthicum-based electronic systems sector of Northrop Grumman. Deshpande is responsible for mission assurance across the sector for all programs, including quality and product assurance, compliance, process excellence and supplier mission assurance. Deshpande joined Northrop Grumman in 1986 and has held a number of leadership roles in sector program and functional organizations. Deshpande earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in electrical engineering from Johns Hopkins University. She has also completed the General Managers Program at Harvard Business School.



**Amy Burke Friedman |  
PROFILES, INC.**

Amy Burke Friedman has been promoted to president of Profiles, Inc., a public relations and marketing company in Baltimore. Burke Friedman, a Towson resident, joined Profiles in 2003 as a junior account executive and became an account executive just six months later. She was named a senior account manager in 2005. She was named vice president in 2009. As president, Burke Friedman will play an integral role in day-to-day business operations, concentrating on the firm's business development program. She will continue to manage client accounts and provide insight on the strategic direction of the business. Burke Friedman holds a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from the University of Maryland, College Park.



**Ardena Githara | HHS**

Ardena Githara, a senior grants management specialist with the Department of Health and Human Services and the owner of ANG Consulting LLC, has been named to the board of directors at the Pro Bono Counseling Project, an organization that ensures Marylanders with limited resources requesting mental health care are provided access to volunteer licensed mental health professionals and other necessary supportive services.



**Lisa Manzone |  
MCCORMICK & CO.**

Sparks-based McCormick & Company, Inc., has appointed Lisa Manzone as senior vice president of human relations. Manzone will also become

a member of McCormick's Management Committee. Manzone joined McCormick in 2007 and most recently served as vice president for global human relations. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in employee relations and a master of labor and industrial relations from Michigan State University.



### **Betsy Peisach | MPT**

Betsy Peisach has been promoted to vice president and head of the education division at Maryland Public Television. Peisach, an Owings Mills resident, joined MPT in 2000 and was soon promoted to managing director of the education marketing and outreach department of the education division. In December 2014, she was named acting vice president and head of the division. In her current post, Peisach oversees departments that work in early childhood and K-12 education, educational outreach, and educational technology. She holds a bachelor's degree in radio, television, and film from the University of Maryland, College Park.



### **D. Kay Rand | NORTHROP GRUMMAN**

D. Kay Rand has been appointed vice president of operations for Northrop Grumman's Linthicum-based electronic systems sector. Rand joined the company in 1982 and has held a number of leadership positions in programs, manufacturing, business operations and mission assurance. Rand earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from James Madison University, a bachelor's in electrical and electronics engineering from the University of Dayton and a master's in technical management from Johns Hopkins University. She has also completed the executive marketing program at UCLA and the general manager's program at Harvard University.



### **Barbara L. Simmons | M&T BANK**

Barbara L. Simmons has been promoted to group vice president for the Baltimore and Chesapeake Commercial Real Estate Group at M&T Bank. In this role, she manages a department

responsible for a \$2.5 billion investment commercial real loan portfolio. Simmons has been with M&T Bank since 1991.



### **Michele Tomlinson | WARSCHAWSKI**

Michele Tomlinson has been promoted to vice president at Warschawski, an advertising and marketing firm in Baltimore. In her new role, Tomlinson will take on an increased leadership role within the agency, providing strategic guidance on agency accounts, overseeing the execution of integrated communication campaigns, managing account team members and ensuring all clients receive the highest quality of service. She will also play a more active role in new business development. Tomlinson holds a bachelor's degree in communications media from the University of Worcester and a Bachelor of Science in communications and media from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



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# Q & A: WHAT WAS YOUR PATH?



## **Dr. Mary Teddy Wray** **CEO & Owner** **Laurel Bush Family** **Dentistry**

Dr. Mary Teddy Wray opened her own dental practice in 2002 that continues to thrive today. Wray, a Top 100 Woman, serves as chief executive officer and owner of

Laurel Bush Family Dentistry.

She says her success also has allowed her to give back to her Harford County community. She has donated dental services and also donated funds to nonprofit organizations and schools.

### **What does success look like to you?**

I look at success as being happy doing what I like to do every day and getting compensated well for it. I am grateful that I am able to help many people and nonprofits organizations that reach out to me. I don't view success by how much money or material possessions one has, but by what they have done with what they have. I look at success as happiness within myself. To me happiness comes from loving my family, friends, my job and the satisfaction I get giving back to my community.

### **What challenges did you face along the way?**

My biggest challenge was being able to survive alone at a very young age. I had to find a way to put myself through college and dental school. That meant working 50 to 60 hours a week and sacrificing family, friends, sleep and a social life.

### **What was the biggest lesson you learned?**

When I was a struggling teenager, I quickly learned that the only way I can survive in this country or anywhere was through hard work and good education. Once I became a dentist, I realized that I had to continue working very hard to become a successful dentist. This time I had to accept the fact that I can't do that all alone, that successful dentistry was a team effort with me as the leader. I learned to build a successful team by continually attending business seminars with my team and practicing what we learnt.

### **What advice do you have for other women?**

Always have a plan and stay focused. Remember to work hard and make sacrifices. Don't be afraid to fail. If you try your best and still hit rock bottom, you are not a failure. Failure is hitting rock bottom and decide to stay there. Success is gathering yourself and quickly start climbing up to the top. It may be a long way up there, but you will eventually get there. There is nothing wrong to yell out that you need help because you can't do this all alone.

### **Describe your future goals.**

I would like to start a nonprofit organization that helps adults who can't afford dental care get free dental services. These would include the homeless and the elderly. I have two wonderful sons but my heart has always ached for a daughter. Right now I am in the process of being matched with a daughter who is available for adoption through the state foster systems.

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# Creating Opportunities – Pathways to Leadership

**By Nadine Braunstein, PhD, RD**

What opportunities have you not considered because those opportunities brought challenges that were yet to be tackled? How many times have you doubted yourself and said, “Someone like me could never do that?” In your quest to propel your career, how many opportunities have you let slip by simply because you did not recognize them as opportunities to lead? Successful leaders have a vision of what could be. They see challenges as opportunities and opportunities around every bend. In essence, leaders create opportunity. What follows are three key strategies about creating opportunities that can lead to professional leadership growth and success.

## Volunteer

Get involved with your community, workplace, or professional association and volunteer for a committee. The benefits include building your network and your confidence. Others see you in action and they become witness to your capabilities. Your fellow committee members will recall your leadership skills and can be an invaluable resource for learning about career positions with a leadership role. Another benefit of volunteering is having advance knowledge of changes on the horizon. This positions you to lead your team to adapt, control and effect change.

Early in my career I had the chance to be interviewed for a local access television show. I thought that it would be good to learn more about television production so I wrote a proposal for a monthly nutrition show where I invited colleagues to talk about their work and explored nutrition topics out in the community. This was an unpaid project; but by creating the opportunity I hosted and produced 25 shows and obtained valuable skills and comfort with television interviews.

## Take a chance

Many times creating opportunities means taking a chance. Apply for that job, promotion, fellowship or grant that you think you may not get. Be bold. Be prepared. Be surprised.

When I decided to apply to the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellowship, I spoke to the one nutrition professional who had participated in the fellowship over thirty years before. She mentioned that the fellowship didn’t usually accept nutrition professionals, but I should talk with the program director. What I learned is that the fellowship didn’t select nutrition professionals because they

don’t usually apply! I submitted a strong application, and was one of six fellows for 2013-2014.

The experiences as a health policy fellow as well as having served in leadership positions at the state and national levels led to my being selected to serve as the Vice Chair of the Legislative and Public Policy Committee of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Success builds upon success and leads to even more opportunities.

## Share

It is important to share with colleagues, supervisors and subordinates what is learned from various opportunities so that they, too, can grow and develop. Being known as a generous person who wants to develop others is a quality of an outstanding leader. In the book, “You Don’t Need a Title to be a Leader” (Currency Doubleday, 2006), Mark Sanborn identifies qualities of leaders that include caring about and listening to others and looking for ways to encourage the contributions and development of others rather than focusing solely on personal achievements.

In my role as an assistant professor at Towson University, I enthusiastically share my knowledge and encourage my colleagues and students to volunteer and take chances so that they too can create opportunities for themselves.

Recognizing opportunities to lead and to bring a greater and lasting impact to your own career and workplace can be a never-ending pursuit and one you will eagerly follow. There is nothing quite like the sense of accomplishment derived from leading confidently and successfully and by passing your knowledge to others, providing them with the skills to also take the lead.

*Nadine Braunstein, PhD, RD is a Registered Dietitian and an Assistant Professor in the Interprofessional Health Studies department at Towson University. She was a 2013-2014 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellow.*



# Hastler elected president of MLA

Harford County Library CEO will work to promote, enhance library system statewide

By Erin Cunningham

Erin.Cunningham@TheDailyRecord.com

Mary Hastler recently purchased an Apple Watch, but already the high-tech device has her thinking of ways she could improve service for her customers at Harford County Public Library.

"I'm just very curious about how I can take what I'm doing on the iWatch and bring it to our customers," said Hastler, who has served as CEO of the library system since 2010. "I always get ideas outside of the library and bring them back to the library. So, stay tuned for that."

That has been the trend for Hastler, who led the launch of the library system's Innovation Lab and nationally known Little Leapers program.

Hastler first joined Harford County Library in 1996, and left for one year to join the Baltimore County Library system before returning.

Her innovative spirit and success in Harford

County led to her statewide election recently as president of the Maryland Library Association.

Hastler, a Top 100 Woman, who has been involved with the organization for many years, said it was an honor to be elected.

As the group's president, she'll continue to be active on legislative issues and in raising awareness for libraries in the state and beyond.

"People think of them as dusty book collections," Hastler said.

But she and the Maryland Library Association are working to change that.

While books are not disappearing from the state's libraries, librarians are adopting the latest technology to improve the customer experience — providing materials in a variety of formats.

That includes electronic books, videos, downloadable material and more.

"No matter how you get your content or your children or your grandparents, we can provide that to you," she said.

Libraries also partner with school curricula in many cases, providing classes in STEM, art and more.

"Schools are there during the finite time during the school year, and we're there after

that or on the weekend," Hastler said.

Another goal includes providing the resources to help all students start school at grade level.

This summer, Harford County Library launched a superhero collection as part of its summer reading program. The program, intended to help engage all young readers, invites students to choose an action figure and then write and record their "adventures" for a week. Another group of students then will include their own stories.

"We'll have a whole story finished by the end of the summer," she said.

The program is intended to help students read, play, interact and develop their writing skills.

"Libraries are critical to our community, and not just in Harford County, but across the country," Hastler said. "They are a wonderful resource that is always evolving and changing. If you want to look at something that is new and different come to the library."

"It's a very unique institution and something that should be treasured. I have the best job in the world."

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# DRESS TO IMPRESS

Each month, Path to Excellence will feature a column on business fashion and trends. If you have a question or topic you would like to see addressed, or if you would like to share your expertise on this topic, please email Erin Cunningham at [erin.cunningham@thedailyrecord.com](mailto:erin.cunningham@thedailyrecord.com).

## FASHION TRENDS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH



**By Salli Ward**

Despite the heat and humidity, it is not too soon to begin thinking about what you will wear this fall.

I love wearing my summer fashions and sandals, but when the cold weather comes, I want to be ready with a fresh new look! What secrets do I have to share about the trends in 2015 fall fashion? Think first about colors that will be important this coming season, then think about fabrics that will make your wardrobe feel fresh and updated. I recently returned from Dallas where the Doncaster FAB Forum presented our new collection that “rocked the runway” and those of us who bring it to you!

Our take on the pantone color of the year “marsala,” is reflected in a wonderful shade, called antique ruby that is beautiful, savory, strong and sexy!

It is a rich color – BOLD enough to replace your black, and you will be noticed as the one “in the know.”

Other new hues for fall include:

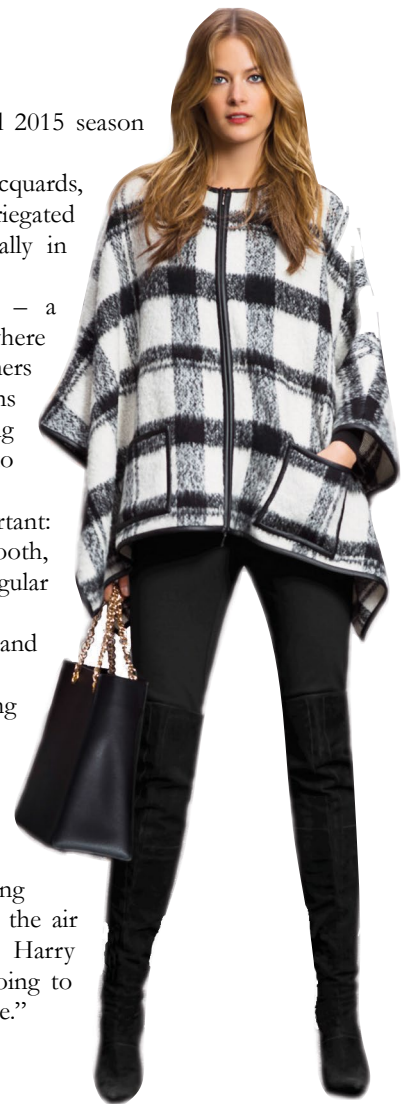
- Peony, a new shade of fuchsia
- Caledon, the perfect fall light green
- Flame and carmine, for red lovers everywhere
- Olive, a deep rich hue
- Light and dark chocolate,
- Terracotta, for you redheads and blondes,
- Blue bird, a beautiful bright color for everyone

Neutrals: Winter white, black and heather charcoal  
Black and white are ALWAYS best sellers

Important Trends of the fall 2015 season include:

- Patterned and textured jacquards, a fabric of intricate variegated weave or pattern generally in the same color way
- Soft prints and palettes – a continuation of spring where all contemporary designers had silks in their collections
- Couture sport – bringing athletic wear into ready to wear
- Patterns remain important: floral prints, hounds-tooth, abstract reptile, irregular check and maze prints
- Novelty jacquard jeans and trousers are a fresh look.
- Capes, ponchos and long vests
- Lace

With rich colors, luxury fabrics and glamorous styles, the Doncaster fall 2015 Collection will have you looking on trend and fabulous when the air turns cold. Remember what Harry Winston said, “People are going to stare, make it worth their while.”



Salli Ward, a 2015 Top 100 Woman, is a wardrobe stylist and president of Wonderful Wardrobes. She has built her personal stylist business to help hundreds of women look and feel wonderful about how they look and dress. She also has taught many women how to present a polished and professional image. Feel free to contact her and ask her your fashion questions at [sallijward@aol.com](mailto:sallijward@aol.com) or call her at 410-654-2459 or 410-428-5566. Visit her website at [www.sallijward-doncaster.com](http://www.sallijward-doncaster.com).



# PATH TO EXCELLENCE NETWORKING SERIES

Do not miss this opportunity to networking with Maryland's Top 100 and Leading Women. The Daily Record will host free networking events in nine locations across the state annually, giving women the opportunity for networking, professional growth and to give back to a community nonprofit organization.

**July/August 2015****Publication:** Aug. 14**Networking Event****Harford County:** Aug. 26**November 2015****Publication:** Nov. 27**Networking Event****Eastern Shore:** Nov. 16**April 2016****Publication:** April 22**Networking Event****Prince George's County****September 2015****Publication:** Sept. 30**Networking Event****Baltimore:** Sept. 30**February 2016****Publication:** Feb. 19**Networking Event****Baltimore City****May 2016****Publication:** May 27**Networking Event****Howard County****October 2015****Publication:** Oct. 23**Networking Event****Montgomery County****March 2016****Publication:** March 25**Networking Event****Baltimore County:** March 2**June 2016****Publication:** June 24**Networking Event****Frederick County**

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To register for one of the free networking events, call Clare Sheehan at 443-524-8101 or email [clare.sheehan@thedailyrecord.com](mailto:clare.sheehan@thedailyrecord.com)

*For ideas related to content in Path to Excellence, contact Erin Cunningham at 443-524-8155 or email [erin.cunningham@thedailyrecord.com](mailto:erin.cunningham@thedailyrecord.com)*



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