

# Florida Business Woman

Winter 2020

## ELEVATE DIVERSITY WORK

*There is a wide gap between organizations engaging in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work and those that are actually valuing it, according to Wharton management professor [Stephanie Creary](#). In this opinion piece, she offers a framework for how companies can change DEI work from an unrewarded side hustle to a merit-worthy practice that is valued across the company. Creary’s article originally appeared on the LinkedIn platform of bestselling author and social psychologist [Amy Cuddy](#), as part of the #ShareTheMicNow social media campaign in which black women scholars and activists take over the accounts of influential white women for a day in order to amplify their voices and ideas.*

To address systemic racism, many organizations are starting to create [anti-racist diversity, equity, and inclusion \(DEI\) change agendas](#). Yet, my ongoing research into corporate DEI practices suggests that there is a wide chasm separating those organizations doing DEI work and those that are actually valuing the DEI work being done. Here is a summary of a few key issues that DEI experts and their organizations currently face:

First, DEI experts and their work have been devalued for some time. Specifically, experts often lack adequate staff and financial resources to create programs and initiatives designed to improve employees’ experiences and workplace outcomes. The lack of sufficient budget and staff also makes it difficult for experts to help their organizations address systemic racism, which has become a priority in many organizations today.

Second, DEI experts are often tasked with a seemingly impossible set of goals; that is, not only are they expected to help their organizations view diversity as helping rather than hindering their workplaces, they also need to help their organizations create a culture where everyone feels valued and believes that processes and outcomes are fair. Yet, DEI experts often lack the power and authority to drive change processes in their organizations.

Third, in order for DEI work to matter, employees at all levels need to be committed and engaged in doing the work. Yet, this is not often the case. For example, research suggests that middle managers have long struggled to understand their role in DEI work and have been less committed to doing

the work. In comparison, women — including women of color — and racial minorities more broadly have historically taken on the brunt of this work even though research suggests that they may be penalized for doing so.

“The lack of consistency in codifying and treating DEI work as a merit-worthy endeavor for all employees ... threatens its success.”

When issues like these are revealed, a common recommendation has been to give DEI experts a bigger budget and more staff. While these resources are vital, there is a larger point around valuing DEI work that can become lost in organizations’ efforts to “throw money at the problem.” Hereafter, I propose a more systematic way forward.

### A MERIT Framework for Valuing DEI Work

Merit-based practices can have objective features. Research on merit suggests that – to be fair – rewards should be distributed based on people’s actual efforts, which should be the same across groups. In this respect, actual efforts and rewards can be codified and systematically evaluated similarly across groups. However, there are downsides to merit-based practices; research has found that they can create disparities when accountability and transparency into the reward system is lacking.

Merit is also subjectively evaluated and applied. Namely, people understand and apply merit differently in the workplace based on their own personal experiences. My research interviews with corporate leaders including DEI experts suggest that people also evaluate the merit of DEI work differently – meaning that people who believe that DEI work is important willingly and actively engage in it, while others dismiss it and do not willingly participate in it.

The lack of consistency in codifying and treating DEI work as a merit-worthy endeavor for all employees – that is, worthy of investment, visibility, and other rewards – threatens its success. Claiming that DEI is important –

*(Continued on page 9)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President’s Message	3
State Committee News	5, 18
Local Organization News	12-13, 15-16
Education Foundation News	19

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## BPW/FL Calendar of Events (2021)

*February*  
American Heart Month

*March*  
Women's History Month  
8 International Women's Day  
held annually to celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations

*March-April*  
TBD Equal Pay Day

*May*  
Lupus Awareness Month

*June*  
17-20 BPW/FL Annual Conference  
Saddlebrook Resort  
Wesley Chapel, FL  
SAVE THE DATES!!  
Make your hotel reservation now!

### BPW/FL's Mission

*To achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education and information.*

## Florida Business Woman

Florida Business Woman, the official publication of BPW/FL, is published three times annually by the Florida Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. (BPW/FL. Membership subscription is included in Federation dues.

*Upcoming advertising and copy deadlines:*

State conference issue	April 1, 2021
Summer issue	August 1, 2021
Winter issue	December 1, 2021

<i>Advertising Rates:</i>	Single issue	Two issues	Three issues
Full Page	\$175	\$315	\$420
Half Page	\$100	\$180	\$240
Back Cover (1/2 p)	\$150	\$270	\$360
Quarter Page	\$50	\$ 90	\$120
Business Card	\$25	\$ 45	\$ 60

The rates quoted are for BPW/FL members. Non-member fees are double the member fees. Color ads will show online but the print issues will be black & white. All copy and ads (with check) should be sent directly to the Editor. Please make checks for ads payable to BPW/FL.

Articles of up to one page will be accepted for consideration to be included on a space available basis. Items to be submitted include: officer and state committee chair reports, calendar entries & press releases, photos & articles about local organization events, and articles related to our mission that would be of interest to BPW members.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BPW Members:

As I write this article, the Holiday Season is fast upon us. Thanksgiving was just a day or two ago, Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa are just around the corner and by the time you read this, it will most likely be just about the New Year (if not already there, dependent on the mail service). I don't think there is anyone who won't be glad for 2020 to be over. And I believe most, if not all, are hopeful for a healthier, safer and more peaceful 2021.

We've had many milestones to overcome during this year of pandemic, as individuals and as an organization. We have seen a country that at no time since the Vietnam War has been so divided, not just between neighbors, but between families and friends, as well.

We have much to be proud of in BPW/FL. We were able to quickly adapt to a new way of doing things. Some of our committees and their chairs have been extremely busy this year in helping us navigate through these unusual times. We had bylaws amendments to assist the Local Organizations (LO) be able to meet in a fashion other than in person. We had joint committees that were able to find funds to allow us to amend our budget, with Board of Directors approval, so that we could offer COVID-19 membership funds to our membership. (We still have funds available, so if your membership is up or past due, please reach out—we want to help!). We had to cancel our in person 100th State Conference but were able to successfully hold our Annual Meeting via video conference. If your LO needs or would like to utilize the BPW/FL Zoom membership,

please reach out to Technology Chair Sheila Barry-Oliver, and she will be happy to set it up and work with you. We have moved forward with a Strategic Planning Task Force; at the time of this writing, we are looking for a facilitator for a Strategic Planning Session in January.

The Federation (BPW/FL) and the Foundation (BPW/FL Education Foundation) have collaborated on a couple of different fundraising projects to assist the Foundation in fundraising opportunities they would have had at the 100th State Conference. Hopefully by now you have received and reviewed the email that made you aware of the BPW/FL masks and that you have pre-ordered your Foundation t-shirt.

We are continuing to plan for an in person 100th State Conference in June 2021. With this in mind, please don't forget that award submissions are due no later than May 1 at [awards@bpwfl.org](mailto:awards@bpwfl.org); if you are interested in running for a state leadership position (Vice President, Secretary and Nominations Chair will be up for election in 2021), your nominations packet is due no later than March 30. Please reach out to our Nominations Chair Syd Gibson to advise of your interest and she will be happy to assist you to make sure your submission is complete. President-Elect Sheri McCandless will be installed as your new BPW/FL President at the 100th State Conference and I am sure she would love to have you on her team; even if you don't want to be an officer, maybe you would like to serve as a committee chair . . . No one person can do it alone, we are stronger together!

I know you probably get tired of hearing my mantra “we are

stronger together”, but it really is true. None of us can go through life alone, we need our friends and family. We need our business associates and our organizational partners. The EC would not have been able to navigate all that needed to be done (especially on such short notice) without the assistance of committees and other BPW/FL members.

If you have not been on the website in a while, I encourage you to do so. We have started weekly member and monthly LO spotlights. If you or your LO have not been highlighted yet, please let our technology chair know. She will be happy to schedule your spotlight.

Finally, I would like to thank all BPW/FL members for your membership and your dedication to BPW, at the state and local levels. Without you, our members, BPW/FL does not exist. I want each of you to know how grateful I am for your membership and that I look forward to meeting and/or seeing each of you as we move into 2021.

Happy Holidays.

*Jerri*

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BPW/Fort Lauderdale  
President 2020-2021  
BPW/FL President 1993-1994

# BE VISIBLE ~ EVEN WHEN WORKING FROM HOME

As the novelty of working from home wears a bit thin, I'm hearing a concern from my clients about how to stay visible and draw attention to the value they provide.

Without the normal everyday interactions when physically present with your co-workers, you must be more intentional about promoting your achievements and informing your manager and team about the results you are delivering. This is self-marketing and self-promotion. It's likely to be a bit uncomfortable, but if you don't learn to develop the language of achievement and speak it, you will probably be overlooked when the time comes for promotion, or you'll receive a less than stellar performance review.

Some people are so prolific at drawing attention to their achievements that they may be viewed as grandstanders or braggarts. To imitate them feels phony or just plain not who you are. Nevertheless, you must be able to know and speak your value. And you don't have to overwork it to prove what a great team member you are.

In any case, this is no time to keep a low profile. When opportunities arise, you want to be considered. And your ability to speak confidently about your work will help build stronger relationships

with both your management and your colleagues. And if you're a manager, serving as a role model for your staff and demonstrating the ability to showcase your skills is invaluable. Besides, you have earned and deserve the recognition that your contributions merit.

I once worked for a manager who taught us, his staff, how to promote our value. I've thanked him many times for developing this competency in us. It's a skill that's lacking in many organizations and their leaders.



Let's take a look at how you can have the maximum impact and stay visible while respecting your authentic nature.

One suggestion that I saw in a recent article was to create and circulate short, fun videos about a project you or your team are involved in. A tool called LOOM (not ZOOM!) was recommended. Taking the time to be a bit creative can work wonders for promoting visibility and attention.

In addition to the music you play while tooting your own horn, take the time to sing the praises of your colleagues. Words of praise go a long way during these times when boredom, depression and loneliness may be at a dangerously high level and on the increase. Be aware of others and what they are accomplishing. Isolation during this WFH time is not your friend. Find ways to collaborate when possible.

Even though the ZOOM meetings phenomenon appears to be leading to exhaustion for many people, look for opportunities to participate in meetings where you can learn or contribute. "Seeing" you, albeit on video, adds to your visibility. Use the video option!

Be proactive with ways to reach out to colleagues. Virtual happy hours, birthday celebrations, short coffee catch-up opportunities, impromptu chats, etc. It becomes easier and easier to want to limit connect time, but know that if you give in to that temptation, you risk becoming invisible.

*Lorraine Lane  
BPW/Hernando  
Executive and Business Coach | Author |  
Speaker  
Global Business Connector Tampa Bay,  
Women Speakers Association*

*"I know that women are more inclusive than mercurial,  
more patient than impatient, more respectful than abrasive."*

*~ Christine Lagarde, President of the European Central Bank*

## New Members (August–November 2020)

### **BPW/Englewood-Venice**

Ellen Briggs  
Helena Cao  
Lisa Capell  
Stacey Chaisson  
Madeline Salerno  
Karen Udiskey  
Bianca Vales  
Laura Williamson  
Debby Wolfe  
Sharon Zitrin

### **At Large**

Shyanne Michel  
Naheelah Wallace

### **BPW/Hernando County**

Jeannie Galbo  
Kathleen Griffiths  
Samar Hennawi  
Lorraine Lane  
Christina Macri  
Olivia Miller  
Laurie Pizzo  
Spring Sommer

### **BPW/Halifax**

Fred Bergeron

### **BPW/Marathon**

Patti Childress  
Christina McIntyre

### **BPW/North Sarasota**

Melanie Lavender

### **BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas**

Brooke Fairman  
Nancy Safford Westphal

### **BPW/Upper Keys**

Trish Fedorchak  
Patricia Milian  
Brittany Parker  
Katherine Rubio  
Sally Stribling  
Jenn Weiden  
Lynda Weinstein

# REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## President-Elect

Greetings from your President-Elect! In my last update for FBW (August), I hoped that my message found each of you healthy... mentally, physically, and financially... as we all struggled to cope with what the global pandemic had brought to each of us personally and professionally. It is now three months later, and life is a new normal since COVID-19 took hold of our nation.

Our local organizations (LOs) have managed to find what works for each of them, changing from in person meetings to virtual ones via video conferencing (State has helped to keep LOs meeting by hosting meetings through its Zoom platform); to a blend of in person and video meetings based on their members' comfort level to gather in person; while some LOs have decided not to meet at all until they can meet again in person.

State has maintained its membership level, holding at or around 400 members, for as long as the Governor keeps Florida's State of Emergency Order in place and that order was renewed until January 2021 in November. BPW/FL has a Dues Relief Fund set up for any of our members who have been affected financially by COVID-19 and I encourage you to apply for these funds to renew your membership. It's as simple as downloading the form from the website, submitting to your LO President or sending directly to State President Jerri Evans. No application will be denied. Your membership is important to our organization and this fund is just one way that BPW/FL can help its members get through this difficult time.

This year is the 100th Anniversary of the right of women to vote and we continue to celebrate this centennial. Did you know that BPW/FL is more than 100 years old? Yep, we have been around for as long as women were granted the right to vote! This year we would have celebrated holding our 100th State Conference, which had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. We plan to hold our 100th in June 2021 at Saddlebrook Resort in Wesley Chapel and are hopeful that we are able to gather safely in person by then. Stay tuned for updates through BPW/FL communications and the website events page.

The input of our membership is important to what we want the organization to look like in the next 100 years. The State is looking to hold a Strategic Planning Session virtually in January, led by a professional facilitator. As I prepare to take the helm of our organization for our next fiscal year of 2021-2022, your input in the continuation of our organization is important to me. I have my pen to paper as I plan for what our organization and the leadership team will look like. If you have ideas or are interested in serving, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me and let me know. I would love to hear from you!

Finally, since this will not go to publication until after the holidays, I want to personally wish each of you and your families a healthy and happy new year. 2020 has been a most unprecedented and difficult year for many of us, but we women are strong and even **"stronger together"**. I have hope that 2021 will be a better year for all of us.

*Sheri McCandless, 2020-2021 BPW/FL President-Elect*

## Treasurer

11/25/20 - Washington – The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers of a special new provision that will allow more people to easily deduct up to \$300 in donations to qualifying charities this year. Following special tax law changes made earlier this year, cash donations of up to \$300 made before December 31, 2020, are now deductible when people file their taxes in 2021.

Under this new change, individual taxpayers can claim an "above-the-line" deduction of up to \$300 for cash donations made to a Section 501(C)(3) charity during 2020. This means the deduction lowers both adjusted gross income and taxable income – translating into tax savings for those making donations to qualifying tax-exempt organizations. Even if you do not "itemize," you still can still take this deduction. Cash donations include those made by check, credit card or debit card but not securities, household items or other property.

The IRS reminds everyone giving to charity to be sure to keep good records. By law, special recordkeeping rules ap-

ply to any taxpayer claiming a charitable contribution deduction. Usually, this includes obtaining a receipt or acknowledgement letter from the charity, before filing a return, and retaining a cancelled check or credit card receipt.

*Helen Igar, BPW/FL Treasurer*

## Council of Presidents Delegate

Happy Holidays members of BPW/FL! Despite all the uncertainty in the world, the Council of Presidents virtually met every month to learn from each other by sharing information regarding leadership, fundraising, programming, and membership retention. The goal is to inspire and support each other.

Each month, we invite a guest to the Council of Presidents' meeting to share valuable information from BPW/FL State level. We started by learning about the BPW/FL breast cancer fund from Amy Bennett. Then Tiki Bates, BPW/FL business manager and secretary, joined us. She has a wealth of information regarding membership and the organization in general as she serves on the Executive Committee. Sheila Barry-Oliver joined us in October and since she wears many hats within BPW/FL, she shared the progress of the Technology Committee and FBW. She also reminded us about the LO and member spotlights on the BPW/FL website. If you have not been spotlighted yet, please reach out to your local leadership or Sheila directly to submit your story. We love to learn about our members!

At the last Council of Presidents meeting for the year we were honored by the presentation of Mary Giddens. Mary shared a short version of the Robert Rules of Order and discussed the importance of the LO bylaws. She made this serious topic sound easy and fun. All in all, a productive few months.

If a BPW/FL member has a topic you want addressed at the next Council of Presidents, you can reach out to me directly or to your LO president. We are here to serve the membership and gladly hear what your vision for BPW/FL is.

*Ilja Chapman, BPW/FL Council of Presidents Delegate 2020-2021*  
*Ilja.bpwfl@gmail.com, 305-998-8348*

# BPW/FL COMMITTEE NEWS

## Breast Cancer Fund

Happy Holidays all. The Breast Cancer Fund has had quite a bit of activity the first half of 2020. We have disbursed \$3,750, which means we have blessed 15 breast cancer survivors. Congratulations to BPW/Hernando County on another successful breast cancer fundraiser; we deeply appreciate your generous donation of \$2,500.



It is heartwarming to receive words of thanks from a recipient and just how much the check for \$250 has meant to them. I cannot encourage each LO enough to support as well as promote the Breast Cancer Fund. If you need help finding the link on the BPW/FL website, please reach out to either myself or any state officer. I wish you all a blessed and safe holiday.

*Karen Lund*  
Breast Cancer Fund Chair

## Bylaws

Greetings, members! Your Bylaws & Handbook Committee has been at work behind the scenes to continually address the Federation's needs and changing environment. Recently, two proposed amendments to the Handbook were presented to the BPW/FL Board of Directors, which will be considered at their December meeting. One is a clarification item, and the other is to address guidelines for the use of BPW/FL technology assets by LOs. The committee is also working in conjunction with a special task force to review the BPW/FL annual awards, which we'll report on in the next issue.

Still only five LOs have sent in their updated bylaws (Englewood-Venice, Halifax, Hernando County, St. Peters-

burg-Pinellas and Upper Keys). If your LO is not among these, please do take the time to update your bylaws. We strongly encourage that you share your draft revisions with the Bylaws & Handbook Committee ahead of your membership's vote so that we can help ensure that they'll be in compliance and cover all the areas that you might need in the future. The Model LO Bylaws and submission form can be found in the Members-Only section of the state website.

We are still in need of one additional member on the state committee, which currently consists of myself as Chair, Lorraine Pollock (Member-At-Large, Orlando) and Mary Giddens (Member-At-Large, LaBelle, and BPW/FL Parliamentarian). Whether this is a skill set that you have or one that you'd like to develop, we welcome your participation! Let me know if I can answer any questions if you're interested.

*Tami Simms*  
BPW/FL Bylaws Committee Chair

## Membership

In the spring issue of FBW I asked the question, "How did we get here?" Today the world is still hurting, and we still don't know when the pain will go away. Some BPW organizations have met in person over the last few months and others have been creative with their virtual gatherings. The silver lining is that each BPW/FL member now can easily join a meeting of any BPW LO across the state. It is fun to see how other BPW organizations conduct business.

Remember that BPW/FL is offering financial assistance for those members who are financially struggling and might not be able to afford their upcoming BPW membership fee. Human connection, support and empathy are so important during these unnerving times. BPW members can and will offer each other just that. Don't let your membership lapse – take advantage of the COVID-19 emergency fund. Simply reach out to the leadership of your local BPW organization or any of the BPW/FL executive committee members.

You, the member, are an essential part of our organization. Wishing you a happy

and healthy holiday season with hope for 2021.

*Ilja Chapman*  
BPW/FL Membership Committee Chair  
305-998-8348

## Nominations

Greetings to you fabulous BPW women! Hope you are well and planning on a meaningful 2021 personally and professionally. This is the time of year we begin to make resolutions for the New Year and hopefully you will consider involvement in a new position within BPW at the State Level.

Perhaps you are already volunteering in another capacity, but would like to expand your talents in a different capacity. Opportunities available include the positions of Vice President, Secretary and Nominations Chair to be elected at the State Conference in June 2021; these are one year terms. The Education Foundation will be electing three (3) directors to complete the Board at the State Conference in June; these are two year terms. Additional information is available in the Bylaws and the Handbook for descriptions of the positions and the qualifications for these positions or feel free to contact me directly (941-416-1950 or [sydgibson10@gmail.com](mailto:sydgibson10@gmail.com)) as I would be happy to answer your questions and place your name for inclusion in the conference issue of *Florida Business Women* in the spring.

We need your involvement in BPW at the state and local levels to continue our mission to achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education and information.

*Syd Gibson*  
BPW/FL Nominations Chair

## Public Policy

First, I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on our trips to Tallahassee. The Executive Committee has made the decision to forego a trip to Tallahassee in January as we continue to be unsure of a number of different things, the first being whether or not the public will be allowed into the Capitol during Committee Days. We are continuing to monitor for Lobby Days in March, as my desire to have a

# BPW/FL COMMITTEE NEWS

charter bus pick up members throughout the state to lobby our legislative members is still strong.

I am going to guess that no matter what your party affiliation, you are glad that the election cycle of 2020 is over! It seemed to last much longer than the normal 18-month election cycle and I'm not entirely sure why it seemed so long and arduous, but it certainly did.

As all House of Representative Congressional members face an election every two years, I thought I would give a quick re-cap of the Florida elections for the House (I've only included Districts that include counties where we have a Local Organization):

- District 6, Volusia County, Michael Waltz
- District 11, Hernando County, Daniel Webster
- District 12, Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, Gus Bilirakis
- District 13, Pinellas County, Charlie Crist
- District 14, Hillsborough County, Kathy Castor
- District 15, Hillsborough County, Scott Franklin
- District 16, Hillsborough and Sarasota Counties, Vern Buchanan
- District 17, Charlotte County, Greg Steube
- District 20, Broward County, Alcee Hastings
- District 22, Broward County, Ted Deutch
- District 23, Miami-Dade County, Debbie Wasserman Schulz
- District 24, Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, Frederica Wilson
- District 26, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, Carlos Gimenez
- District 27, Miami-Dade County, Maria Elvira Salazar

There were also six Constitutional Amendments on the ballot and while Constitutional Amendments typically fare well in Florida, whether they should or not (remember the pregnant pigs . . .).

- Amendment 1 – Citizenship Requirement to Vote – Passed
- Amendment 2 – Raising Florida Minimum Wage to \$15 by 2026 – Passed

- Amendment 3 – Open Primary – Failed
- Amendment 4 – Voter Approval of Constitutional Amendments – Failed
- Amendment 5 – Limitation on Homestead Assessments (Extends Save Our Homes) – Passed
- Amendment 6 – Tax Discount for Veteran Spouse – Passed

Please don't forget to reach out to your local legislative delegation to remind them about BPW and our Public Policy Platform, which can be found on our BPW/FL website. It is important that we remind them that we are larger than our Local Organizations with a statewide membership over 350 and growing.

## Public Policy Committee

### Public Relations

It is gratifying to read the various media delivery methods used by our local organizations (LOs) to connect with their members and communities. Through online newsletters and creative email meeting notices they are reaching beyond their circle of influence.

- BPW/Englewood-Venice was featured in the local September 2020 issue of *Women in Business*. They also had a full page spread in the newspaper recognizing this LO's 60th anniversary.
- BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas had a conversation with Congressman Charlie Christ via Zoom, which was announced to members and friends via their weekly e-newsletter, on their website and on Facebook.
- BPW/Upper Keys connects with members and guests sending an e-vite for a zoom coffee chat. The coffee chats are also announced on their website and on Facebook.
- BPW/Gold Coast and a local live theatre are requesting patrons attending the December performances to donate personal care items collection for the local domestic abuse shelter.
- BPW/Hernando's creative wine tasting created a buzz (pun intended). The event was published on Facebook.

Please include LO presidents, BPW/FL committee chairs and BPW/FL executive officers on your distribution lists. It

is easier than ever to attend meetings and events around the state – we all are as close as our computer or mobile device. We can also add your events to the BPW/FL calendar. Copying ideas and formats is a sincere form of recognition of your know-how.

*Sue Banks*  
BPW/FL Public Relations Chair  
Sue.bpw.pr@gmail.com

### Technology

Technology has become an increasing aspect of our day to day lives since the beginning of the corona virus pandemic. The Technology Committee evaluated software products to support both meetings and webinars and chose Zoom. This is also the software that most LOs are using. If your LO does not have Zoom, you can use the state license. Just contact me at sbo.bpw@gmail.com and I will set it up for you.

We have continued with the monthly LO Spotlight and the weekly Member Spotlight on the BPW/FL website home page. This provides both members and non-members alike the opportunity to get to know us better. We are looking for members who wish to be spotlighted; just email me if you wish to do so.

We have been more proactive in the use of social media. It would be great if you would like, follow, and/or share BPW/FL as the case may be. The more exposure we have, the stronger we are.

In response to the summer member survey, we are very excited to announce a series of four monthly technology webinars, on the fourth Thursday of the month, starting in January. They will be held from 12 noon-1 pm. Look for an announcement once we have the registration set up. The webinars will be recorded and available after the fact in the member-only section of the website.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions related to technology (or would like to join the committee), please reach out to me at sbo.bpw@gmail.com.

*Sheila Barry-Oliver*  
BPW/FL Technology Committee Chair

*(Continued on page 16)*

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while penalizing those who are more apt and willing to engage in it (i.e., women, women of color, racial minorities) is a racist and sexist practice. Further, penalizing those who want to do DEI work (and telling them not to do it or not rewarding them for doing it) while incentivizing and rewarding those who need to be convinced to do it is discriminatory.

To mitigate these issues and to help leaders who are serious about doing DEI work learn how to treat it as merit-worthy, I offer a “MERIT” framework for valuing DEI work, which accounts for both the objective and subjective notions of merit.

**M: Make DEI goals and work actionable, measurable, and evidence-based.**

A common defense against doing DEI work is that it is abstract or not practical. When it comes to race, an oft-heard defense is that we should all be “colorblind.” To chip away at these defenses, leaders need to make sure that their organization’s DEI goals are concrete and measurable. This also means that the DEI work that people are expected to do should be actionable so that it seems do-able for all. Regarding race work, specifically, leaders should provide evidence revealing the costs of racial colorblindness, which may contradict long-held beliefs about race that may be impeding leaders from progressing a DEI change agenda focused on improving racial equity and inclusion.

**E: Elevate DEI work internally and externally.**

To marginalize someone or something means “to relegate to an unimportant or

powerless position within a society or group.” In comparison, to elevate someone or something means to “raise in rank or status.” To elevate DEI work and race work specifically, the CEO should spearhead these efforts. Assuming this responsibility, the CEO should not only provide an appropriate budget and level of resources to address DEI issues and opportunities, but should also increase the visibility of this work and the people who will be needed to execute it. To accomplish the latter will require greater internal and external transparency. One option is for the CEO to commission an annual DEI report that shares the DEI work that the organization has been doing and any progress it has made toward meeting its goals.

**R: Require leaders and managers to participate in behavior-based DEI trainings.**

Yes, diversity training can work. However, it cannot be only oriented toward increasing awareness or changing attitudes. It must also be behavior-based. DEI work is not intuitive. People need to be taught how to engage in the types of behaviors that organizations would like to see. To show that DEI is valued work, CEOs should require leaders and managers to attend trainings that are focused on improving their DEI work-related skills.

**I: Identify leaders and non-managerial employees willing to serve as DEI sponsors.**

CEOs and DEI experts should not be the only leaders speaking up in support of the organization’s DEI goals and work. A long-standing practice in companies experienced in DEI work has been to appoint executive sponsors or “champions” to DEI initiatives. Yet, today, many newer and younger employ-

ees are passionate about DEI work and are looking for opportunities to help their companies. One option would be to create DEI sponsor roles for non-managerial employees who can work with the DEI team and their managers to implement DEI goals and work in their teams. However, they should be rewarded for doing this work (see “T” below).

**T: Treat DEI work as core rather than peripheral work.**

In order to improve DEI and eradicate systemic racism, all need to shift their mindsets and their practices from treating DEI as an unrewarded “side hustle” (i.e., peripheral work) to treating it as merit-worthy work (i.e., core work). To accomplish this, DEI experts need to have titles (e.g., Chief Diversity Officer) and reporting relationships (e.g., report to the CEO) that match the importance of their work. Leaders, managers, and employees who have traditionally treated DEI work as “extra” work need to be evaluated based on their performance of this work if it is to be taken seriously. One option is for leaders to include DEI work as a section in actual performance evaluations since these tools are often used as the basis for determining other rewards, including pay, promotion, and bonuses.

Yes — everyone needs to [take actions](#) to address systemic racism and DEI. But leaders — including the CEO — need to treat the actions being taken as MERIT-worthy in order to ensure that DEI initiatives and efforts to eradicate systemic racism are sustainable far beyond the ebbs and flows of the current news cycle.

<https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/elevate-diversity-equity-inclusion-work-organization/>



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# STAY CREATIVE IF LIFE FEELS MONOTONOUS

Over the last seven months, as the Covid-19 virus has continued its spread, our worlds have become smaller. Working from home has morphed from a novelty to the mundane. Travel for business or pleasure, once routine, has become nonexistent. Seeing friends, going to our favorite restaurants, visiting family — the list of things we can't do, and won't be able to for months to come, is endless.

The sameness and lack of novelty in our Covid existence can negatively impact our creativity — our ability to put ideas together in new, useful combinations to solve problems. Creativity is often enhanced when we're exposed to new situations. For example, in one experiment using virtual reality, researchers divided participants into three groups. The first group was exposed to a wild simulation that defied the laws of physics: They walked around in a room where objects fell up rather than down or got smaller as they approached them. The second group was placed in a similar simulation, but the objects behaved normally. And the third group of participants watched a film clip of the first group's simulation. Participants in the first group showed an increase in cognitive flexibility, an essential part of creativity, while the others did not.

While most of us aren't regularly exposed to virtual reality, we routinely encountered novel situations before Covid. Even activities as mundane as taking a new route to work because of a construction detour or having a serendipitous hallway conversation with a colleague can help increase our cognitive flexibility. We're also under a tremendous amount of stress right now — from worries about our job security to the health of our loved ones to our children's education. Research on decision-making shows that our brains are wired to be more reactionary under stress, and this can take a toll on creativity. In our decision-making, for example, we're likely to limit our thinking to binary choices.

With the pandemic keeping us in our limited and stressful worlds for the foreseeable future, do we have to resign ourselves to an increasing lack of creativity in our work and lives? Not necessarily, according to leadership and crea-

tivity experts, as long as we know what steps to take. Here are five research-backed strategies to widen your world view and enhance your creativity.

## **Harness your negative emotions.**

A growing number of psychologists and brain scientists are amassing evidence that negative emotions can be a vital component of our emotional tool kit. Anger, in particular, can be a motivating force, focusing our minds and moods in productive ways and fueling us to achieve our goals. When people perceive they have the ability to improve things, pessimistic moods can activate the reward center in the brain.

In my executive coaching practice, I've seen firsthand how the anger and frustration my clients are feeling over the pandemic and other societal ills is fueling decisions to step away from large salaries into more creative endeavors.

For example, one of my clients, Dr. Susan Abookire, was a chief medical officer of a hospital earning a handsome salary. She recently left her role to create a new physician-training program with an innovative curriculum promoting the interconnectedness of nature and medicine as a strategy for improving public health — a radical departure from traditional physician training. "I believe the pandemic has supported my creativity by eliminating distractions that diverted my focus, often in a chaotic and draining way," Susan says. "Imagination is allowed to come forth when we dedicate uninterrupted time to what we hope to create."

## **Engage in an expressive outlet.**

Studies have shown that expressing yourself through art can help manage stress and anxiety, and even improve health.

Before Covid hit, another one of my clients — a C-suite leader of a health-care nonprofit whom I'll call Julia — decided to enroll in an improvisational acting class to help her manage stress. After Covid hit, Julia was thrust unexpectedly into the role of interim CEO, and in that role she has found that her improv classes, which she continues to attend remotely, have helped her come

up with creative solutions to unexpected problems. For example, improv has helped her learn how to tune into non-verbal signals — not just words but subtext and intent. Another client decided to learn the ukulele with the extra time she gained by not commuting. That decision has helped her tap into a new community of learners, lessening her isolation and opening her up to new and novel experiences.

## **Get into a flow state.**

Have you ever been so completely immersed in an activity that you lost all sense of time? You may have been experiencing a mental state known as "flow," which the psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, defines as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake."

Research done by the Harvard professor Teresa Amabile shows that people who experience flow report higher levels of creativity, productivity, and happiness. Amabile discovered that not only are people more creative in flow, they also report having more creative days — suggesting that flow doesn't just heighten creativity in the moment, it heightens it over the long haul. In other words, being in flow trains us to be more creative.

You can cultivate a [flow state](#) without intentionally trying to be creative. Think about the moments when you're most likely to lose track of time: What are you doing in these moments? Is it going for a run? Reading a good book? One option, recommended by Giorgia Lupi in her book OBSERVE, COLLECT, DRAW!, is to create a personal documentary by drawing the minutiae in your everyday life.

## **Broaden your network.**

Research shows that diverse networks enhance creativity and that knowledge diversity positively correlates with individual creativity. In the 1970s and 1980s, knowledge creation was considered an activity based on our ability to process data and information. However, current science understands it as a social process enhanced by interactions with people of different backgrounds

*(Continued on page 16)*

# LOCAL ORGANIZATION

## BPW/Calusa

Hello my fellow BPW sisters. Well it has certainly been an interesting year to say the least. BPW/Calusa hopes that you have all been well and not too stressed. BPW/Calusa has been rather quiet since April; we decided to get moving in January if permitted to do so. I guess like a lot of you, promotions, fundraising and other functions were put on hold as well, which was a pity as we are an organization of giving along with being a business organization.

BPW/Calusa has survived though with all but two members rejoining so far, so we hope that next year will bring the fruits back. We did a little zooming but that did not really work for us; we tried to meet in person and that did not work, so it has been a fairly lonely time for us all.

Kudos to Ilja Chapman in her role as Council of Presidents Delegate; she is lively and I love the meetings. At the time of writing this, I went to Aruba for Thanksgiving with friends and we are still here one week later. Our flights were cancelled and the only flights then over the next couple of days were over 20 hours long. Oh my, I can fly back to Aussie in that time, so we elected to get the next flight out, which is Saturday. Not a bad place to be marooned BUT!!!

Our large fundraising event set down for March 2021 has been put off until October due to Covid-19. In March things may be back to some sort of new normal, but financially we thought it unfair to expect people to put their hands in their pockets.

Also, as I am on the Conference committee with Sheri McCandless, we can report that the conference is moving along and we will have more information shortly.

BPW/Calusa and I wish everyone a joyous Christmas and may 2021 be a much better, healthier and prosperous year.

## BPW/Englewood-Venice

BPW/Englewood-Venice celebrated its 60th anniversary on October 16, 2020, at the newly opened wine bar Rumours in Englewood's Lemon Bay Shopping Cen-

ter. This celebration was held in conjunction with the BPW/EV Annual Wine Tasting fundraiser to support the Adult Learner Scholarships and to benefit BPW/EV. Founded in 1960 and called Englewood BPW at the time, the members of this new organization dedicated endless hours and efforts to support civic projects in this area. The first project they adopted was granting scholarship loans, available to women regardless of age, according to her particular need.

In the early 1960s, the group launched many important projects that today still benefit this community, including working on the founding of a new library, establishing a community-wide sewage system, discussing an Englewood school system, appealing to the state of Florida for a stoplight at Dearborn and State Route 776, and supporting the Loveland Center. In 1962, Josephine Cortes, founder of the Pioneer Days, became the group's first "Woman of the Year". Pioneer Days is a huge event now with a grand parade attended by people from local and distant communities.

In the 1970s, BPW strongly lobbied for a high school in Englewood, which became a reality in 1979. In 1977-78, BPW contributed funds to establish a Manatee Community College branch in Venice, which evolved into the State College of Florida, Venice Branch. In 1982, when Betty Swanson was president, BPW/Englewood had 173 members. In 1995, the Money for Mammograms, now Dollars for Mammograms (DFM), was established by former BPW president Pat Newton and president Jan Birch, thanks to an endowment from a man whose wife had died of breast cancer. Today, DFM serves uninsured women in Sarasota and Charlotte Counties. Rita Bertler is the current president of DFM, Inc.

In the mid-2000s, Englewood BPW became BPW/Englewood-Venice. A new website was created and the newsletter was published electronically, all thanks to the help of former BPW/EV president Bobbie Marquis.

BPW/EV continues holding the Annual Wine Tasting. A "Women's Individual Development Workshop" was held on December 5 with interesting speakers on the program such as Dr. Karen Helmick, Cynthia Fredricks, M.K. Muller, Mark

Rizzo, Mr. Mechling and Dr. Christopher Cortman. The topics included Cosmetic Options for Women, Managing a Very Busy Life, Spiritual Health, How to Stay Safe Online, Secrets of Aging with Good Health and Dealing with Personal Challenges. On December 18 the BPW/EV members will be holding their 2nd Annual "Adopt a Senior" gift exchange and cocktail party at the Venice Senior Friendship Center. This event brings joy and sometimes tears to the seniors who often don't receive gifts or cards from anybody.



BPW/EV's Women Helping Women (WHW) project is also in full swing. Each year BPW/EV adopts the children of three single women in the Venice/Englewood area and buys the clothes and shoes that these children need as well as one much desired toy. The Venice Salvation Army provides the names of the children and their respective sizes for clothes and shoes. The money used for WHW is always collected at the October and November BPW/EV meetings. Several members do the shopping and return everything unwrapped to the Salvation Army for distribution to the selected families. WHW is a project that BPW/EV adopted many years ago.

President Morina Chmielak was honored at the October meeting as the 2020 Woman of the Year. She is the perfect example of what can happen when one person is inspiring, organized, helpful, always there, motivating, kindhearted, supportive, and truly a nice person! Congratulations Morina!

## BPW/Gold Coast

Never count BPW/Gold Coast out! We continue to remain connected to each other and our mission of women helping women by holding and hosting virtual meetings. We partnered with BPW/Upper Keys in August and in October. In December we are partnering with Palm

# (LO) NEWS

Beach Institute for the Entertainment Arts performances of an abridged version of the Tony nominated play *Good People*. Patrons will demonstrate good people doing good by donating personal care items for Harmony House, Palm Beach County YWCA's shelter for abused women.

In August, we used our monthly virtual meeting slot to approve our budget and prepare for the celebration of Women's Equality Day on August 26. We invited PSP/PNP Nancy Hurlbert as the featured speaker and the format then had breakout discussion rooms. This was such a great opportunity for Gold Coast to work with a technologically advanced LO and connect with members around our state.

We used our September virtual meeting to discuss how we could use what we learned from the joint August 26th 'event'. We began to look forward by planning an in person event possibly for May to support our BPW/FL Breast Cancer fund, conditions permitting.

Our October meeting was open to members and guests - it was a presentation and discussion of the proposed amendments to the Florida constitution appearing on the November ballot. Using the research and summary of these amendments prepared by the Florida League of Women Voters, we were able to dig deeper into the meaning and impact of the various amendments. Shortly after the virtual presentation, one member was able to share this information with another voter while waiting in line to vote early in person. She overheard another voter expressing dismay over the amendments - apparently, this voter was reviewing the ballot for the first time. Our member was able to explain in a non-partisan way how to decipher the impact of both a yes and no vote.

The virus moved our annual support of the Back to Basics Angel program from December to November. We shopped and wrapped specific gifts of the basics of sneakers, underwear and socks needed by a child to continue to attend school. 'Mrs. Claus' list of children in need provided by our public schools expanded to over 8,000 children. At our November virtual meeting, we "talked

turkey" sharing plans for Thanksgiving version 2020.

## BPW/Hernando

In the last few months of a challenging year, BPW/Hernando has continued to provide education advocacy and information to our county. Due to the health crisis going on during these months, we adjusted our meetings to meet the needs and safety of all our members. In September we held our candidates forum. This year the candidates forum was a little bit different from years past, instead of opening it up to the community at large, we kept the RSVPs to a minimum while live streaming the event in order to provide information to not just our members but our community as a whole. October saw the annual BPW/Hernando Breast Cancer fundraiser. This fundraiser was sponsored by Bonefish in the Julian Institute; during the event we were able to raise funds to provide a check to the state fund for \$2500. November is BPW Hernando's field trip month, where our members have the opportunity to support female owned businesses in the local community. This year's host for the event was traveling art parties, where members were able to create a beautiful Thanksgiving centerpiece of a painted wine bottle.



December will be an annual holiday dinner, where members will be celebrating together in order to share positive memories of the years past, as well looking forward to a new year of 2021.

## BPW/Marathon

After many months of meeting via Zoom, BPW/Marathon held a membership meeting at the Key Colony Inn in September. It was a much-needed reunion with 13 members in attendance. The restaurant ensured all safety precautions were followed.

We have continued to hold our monthly meetings at the Key Colony Inn. At our October meeting, we inducted new member Patti Childress and welcomed returning member Kiki McIntyre. We also awarded well-deserved Woman of the Year honors to Jeanine D'Amico and Mallory Pinto. During October, the Club participated in the Drive Strides event for the American Cancer Society. And we distributed candy at the Zonta Halloween Drive-Thru, held at Marathon Community Park.

At our November meeting, we recognized Blair Shiver, owner of Food for Thought in Marathon, as our Employer of the Year. Blair spoke about female entrepreneurship and the challenges and rewards of owning a small business.

With the cancellation of our Taste of the Islands event due to the pandemic, we have been scrambling to find new avenues for fundraising. Our member Lisa Wojciechowski is a Consultant for Thirty-One Gifts. She came to the rescue with a Thirty-One fundraiser where she generously donated 100% of her commission from all sales, resulting in over \$400 going directly to our Stacie Kidwell Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Additionally, we held our third annual Sip and Shop evening on November 12 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Marathon. Originally designed as a membership drive, this event was converted to a fundraiser this year. Thanks to some 25 vendors and a couple hundred attendees, we added nearly \$2,000 to our scholarship fund.

Because of the uptick in COVID cases in Monroe County, our Board made the difficult decision to cancel our Holiday Party. This annual event, with our spirited white elephant gift exchange, is a favorite among members, and we will surely miss each other's company this year. However, we were pleased to participate once again in the Zonta Festival



*(Continued on page 15)*

# HOW TO THRIVE WHEN EVERYTHING FEELS TERRIBLE

By Christine Porath and Mike Porath

We're surrounded by negativity everywhere we turn. The news we read, social media we peruse, and conversations we have and overhear. We absorb stress from our family, friends, and coworkers. And, it's taking a toll.

The Mighty, a community platform (founded by Mike) that provides health information and brings people together around specific health issues, has surveyed more than 70,000 readers and community members since March around their awareness, perceptions, and experience with the coronavirus crisis. In September, respondents reported their top three emotions were frustration, worry, and anger. The number of respondents choosing anger as one of their top emotions has more than doubled since March — rising from 20% then to 45% in September.

Negativity can have toxic effects. In fact, Christine's research has shown over and over that we falter when exposed to negativity or rudeness. Witnessing rudeness interferes with our working memory and decreases our performance. Mere exposure to rude words reduces our ability to process and recall information. We tend to shut down, stop communicating, and cease being helpful to others. Dysfunctional and aggressive thoughts (and sometimes actions) skyrocket. Fortunately, Christine's research also shows that there is a productive way to counter those effects. It's called thriving — the psychological state in which people experience a sense of both vitality and learning. Thriving individuals are growing, developing, and energized rather than feeling stagnated or depleted.

In studies conducted across a range of industries, Christine has found that people who experience a state of thriving are healthier, more resilient, and more able to focus on their work. When people feel even an inkling of thriving, it tends to buffer them from distractions, stress, and negativity. In a study of six organizations across six different industries, employees characterized as highly thriving demonstrated 1.2 times less burnout compared with their peers. They were also 52% more confident in themselves and their ability to take control of a situation. They were far less likely to have negativity drag them into distraction or self-doubt.

So how do you increase your thriving especially when it feels like you're drowning in negativity? Our research points to some tactics.

**Avoid negativity.** Pay attention to what you're ingesting: what information you chose to read, the media you consume, the music you listen to, the people you choose to spend time with, and the people you look up to. Negativity seeps into our pores through these sources. So make simple choices away from negativity and toward positivity.

**Watch out for what you say out loud.** Negative language is particularly insidious and potent. Be mindful of what you're thinking and saying. Yes, those around you influence you and your mood, but we have more control over our thoughts and feelings than anyone else. And what we say out loud also carries significant weight. According to Trevor Moawad, a mental conditioning coach who works primarily with elite athletes, it's ten times more damaging to our sense of thriving if we verbalize a thought than if we just think it. So, think twice about how you're framing and speaking about a situation. Instead of saying, "This is the worst I've ever seen," or "It's catastrophic," (or "devastating" or "terrible"), tweak your language to be more neutral. You might say, "This situation is challenging," which recognizes the opportunity for growth or learning. You can — and should — acknowledge the truth, while minimizing its power to drag you down.

**Adopt a neutral mindset.** Negative thoughts and worries take us off track. We're more likely to struggle on basic tasks. Long term, repetitive negative thinking is associated with cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. It also hurts others because they are then exposed to our negativity. Of course, it's all too easy to dwell on toxic people or situations. We might play the blame game, ruminate, or overanalyze the situation. It's far better to adopt a proactive mindset, focusing on what we can control and what we should do next. Moawad suggests using neutral thinking — a non-judgmental, nonreactive way of assessing problems and analyzing crises. This includes staying in the moment, reacting to each moment as it unfolds, and keeping

your focus on how you can influence your next action. Don't get sucked into analyzing past failures or hijacked by future fears or thoughts. Take one play at a time.

**Practice gratitude consistently.** There is lots to be said about the benefits of gratitude. Gratitude reduces our stress, makes us happier, and helps us reach our goals. Routinely feeling grateful increases the social support we receive, which further reduces stress and its negative effects. It's especially powerful when practiced alongside neutral thinking. Seattle Seahawk quarterback and Super Bowl winner Russell Wilson has talked about how he has used this combination to navigate the death of his father, a gut-wrenching Super Bowl loss, the impact of Covid on his life and profession, and other challenges. Wilson says that with an "attitude of gratitude" you can be thankful for a challenge, and get through it. His advice spurred our family to think about some of the positives that the pandemic brought. For example, like many families, we started a weekly Zoom meeting, uniting family members spread across the globe that hadn't been in regular touch previously.

**Take care by managing your energy.** You can also increase your resilience in the face of negativity and encourage thriving by exercising, eating well, and getting enough sleep — all things we know we're supposed to do but we often fail to when we're bombarded with negativity. When we exercise, our muscles pump "hope molecules" into our bodily systems that are good for our mental and physical health. You can amplify these effects by exercising outside, with others, or to music. Healthy eating also helps you stave off negativity. How well do you respond to frustration when you're hungry? We lack the self-control required to respond patiently. Sleep is also important. A lack of it impairs self-regulation and self-control, which can produce more negativity. Research has linked poor sleep to frustration, impatience, hostility, anxiety, low levels of joviality, lower levels of trust, workplace deviance, and unethical behavior. Sleep deprivation also hurts the relationship between leaders and their followers, and diminishes how much help people provide to others.

*(Continued on page 16)*

## LO NEWS *(Continued from page 13)*

of Trees with our contribution of a “Memories of Marathon” themed tree. The Festival is key to Zonta’s fundraising efforts, and we wish them great success.

BPW/Marathon is having a baby boom! Within the past year, Kacey Hunt delivered baby boy Hamill and Chelsea Young brought baby girl Sophie into the world. We currently have four mamas-to-be! Stephanie Zajac and Jeanine D’Amico are expecting this month, Kristin Carlson is due in January, and Kayla D’Ascanio is due in May.

Finally, we were saddened by the sudden passing of Sally Ballinger on Thanksgiving. A member of BPW/Marathon since 2017, Sally had a storied career with many entrepreneurial successes. She called herself, “Marathon’s hooker,” because her most recent project was as a teacher of the fine art of rug-hooking. We will post a full memorial for Sally once it has been prepared by her family.

### **BPW/North Sarasota**

BPW/North Sarasota did not allow COVID-19 to interfere with our programs and activities this year. After meeting virtually for a while, we decided to meet in person at a local church, which allowed us to practice social distancing with only two per table.

The program at our September meeting was presented by Theresa Chestnut, a credit consultant with her own company. Ms. Chestnut is a licensed real estate sales association with three years of experience in real estate business. Her topic was “Credit Talk!” She shared information on the home buying process, how to get qualified, financing, credit scores and much more. We had a new member join at this meeting, Melanie Lavender.



Our October meeting focused on the importance of registering to vote and then going to the polls to exercise your right to vote. Our speaker was Delores “Dee” McFarland, an at-large member and vice chair of the Democratic Black Caucus. Ms. McFarland informed us of the “Black Agenda Think Tank” and its five initiatives: law enforcement, politics, education, the census and economic empowerment.

In November, our issues management was on COVID-19 and mental health. We learned that the coronavirus pandemic may be stressful for people and fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. However, these actions are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Our guest speaker was Eric Reaves, MSW, with Manatee Associates of Counseling and Assessments. Mr. Reaves talked about the wide range of challenges and struggles in our personal and professional relationships and reminded us of the great joy and satisfaction and fulfillment from those relationships. Manatee Associates of Counseling and Assessments offers effective counseling, therapy and support services to help restore balance and improve quality of life.

We are happy to announce that one of our members, Cynthia Howard, was recently appointed to the board of BPW/FL Education Foundation. Congratulations Cynthia!

We are looking forward to the holidays – even though they make look different this year. Happy holidays to all and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year!

### **BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas**

What a year it has been. BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas has met the challenges this year has brought with innovation and patience. In addition to the fabulous speakers we’ve had at our luncheons, which are held in person and via Zoom, we’ve also had a number of successful Zoom events this fall. Our first was in September with a virtual happy hour,

then in October we celebrated National Business Women’s Week with a virtual bingo game that showcased women who have shattered the glass ceiling from all walks of life. We also had the opportunity to speak virtually with Congressman Charlie Christ and ask him questions about his work in DC and the COVID virus.



In November we held our first ever virtual cooking class fundraiser with Wendy Wesley, a former member who graciously gave her time to us to teach us how to make healthy stuffed mushrooms. It was a huge success and participants received an apron with the BPW logo!

We plan on hitting the ground running in 2021 with more virtual fundraising events and hopefully, we’ll be able to plan some in-person events soon, too!

### **BPW/Upper Keys**

BPW/Upper Keys continues to conduct business virtually. Our board is meeting monthly via Zoom, as are most of the committees. All our events are still virtual, but we are proud to say that they are continuing to be well attended, attracting guests and even new members! We have added seven new members since August!

August was a busy month! We held our traditional “Meet the Primary Candidates” Political Mixer - virtually. We also broadcasted the event live on Facebook. In August, we also hosted our very first ever Coffee Hour, themed “Tell Me Something Good.” There was a professional development workshop about Social Media and Creating a Supportive Business Community Online. And, we co-hosted a happy hour with BPW/Gold Coast celebrating 100 Years of Women and the Vote and invited all the BPW/FL LOs to attend.

September was also full of virtual

*(Continued on page 16)*

events. We hosted a virtual luncheon with the first female School Superintendent of the county as our speaker. It was very timely in early September as decisions were being made about going back to school. On the 17th, we co-hosted a Constitution Day virtual event with the Upper Keys League of Women Voters, which was also broadcast live on Facebook. We ended the month with another professional development webinar from Marine Lab about the Secret World of the Mangroves, and another Coffee Hour.

In October we continued our tradition of hosting a Political Forum in an election year. We have a reputation for asking



the “tough questions.” The virtual event was well attended and we had all the candidates participating. During that event, we awarded our Woman and Business of the Year and announced two scholarship recipients. We ended the month with another virtual Coffee Hour. And in November we held another virtual luncheon.

**Tribute**

I am happy to Chair the 2020-2021 Tribute Committee. This committee was established to keep the members informed of BPW members that we have lost during the year with a tribute table at State Conference.

During the course of the year if you need to report to me, send your information to [joan-norrbpw@gmail.com](mailto:joan-norrbpw@gmail.com). I would like to receive a bio of your former member and a picture in jpg format. You can also contact me at 305-393-1863.

*Jo Ann Orr, BPW/FL Tribute Chair*

**CREATIVITY** (Continued from page 11)

and insights.

Even though most of us aren’t traveling or attending in-person events right now, we can still network virtually. You can host your own event. For example, I helped form and belong to a Mastermind group of women entrepreneurs that meets bi-weekly on Zoom. We come together as business owners with complementary skills who want feedback from smart, motivated individuals about how to take our businesses to the next level. In addition to talking about business, we have participated in an art and renewal session to revitalize our spirits and have shared a fun online puzzle-break experience.

**Spend time in nature.**

A psychological study that looked at the impact of nature on creativity found that

spending quality time outside improves people’s creative potential. Fifty-six people who went on a hiking trip took an assessment that measured creative potential using word associations. Twenty-four took the test before they began the trip, and the other 32 took it on the fourth day. Those in the latter group performed much better. Researchers ultimately found that spending time in nature improved creativity test scores by 50 percent.

Susan, the chief medical officer turned physician-trainer, used her certification as a forest therapy guide to teach young doctors about systems and leadership. This project engaged her creativity at the same time. “This pandemic has given me more quiet space to focus and persist on creative endeavors,” she said.

All of the above strategies are an excellent place to start if you’re hoping to spark some new ideas “Our creativity

will wane,” the creativity expert David Burkus counsels, “unless we make conscious efforts to counter the narrowing and anxiety of our current situation.” That’s good advice. Your creativity shouldn’t be something you forfeit at a time when you need it most.

*[Susan Peppercorn](#) is an executive career transition coach and speaker. She is the author of [Ditch Your Inner Critic at Work: Evidence-Based Strategies to Thrive in Your Career](#). Numerous publications including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, the Boston Globe, and SELF Magazine have tapped her for career advice. You can download her free [Career Fit Self-Assessment](#) and [25 Steps to a Successful Career Transition](#).*

<https://hbr.org/2020/11/how-to-stay-creative-when-life-feels-monotonous>

**THRIVE** (Continued from page 14)

**Seek out positive relationships — inside and outside of work.** Christine’s research found that de-energizing relationships — in which one person possesses an enduring, recurring set of negative judgments, feelings, and intentions toward another person — have four to seven times greater impact on an employee’s sense of thriving than energizing, positive relationships. To offset these effects, surround yourself and spend more time with

energizers — the people in your life who make you smile and laugh, and lift your spirits.

You may not be able to stop the flow of negativity in your life, especially right now, but you can resist its toxic effects by making smart choices about who and what you surround yourself with, the mindset you adapt, and the information you consume. Not only will you be better off because of these choices — those around you will too.

***Christine Porath** is a professor of management at Georgetown University and the author of [Mastering Civility: A Manifesto for the Workplace](#).*

***Mike Porath** is the founder and CEO of [The Mighty](#), the world’s largest health community. Previously he was a journalist for ABC News, NBC News, and [The New York Times](#).*

<https://hbr.org/2020/10/how-to-thrive-when-everything-feels-terrible>

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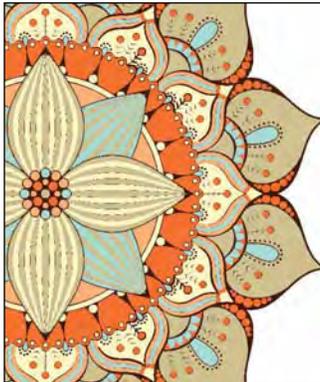
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To see a map of where all the BPW/FL local organizations are and to learn about their meeting dates/times/locations, visit <https://www.bpwfl.org/membership/local-organizations/>.



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# THE IMPORTANCE OF BPW

BPW was founded on July 15, 1919. Throughout the years, three major issues shaped BPW's legislative agenda: the elimination of sex discrimination in employment, the principle of equal pay for equal work, and the need for a comprehensive equal rights movement.

BPW's goal and mission: To achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education, and information; and to continue to be the leading nonpartisan, grassroots advocate for working women, are STILL particularly important and needed now.

BPW membership is open to both women and men although our mission statement reflects our commitment to women's issues. BPW's commitment to America's workingwomen is reflected in our different events, programs and work that benefit local communities, aid in the personal and professional development of women, and raise awareness of issues affecting working women among business leaders and legislators.

BPW members from every job skill and classification seek to advance their career goals, earn higher salaries, build stronger businesses, achieve pay equity and equal opportunities, and establish rewarding careers.

## Some History

While wage discrimination has existed since women and minorities first entered the paid workforce, its prevalence was not felt until the massive influx of women sought work during WWII. Following the war, the Women's Pay Act of 1945, the first ever legislation to require equal pay, was introduced in the U.S. Congress. President Kennedy recognized BPW's leading role in securing passage of the Equal Pay Act by giving BPW's National President the first pen he used when signing the Act into law.

The first National Legislative Conference, held in 1963 in Washington, D.C., later developed into Policy and Action conferences, where members lobbied Congress. Legislative strategies were

developed and the BPW PAC was formed in 1979. BPW lobbied Congress for nearly a decade until it saw the passing of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 1993.

The BPW Foundation was the first foundation dedicated to conducting research and providing information solely about working women. A valuable benefit of BPW membership is the opportunity to exchange ideas, build friendships and business leads, find field peers, or learn how to be more active politically at events, meetings, and conferences.

BPW connections have proven invaluable for members to develop better leadership, communication, and networking skills and further personal, professional, and community growth and change.

BPW's objectives are as relevant today as when BPW was founded.

*Vicki Faulkner, BPW/FL Leadership Committee Chair*

## This little piggy (bank)... helps women obtain higher education.

Since 1965, the BPW/FL Education Foundation has helped women attend colleges and universities by defraying the costs of housing, first through brick and mortar housing on campuses and now also through housing scholarships. We need YOUR help to keep the legacy going forward for generations of Florida women to come!



BPW/FL  
Education  
Foundation

[www.EducationFoundationBPWFL.org](http://www.EducationFoundationBPWFL.org)

"Like" us: [www.Facebook.com/BPWFLedFdn](https://www.facebook.com/BPWFLedFdn)



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# NEWS FROM THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*The Education Foundation of the Florida Foundation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. (aka EFFFBPWC, Inc. and/or the BPW/FL Education Foundation), a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization, was established in 1965 by the members of BPW/FL. Its purpose is to provide housing opportunities for female college students at state college and university campuses across the state of Florida.*



**BPW/FL  
Education  
Foundation**

Greetings, BPW/FL members!

It's hard to believe that we're at the end of 2020. What a shift we've all had to make! Your board of directors has continued to meet virtually, and we've had a few changes in the roster. Karen Lund (BPW/Hernando County) has been appointed Vice President and Cynthia Howard (BPW/North Sarasota) has been appointed to the vacant director position – thanks to both of them for stepping up!

## Scholarship House News

Our two brick-and-mortar Scholarship Houses have been managing quite well with changes in their normal house activities. We sent goody bags to both houses to welcome them back for the fall semester and are already making plans for the spring semester, which will see new residents in both houses. We also received a donation, which will allow us to supplement their COVID supplies like hand sanitizer, antibacterial wipes and disposable masks.



At the Tallahassee BPW House, our resident liaison is now Shyanne Michel, a second year FSU student majoring in

Psychology and Social Work. Shyanne has now lived in the BPW House for three semesters. Our liaison at the FAU BPW House, Naheela Wallace, will be focusing on the completion of her stud-



ies in the spring, so we'll have a new liaison to welcome there in January.

## Mentoring Opportunities

At long last, we have completed the work to set up our program to pair BPW members as mentors with the residents of the Scholarship Houses. Visit the web site at <https://www.bpwfl.org/mentoring-program/> to find out more and to sign up! Even between semesters, the young ladies welcome your support to help them navigate their studies and plan for their futures.

## Direct Scholarships

In addition to the Houses, we continue to fund scholarships for two other educational institutions. In conjunction with the Florida Nurses Association, we awarded a scholarship to a female nursing student at the University of North Florida. At St. Petersburg College, we

provide three scholarships per semester to women furthering their education. The selection committee just recommended three applicants for Spring 2021 awards of \$3,000 each. There is no campus housing for SPC, so these monies help them offset their expenses in amounts that would equal what they'd pay for market rent in the area.

## Fundraising – Masks & T-Shirts

In collaboration with BPW/FL and the funds made available through the Jackie Fleener Fund, we have customized BPW/FL masks in blue and black available for purchase now, \$6 each or two for \$10. We've also designed a great t-shirt promoting the Education Foundation that can be pre-ordered in a variety of sizes for \$15 each (slight upcharge for XXL and 2X sizes). As all of our LO fundraising activities have been impacted by the pandemic, as well as our usual State Conference fundraising, this is a great way to support the Foundation and "show your colors." Watch the website for these items.

We hope that you all will continue to support the Education Foundation at the local level. Make sure that others know how significant the impact is on women throughout the state pursuing higher education. As all of you are members of the Education Foundation, you all should be proud of the work that we accomplish together!

\*\*\*\*\*

Tami Simms, President  
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P.S. If you're on social media, please "like" our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/BPWFLedFdn](http://www.facebook.com/BPWFLedFdn)



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### **BPW/Florida's Mission**

*To achieve equity for all women in the workplace  
through advocacy, education and information.*



### **BPW Foundation's Mission**

*To empower working women to achieve their full potential  
and to partner with employers to build successful workplaces  
through education, research, knowledge and policy.*