



Business and  
Professional  
Women / St. Petersburg-  
Pinellas

**2022-2023 Educational Programing  
Award Submission**

## **BPW/FL Educational Programming Award Submission 2022-2023**

The programming goal of BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas (BPW/SPP) is to maintain a balance of speakers (mostly women) whose topics or life stories are geared towards working women and align with BPW's legislative platform (equality for all; economic equity, opportunity and self-sufficiency; safe workplace; healthcare; environment; and voting rights and access). We achieved our goal through four key settings: our monthly membership meetings, our annual Working Women's Forum (held during National Business Women's Week), our annual Unhappy Hour in observance of Equal Pay Day, and our Equality Day Tea. This multi-faceted approach allows us to reach more individuals because of the variety of locations, dates/time and durations. Our approach also allows us to involve more of our members in both delivering the programming and participating as attendees.

BPW/SPP meets on the first Thursday of each month. Guest speakers are invited to deliver a 20-25 minute keynote presentation during the 1-hour luncheon meetings. When scheduling presenters, the 1st Vice President/Programs Chair considers national monthly observances and commemorations, issues facing working women at the local and national levels, current affairs, and matters that concern members as community citizens. Many of these presentations have been designed to provide "educational opportunities to stimulate initiative, self-education, and/or retraining for current and potential members in order to provide new skills and adopt new attitudes." Overall, we aim for a speaker and topic to underscore one or more of BPW's three characteristic pillars—personal, professional, and political. Information about each of our speakers throughout the year is presented below.

Our diversity in programming offers something for everyone. In the past year, we've had local officials, women's health, arts, economic equity, and the Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg. Many attendees at our lunches come exclusively for the programming as it always offers an opportunity to learn, think, discover other points of view, and walk away with something you didn't have before.

Each year, BPW/SPP celebrated National Business Women's Week™ with a signature event. On October 19, 2022, our annual working women's forum, "Advocacy in Action," had a threefold purpose: fulfill BPW's mission to achieve equity for working women through advocacy, education and information; raise funds for the organization; and provide value for members. In addition to the forum's goals being met, the event was successful and innovative from start to finish—from planning to implementation, from sponsorship participation to effective promotion, from member engagement to community response.

The forum was held at The St. Petersburg Museum of History in downtown St. Petersburg, where more than 45 attendees enjoyed a networking reception prior to listening to an all-female panel that represented diverse voices. Dawn Hunter, JD., MPH, Southeastern Region Director, Network for Public Health Law, moderated the conversation among Shanell Rae, Ph.D., Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Tampa General Hospital; Marcia L. Avarado, PE, Structural Market Leader, WGI; and Kimberly Jackson, Executive Director, Strategic Policy Solutions.

Our twentieth annual Unhappy Hour for Equal Pay Day was held on March 14, 2023 at Webb City Cellar. This is an awareness program put on for the community at no charge to attendees. We received Proclamations from both Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg. City

Council member, Gina Driscoll, a longtime friend of BPW/SPP presented the Proclamation from the City.

Finally, this year we were able to celebrate the Women's Suffrage Movement and the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. It was another unconventional wine and charcuterie event at the Hawthorne Bottle Shop. The Hawthorne Bottle Shop is a female owned local wine shop. This year's theme was a Madhatter Tea Party. Approximately 20 BPW members and their guests celebrated the addition of the 19th Amendment which granted women the right to vote.

All four programming initiatives reached both BPW members and non-members.

Our speakers at the monthly membership meetings can be found below.

### **June 2: Jim Nixon – “Turning Points” a History of LGBTQ+ Issues, Progress and Work Still to be Done**

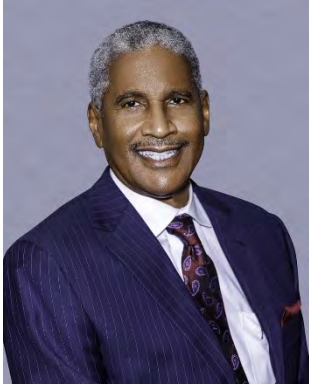


June is PRIDE month in St Petersburg and to kick it off, BPW welcomed Jim Nixon on Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Jim is the Director of the Mayor's Action Center and LGBTQ Liaison for the City of St. Petersburg. IN his role as the LGBTQ Liaison, he serves as an accessible and friendly ear to the city's LGBTQ community and elevates LGBTQ-related concerns to the city executive and other city officials. He's serving as both a spokesperson for the Mayor's Office to the local LGBTQ demographic as well as a representative of LGBTQ interests to the leaders of St. Petersburg Government.

Jim has been a constant marketing force in the LGBTQ community throughout Tampa Bay. Nine years ago he began working on reorganizing a grassroots committee, the St. Pete LGBTQ Marketing Committee, to focus on marketing the Tampa Bay area as an LGBTQ vacation destination, which directly impacted the IGLTA 2017 Global Convention held in St. Petersburg in May 2017.

Over the past five years, he has worked on many initiatives making St. Petersburg an inclusive and welcoming city. He was able to modify the city's Anti-Bullying policy to include sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in all youth-facing services. He assisted in the inclusion of LGBTQ Businesses in the Greenhouse SBE program and successfully navigated St. Pete's Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index resulting in the city receiving a perfect score every year.

He now comes to BPW to share a history of LGBTQ+ issues, progress, and work still to be done.



### **July 7: Michael Lundy - Gender and Racial Justice in Housing**

Please join us on Thursday, July 7, 2022 as we welcome Michael Lundy, President and CEO of the City of St. Petersburg Housing Authority. Mr. Lundy is relatively new to the area having joined the St. Petersburg Housing Authority in 2020 after leaving a position in Birmingham, Alabama. He has over four (4) decades of experience in affordable housing management and real estate development. Most recently he is overseeing the redevelopment of Jordan Park in St. Petersburg, as well as several other projects, that you will hear more about on July 7.

Mr. Lundy is a strong advocate of education and housing programs which support social and economic independence. He also believes that affordable housing programs can help position low-income families to become self-sufficient through education training and employment opportunities.

We are excited that Mr. Lundy is able to join us in July to provide information about gender and racial justice in housing. Are there discrimination and economic inequities that makes it harder for women? Does housing instability have other negative impacts on women and minorities? Is there a correlation between housing and nutrition? Join us on Thursday, July 7 to have these and other housing questions answered by Michael Lundy, President and CEO of the St. Petersburg Housing Authority.



### **August 4: Personal Enrichment Through Mental Health Services (PEMHS) AND THE Crisis in Mental Health Related to COVID**

Did you know that there was a Wellness Center being planned in Pinellas County, to assist with all aspects of mental health? Have you heard of the You Good campaign or Largo Strong? If not, you will want to join us for our August 4, 2022 luncheon meeting where we will welcome Maxine Booker, CEO of Personal Enrichment Through Mental Health Services, or more commonly known at PEMHS. Maxine will update us on the progress and the purpose of the new Wellness Center, and how PEMHS, and other community-based programs, will be assisted by a community-based Wellness Center. Maxine will also be providing an update about the continuing effects of COVID-19 and programs that PEMHS has in place to assist.



**September 1: Kanika Jelks-Tomalin – Keys to Thriving in Work Transitions**

We hope you will join us on Thursday, September 1 as we welcome longtime friend of BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas Dr. Kanika Tomalin. We often talk in BPW about women in transition. Kanika is the embodiment of what we mean when we talk about women in transition. Having started her career in journalism (print, TV and radio), she then moved into health care management, working for more than 13 years for Bayfront Health Systems. Due to her commitment to her community and her leadership style Kanika was then asked by

Mayor Rick Kriseman to join him at City Hall as his Deputy Mayor (not to mention later adding on the City Administrator role), where she served for 8 years. Kanika has now made another transition into higher education as the Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Strategy at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, overseeing strategic services, operations and emergency management, technology services, sustainability efforts and the St. Pete Center for Civic Engagement and Social Impact.

Kanika received a degree in journalism from Florida A&M University, an MBA from the University of Miami and a Doctorate in Law and Policy from Northeastern University. She continues to be active within our community serving on several boards, as well as watching her 2 children grow and thrive as they continue into adulthood at their respective colleges.



**October 6: Christie Bruner – Advocacy and the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce**

Join us on Thursday, October 6 in advance of our Working Women's Forum on October 19, when we welcome Christie Bruner, new Vice President of Advocacy for the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce. While Christie's current position is recent, her experience is not as she has been an advocate her entire professional life.

Christie will provide an update on the Chamber's Benchmarking Trip to Austin, Texas, where the Chamber is taking 55 leaders, including Mayor Welch and several City Council members to learn from Austin professionals about rapid population growth, workplace development programming and much more. The goal of the trip is to bring back innovative ideas and strategic plans to St. Petersburg to implement as we build the future of our city together.

We hope you can join us for the exciting and informative program on Thursday, October 6, 2022.



### **November 3: Barry Burton – State of the County**

We hope you will join us on Thursday, November 3, 2022 as we welcome for the first time Pinellas County Administrator, Barry Burton to our lunch meeting. Mr. Burton will provide an update on the state of the county. As the chief administrative officer for Pinellas County he will also provide information on the goals of the County, per the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Burton has many responsibilities, not the least of which includes building collaborative relationships with municipal and community partners. Has this been easier or harder now that one of Pinellas County's longest sitting Commissioners is now the Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg?

Mr. Burton also works with Development Review Services, Economic Development, Housing and Community Development, all of the things that have been in the news at many levels. Are there things we need to know?

Please join us on Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> as we welcome Barry Burton, Pinellas County, County Administrator.



### **December 1: Katie McGill – Dress for Success**

We look forward to welcoming Katie McGill, Executive Director for Dress for Success, on Thursday, December 1, 2022. If you don't know Dress for Success you will want to come to our program and when you do so, please consider bringing an item on the list below.

Katie has spent more than 20 years volunteering and helping the women in Tampa Bay. More than 35,000 women have been given an opportunity to get back on their feet and have a new outlook on life during Katie's time with Dress for Success, not only as the Executive Director but also as a volunteer.

Dress for Success' programs include a Professional Women's Group, which offers free networking and support for career success, and client tours of local businesses in the community to learn about their business practices.

Three boutiques serve the Tampa Bay community. Each client also has an opportunity to have the assistance of a personal stylist to assist with accessories, including handbags. Dress for Success clients also have access to the computer lab and may borrow a laptop to conduct job services or submit online applications.

Please join us on December 1 to hear more about this amazing organization.



### **January 5: Tara Newsome – The Times Have Found Us**

The time has found us. *Thomas Paine, January 1776 – Common Sense: Addressed to the Inhabitants of America.*

Join us on January 5, 2023 as we welcome Professor Tara Newsom to BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas. Professor Newsom will speak on Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, “*The time hath found us*” and the relevance to today’s political climate, as well as our BPW/FL Public Policy Platform.

Professor Newsom is the founding Director of SPC’s Center for Civil Learning & Community Engagement, which is strategically designed to create diverse civic leadership through public service. She tells her students that she will do her best to encourage and cultivate their critical thinking skills and arm them with the tools to be successful, academically, and personally.

The time has found us.



### **February 2: Kenneth Welch - Mayor City of St. Petersburg**

Please join us on Thursday, February 2, 2023 as we welcome St. Petersburg Mayor, Kenneth T. Welch. In his first appearance to BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas Mayor Welch will present his first State of the City address.

Ken is a lifelong resident and servant of St. Petersburg and Pinellas County, having grown up in the Gas Plant area and attending local public schools. Ken learned about service to our community from a long family history, including from his father, who was a city council member.

A third generation St. Pete resident, Ken lives in St. Petersburg today with his wife of 30 years, Donna, and their two daughters.



### **March 2: Robin O’Dell – Women in the Arts**

Please join us on Thursday, March 2, 2023 as we welcome Robin O’Dell, photographic curator and visual arts writer. Robin is the current Visual Arts Editor and writer for *The Artisan Magazine* and a freelance curator. Most recently Robin was the Curator of Collections for the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts after leaving her position at the Museum of Fine Arts. Have you ever wondered how a collection is curated? How do they find the artwork? How do they find the collectors? Are women still underrepresented in the visual arts? Join us on March 2, 2023 as

Robin O’Dell answers these and many other questions about women in the arts.



## **April 6: Denise Kelly – Housing Affordability and It's Role in Employee Recruitment**

Please join us on Thursday, April 6 as we welcome Denise Kelly, a Certified Economic Developer/Urban Strategist to BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas. Kelly is with Stoneweg US, a real estate investment firm, in St. Petersburg, specializing in the acquisition and development of multifamily assets. Denise's areas of expertise include neighborhood and workforce development, commercial and mixed-use real estate development, business development, public-

private-civic partnerships, and community revitalization utilizing Smart Growth strategies. We welcome her to BPW to discuss the connection between talent acquisition and housing affordability in St. Petersburg. One solution could be found in connecting apartment developments with our healthcare and education employers who need housing that is affordable for teachers, nurses, and other staff in these fields which tend to employ greater numbers of women.

Denise's career in commercial development included projects spanning Philadelphia, San Jose, San Francisco and Hawaii. Those projects, including Oakland's first LEED certified, mixed-use residential community designed using Smart Growth strategies and TOD incentives, and with both Tax and Bond affordable units, piqued an interest in Urban Planning. Through one of the largest Public Private Ventures in the country, she was honored to have served Navy and Marine Corps families through a partnership with the Department of Defense when military housing was privatized, and her company was awarded contracts in Hawaii, the Pacific Northwest and the Southeast. IN Hawaii, she and a small team transitioned more than 10K homes into the portfolio and subsequently built thousands more to replace WWII era housing.

### **Equality Day Tea**

In 1920 the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution was adopted and the women's suffrage movement ended.

### **19<sup>th</sup> Amendment**

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas celebrated its annual Equality Day with an unconventional **wine and charcuterie event** at the Hawthorne Bottle Shoppe, in St. Petersburg. The Hawthorn Bottle Shoppe is a female owned and operated local business in St. Petersburg. Approximately 20 BPW members and their guests, including St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO, Chris Steinocher, celebrated the addition of the 19th Amendment which granted women the right to vote. The Equality Day Tea Committee members included Jerri Evans, chair, and legislative chair; Kristin Smith, President; Lily Alcott, Janine Duffy, Membership Chair, and Nylma Laureano. The committee secured the venue and provided door prizes for tea participants.



Kristin Smith, BPW/SPP President, 2022-2023 welcomed one and all.

The BPW/SPP tea was memorable, fun, and informative and we look forward to celebrating again in 2024.



## **WORKING WOMEN’S FORUM – “Advocacy in Action”**

Advocacy in Action! We talk a lot about advocacy at BPW but what does it really mean and how do you, as an individual, or as part of a team, advocate for yourself, your child, your organization? These and many other valuable questions were answered by our panelists and moderator at the annual Working Women’s Forum. Committee Members: Michele Cavallo and Amanda Cummins, Co-Chairs; Kristin Smith, President; Sheila Barry-Oliver, Tami Simms, Christine Weigle, Amy Dinovo, Jerri Evans, Janine Duffy, Christie Bruner, and Nylma Laureano.

Our panelists and moderator were:



Dawn Hunter, JD., MPH, Southeastern Region Director,  
Network for Public Health (Moderator)



Shanell Rae, Ph.D., Director of Diversity and Inclusion,  
Tampa General Hospital



Marcia L. Avarado, PE, Structural Market Leader, WGI



Kimberly Jackson, ED, Strategic Policy Solutions



## UNHAPPY HOUR FOR EQUAL PAY

On March 14, 2023, BPW/St. Petersburg-Pinellas held our 20<sup>th</sup> annual Unhappy Hour to mark Equal Pay Day, joining women’s organizations around the country in recognizing the ongoing issue of the wage gap. The day chosen annually as Equal Pay Day is symbolic, representing the day in the current calendar year that all women, on average, must work to, until they have finally earned the same amount that a man in a similar job would have earned in just the prior calendar year. At present, the average earnings for all women in the U.S. are roughly 83 cents for every dollar earned by a man, and the gap is even wider than that average for women of color. We recognize Equal Pay Day to continue to raise awareness of the wage gap, and the need to close it.

Our 20th annual Unhappy Hour took place at Webb City Cellars and was attended by \_\_\_ people in our community – a mix of women and men, BPW members and non-members. As in prior years, BPW did received proclamations from the City of St. Petersburg and from the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, declaring March 14 to be Equal Pay Day.

Our Unhappy Hour for Equal Pay Day event was attended by a reporter from the St. Pete Catalyst, the article can be found here [Inside St. Pete’s push for equal pay • St Pete Catalyst](#).

Here are a few pictures from our event.

