

2023 **WOMEN IN  
LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE**

FEBRUARY 10, 2023



JONES GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | MCNAIR HALL, RICE UNIVERSITY



**RICE | BUSINESS**  
Jones Graduate School of Business

# WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2023 - AGENDA

6:45 am - 8:15 am **Registration and Breakfast;** *Anderson Family Commons*

8:15 am - 8:35 am **Welcome and Opening Remarks;** *Shell Auditorium*

- Taylor Anne Adams, 2023 Women in Leadership Conference President
- Barbara Bennett Ostdiek, Senior Associate Dean of Degree Programs and Professor of Finance and Statistics, Rice Business

8:40 am - 9:30 am **Opening Keynote Speaker;** *Shell Auditorium*

- Elissa Sangster, CEO, Forté Foundation

9:45 am - 10:40 am **Morning Panels I**

### Rising Tides Lift All Boats

- Sherhara Downing, Co-Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, SpeakHaus
- Jane Gasdaska, GM, Change Management Business Transformation, Phillips 66
- Kristen Habich, CFA, CFP®, Managing Director and Market Manager, JP Morgan Private Bank
- Sunny Zhang, Founding Partner, Born Global Ventures
- Katie Tsuru, Co-Founder, SheSpace

### Leading with Purpose and Passion

- Ruth Reitmeier, Director of Coaching, Rice Business
- Sussy Aguirre, Senior Manager, Accenture
- Shawnie McBride, Vice President Sales Operations, NRG Business
- Nuray Elci, GM, Renewables, Chevron
- Katrina von Kamrath, Controls Engineer, Zachry Construction Corporation

10:55 am - 11:50 am **Morning Panels II**

### Battling Burnout

- Rayna Anderson-Crier, Associate Director, Career Education and Advising, Rice Business
- Kari Amore, Director of Product Marketing and Fixed Ops Marketing, Sonic Automotive
- Arthi Vasudevan, Senior Cybersecurity Product Manager, Baker Hughes
- Sophie Randolph, Founder and CEO, Green Room
- Kalish Nesbitt, Program Manager, iFundWomen

### A Woman in the Workplace

- Lagina R Harris, Founder, The Us Space
- Staci LaToison, Founder and CEO, Dream Big Ventures, LLC
- Ann Lai, Vice President, Display Solutions, HP
- Rania Biltagi, Director of Public Affairs, Aramco Americas
- Maria Chavarriaga, Customer Service Manager, Vopak



REFER TO SLIDO APP  
FOR ROOM NUMBERS  
& MORE AGENDA  
DETAILS

11:50 am - 1:00 pm **Networking Lunch;** *Jamail Plaza*

1:00 pm - 1:50 pm **Interactive Workshops I**

- Men as Allies Pt. 1
- Speed Networking
- Building Your Personal Brand
- Pivoting at Any Point

2:00 pm - 2:50 pm **Interactive Workshops II**

- Men as Allies Pt. 2
- Speed Networking
- Power and Influence
- Be Your Own Advocate

3:00 pm - 3:45 pm **Closing Keynote Speaker;** *Shell Auditorium*

- Andrea Alexander, Chief People Officer, Rent the Runway

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm **Closing Remarks | Owl Award;** *Shell Auditorium*

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm **Closing Reception;** *Anderson Family Commons*



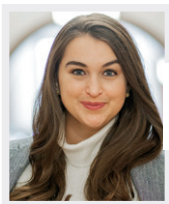
On behalf of the entire 2023 Women in Leadership Planning Committee, we are thrilled that you are joining us today, and welcome you to the Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University.

It is only through sponsorship, allyship, and mentorship that women can continue to excel and demonstrate their exceptional capabilities. As a collective committee we stand firm in the belief that rising tides lift all boats, thus emerged the theme of this year's conference: **Every Woman. Every Voice.**

By coming together and sharing our stories, we can inspire and empower one another to continue to break barriers and achieve our goals. This conference will be an unforgettable experience, and we look forward to learning and growing together. You are the cornerstone of this event and the reason we continue to come back bigger and better each year. So please enjoy yourself today, learn something new, garner inspiration from those around you and take it into the world. The future is up to you. Let us leave this conference not just with new ideas and knowledge but with a renewed sense of purpose and determination to be the change we wish to see in the world and pave the way for the next generation of female leaders.

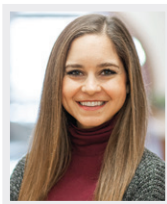
It is with special thanks that we spotlight our generous sponsors who have supported our mission. Without them, this conference would not be possible. We also wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff, students and faculty of Rice Business, whose passion for this event each year remains unmatched and invaluable.

With unwavering determination and a steadfast commitment to progress,  
The 2023 Women in Leadership Planning Committee



TAYLOR ANNE ADAMS  
WILC President

*Taylor Anne Adams*



MARIA KALINA  
External Relations Chair

*Maria Kalina*



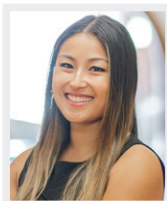
NATALIE ANGELAKI  
Operations Chair

*Natalie Angelaki*



CHELSEA CLARK  
Marketing Chair

*Chelsea Clark*



MAYA STINE  
Volunteer Chair

*Maya Stine*



KAREN GENTRY  
External Relations  
Committee Member

*Karen Gentry*



CASSANDRA  
OPADOKUN  
External Relations  
Committee Member

*Cassandra Opadokun*



MADHURIMA DUTTA  
Operations Committee  
Member

*Madhurima Dutta*



DILDORA AHMEDOVA  
Marketing Committee  
Member

*Dildora Ahmedova*



GULAR  
SHAHTAKHTINSKAYA  
Marketing Committee  
Member

*Gular Shahtakhtinskaya*



AISHWARYA  
BANNORE  
First Year Rep

*Aishwarya Bannore*



JOCELYN GUTIERREZ  
First Year Rep

*Jocelyn Gutierrez*



MITRA MURTHY  
First Year Rep

*Mitra Murthy*



ADRIENNE MILLER  
First Year Rep

*Adrienne Miller*

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**ELISSA SANGSTER** – Opening Keynote Speaker

**CEO, Forté Foundation**

Elissa Sangster serves as CEO of Forté and brings to the role extensive knowledge of issues affecting women’s abilities to seek, prepare for and attain business leadership positions, drawn from her prior experience as assistant dean and director of the MBA program at the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin. Before McCombs, Elissa was assistant director of the MBA program at Texas A&M University’s Mays School of Business.

Elissa currently serves as treasurer and board member for the Thirty Percent Coalition. She is a former chair of the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) Annual Industry Conference and former chair of MBA Student Services Professionals (MBA SSP). Elissa sits on the board of Forté as an ex-officio member. She enjoys reading, running, cooking and Aggie football. Elissa received her MBA and B.A. in English from Texas A&M University.



**ANDREA ALEXANDER** – Closing Keynote Speaker

**Chief People Officer, Rent the Runway**

Andrea Alexander is the chief people officer at Rent the Runway where she is responsible for the global workforce of corporate, warehouse and customer experience employees. She has significant experience in org design; hybrid-virtual working models; culture; leadership team effectiveness; capability building; diversity, equity and inclusion; change management and communications. Andrea has over a decade of experience with McKinsey & Company, where she was a leader in the organization practice. Prior to McKinsey, Andrea taught high school math through Teach for America and helped run the Harlem Village Academies network of charter schools.

Andrea earned a bachelor’s degree in strategic management from the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business and an MBA from Harvard Business School. Andrea enjoys running marathons and dancing in her very limited free time. She also serves on two non-profit boards: Teach for America Houston and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

Compared to men, women have historically encountered additional obstacles and made additional sacrifices to have successful careers. True leaders advocate and sponsor women, creating environments that are safe for all. How have successful leaders built cultures for advocacy and how can you think about “lifting as you climb” as you progress in your career?



**SHERHARA DOWNING, Moderator**  
**Co-Founder & Chief Visionary Officer, SpeakHaus**

Sherhara Downing is a captivating speaker, known for her ability to connect with audiences and explore concepts of authenticity, identity, culture, and the intersection of communication and business. She is the co-founder and chief visionary officer of SpeakHaus, an initiative to make communication coaching accessible, scalable and practical for everyone in business. With over 16 years of coaching and corporate training experience, Sherhara has helped leaders from companies like Under Armour, Capital One, Toyota, and AT&T to elevate their communication skills. Sherhara holds a B.A. in journalism from Indiana University, Bloomington and an M.S. in integrative marketing communications from Roosevelt University. Her personal mission is to make human connection effortless and is dedicated to creating a more inclusive and accessible culture of communication.



**JANE GASDASKA**  
**GM, Change Management Business Transformation, Phillips 66**

Jane Gasdaska is working as a GM for Phillips 66's business transformation where she currently focuses on change management. During her 25+ year career in the oil industry, she has held various positions in supply and trading, fuels marketing, business development and downstream strategy. She began her career in 1996 as a crude oil scheduler for Mobil Oil Corporation in Fairfax, Virginia, and through a series of mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures, worked for Tosco, Phillips Petroleum, ConocoPhillips, and now Phillips 66. Gasdaska graduated with a degree in mathematics from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. She earned an M.A. in systematic theology from the Graduate Theological Union, and an MBA from the Kenan Flagler School of Business at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.



**KRISTEN HABICH, CFA, CFP®**  
**Managing Director and Market Manager, JP Morgan Private Bank**

Kristen Habich is a managing director and market manager for J.P. Morgan Private Bank in the Houston area. In 2014, she was selected as one of the Top 100 Women Financial Advisors by the Financial Times and was an honoree at the Houston Business Journal's "Women Who Mean Business" awards in 2021. Kristen began her career as a portfolio manager in a boutique wealth management firm in California, subsequently joining Private Client Group at Jurika & Voyles and Third Coast Wealth Advisors as the president. Kristen graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a B.B.A. in Finance. She is a CFA® charter holder and certified financial planner. Kristen also serves on the boards of Teach for America's Houston chapter and Easter Seals of Greater Houston.



**SUNNY ZHANG**  
**Founder and General Partner, Born Global Ventures**

Sunny Zhang is a founding partner at Born Global Ventures, an investment firm focused on early-stage globally scalable tech startups led by immigrant entrepreneurs. She is also a tenured marketing professor at the Cameron School of Business at the University of St. Thomas, Houston, with 19 years of teaching experience. Her accolades include Outstanding Professor for 2021-2022 in the Cameron School of Business and the 2021 U.S. Small Business Administration Houston District's Small Business Champion of the Year. She is passionate about closing divides for underestimated founders and underserved communities. She serves as the program advisor of women in AI USA, on the board of advisors for the George H. W. Bush Foundation of U.S.-China Relations, on the advisory board at StudioHub, and on the board of directors at the World Chamber of Commerce. Sunny received her Ph.D. in marketing with a social psychology minor, MBA from Indiana University, Bloomington, and M.S. in applied psychology from the Chinese Academy of Sciences.



**KATIE TSURU**  
**Co-Founder, SheSpace**

Katie's energetic personality and sweetness belies her sassy, strong will, which made itself evident at the age of 18 months when she decided that napping was simply not necessary and that she had more important things on her agenda. While all the other girls were curled up reading, Katie fell in love with numbers and basketball, and went on to get a degree in mathematics. Katie was decisively thrown off balance by the way women were undervalued in the work force. Embedded in the local oil and gas industry, she noticed how often women were overlooked for promotions, earned less for performing the same jobs as men and often sank into the sunset if they took maternity leave. She decided enough was enough, and joined forces with her mother-in-law to create a space designed by women for women, where women can bond together to reach further, faster.



# LEADING WITH PURPOSE AND PASSION

Many industries that are traditionally male-dominated are hard for women to break into and hard for women to stay in. Hear from strong leaders in these industries on how they found success and what factors are important for retaining women in traditionally male-dominated industries.



## **RUTH REITMEIER, Moderator** **Director of Coaching, Rice Business**

Ruth Oh Reitmeier is a seasoned coach and leader with over 25 years of experience developing leaders and building high-performing teams in various organizations. As the director of coaching at Rice Business, she is responsible for building and overseeing executive coaching and co-curricular training programs for Rice Business students and staff. Previously, Ruth was the senior assistant director of coaching at the Doerr Institute for New Leaders where she was responsible for multiple coaching initiatives, including leading and managing a team of 45 coaches, teaching Coach RICE: A Leadership Coaching Program, and building a bespoke program for coaching department chairs. She has served as a consultant to dozens of universities that seek to implement coaching programs for student development.



## **SUSSY AGUIRRE** **Senior Manager, Accenture**

Sussy Aguirre is a senior manager in Accenture's strategy practice in the Houston office. She has spent most of her career working in the customer space across utilities in North America. Sussy has an established reputation for leading and empowering diverse teams, developing data-based strategies, and executing those strategies through transformational programs. Sussy has a B.A. in economics and Hispanic studies from Rice University. In addition to working full time, she is currently pursuing her MBA.



## **SHAWNIE MCBRIDE** **Vice President Sales Operations, NRG Business**

As vice president of sales operations for NRG Business, Shawnie McBride translates business strategy and vision into tangible capabilities required to achieve sales targets. Shawnie is a passionate champion for diversity and inclusion. Prior to her current role and the NRG acquisition of Direct Energy, Shawnie led large-scale business change initiatives from design through execution, providing enhanced capabilities across the customer lifecycle. She also served as Direct Energy's chief risk officer and was responsible for the continued development and implementation of the company's risk management program. During her twenty years of experience in the energy industry, Shawnie has held a variety of risk management, information technology, and wholesale commercial positions with Direct Energy, Energy Future Holdings (formerly Luminant/TXU), Mirant Corporation, and Enserch Energy. Shawnie received her B.B.A. in finance from Texas A&M University.



## **NURAY ELCI** **GM, Renewables, Chevron**

Nuray Elci is the general manager of renewables in Chevron's Americas products business, focusing on infrastructure development of compressed natural gas and hydrogen stations, renewable natural gas projects, and all joint venture and partnership management in the lower carbon space including CalBio, Brightmark, Iwatani, and the recently acquired Beyond6 JV. During her career at Chevron, she has served in several roles of increasing responsibility, including regional manager for fuels, advisor to the president of lubricants, as well as a variety of business development, project management and M&A roles. Nuray graduated from the University of Maryland in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in management information systems and earned her MBA from California State University, Sacramento in 2004. She completed her Ph.D. in management in 2009 at the University of Maryland. Nuray also teaches strategy and marketing courses for the Dual MBA program at the University of Maryland as adjunct faculty.



## **KATRINA VON KAMRATH** **Controls Engineer, Zachry Construction Corporation**

Katrina joined Zachry Construction in 2012 with a BS in civil engineering from University of Utah. As part of the joint venture team for Zachry, she was a field engineer for the California High Speed Rail CP1, responsible for ten bridge structures. In 2019, she was promoted to project engineer responsible for cost and revenue for a \$140 million TxDOT project in North Texas. Katrina started and now advises Zachry Women Breaking Ground the company's first employee resource group focused on recruiting, retaining and developing women within the company. The group has successfully contributed to Zachry by retaining women at a higher rate than other demographics and doubling the number of women project engineers. In 2023, Katrina is working to finish her PE and was promoted into a corporate role function including surety. Outside of work, she focuses on her love of wine knowledge, throwing pottery and family.

Burnout seems common in every industry nowadays, and can be hard to navigate and bounce back from. Join this panel to learn some tips and techniques to battle and prevent burnout.



## **RAYNA ANDERSON-CRIER, Moderator**

**Associate Director, Career Education and Advising, Rice Business**

Rayna Anderson-Crier is a certified professional career coach who specializes in helping job seekers turn their career goals into actionable steps. She brings with her a wealth of career advising experience from recruiting and her time working at both public and private universities including Rice University, Elon University, the University of Houston, and Auburn University's Harbert College of Business. Rayna holds an M.A. degree in higher education administration from Louisiana State University along with graduate coursework in industrial/organizational psychology. She is trained to administer the MBTI, Strong Interest Inventory, and StrengthsQuest assessments and is a registered yoga teacher. Outside of work, Rayna enjoys spending time with her husband and two children and is an active member of the Junior League of Houston and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.



## **KARI AMORE**

**Director of Product Marketing and Fixed Ops Marketing, Sonic Automotive**

Kari is a marketing expert who delivers impactful marketing strategies in the world of automotive retail. With a focus on marketing for service lanes, she often is found shattering glass ceilings in industry spaces historically reserved for males but paved by some amazing women. Kari's storytelling skill has allowed her to engage with audiences and draw them into conversations. Kari earned her M.S. in strategic marketing from Bellevue University. She has a passion for learning and loves to partner with women who are career-starters, as their mentor and proponent of success. In addition to leading various "give-back" programs throughout the year, she serves as the marketing director at her church. As a mother of six children, Kari has learned a few things about beating burnout. Her advice for women ... "from Barbies to boardrooms, creating the space for yourself is an important tool to master."



## **ARTHI VASUDEVAN**

**Senior Cybersecurity Product Manager, Baker Hughes**

Arthi leads the cybersecurity product line at Nexus Controls, a Baker Hughes business, laying the technical and commercial strategy to provide end-to-end cybersecurity solutions to industrial customers. Over the last 14 years, she has led multiple impactful projects in mining, marine and energy industries in the areas of electrical and control system design, new product development, project management, Lean Six Sigma, cost-out and lifecycle management. Arthi holds bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering, and an MBA from Rice Business. She is the recipient of Houston Business Journal's "Women Who Mean Business" award and ALLY Energy's GRIT award. She is also the upcoming author of a children's book on cybersecurity called "Cyberama."



## **SOPHIE RANDOLPH**

**Founder and CEO, Green Room**

Sophie Randolph is the founder of Green Room, a Techstars portfolio company. Green Room provides the tools that let touring entertainers be their own business managers. Sophie launched Green Room while studying at Rice Business (MBA '22). Prior to that she worked in operations and customer success roles at a startup in San Francisco. She also has experience working with international NGOs, managing independent artists, and consulting for other small businesses and startups. When she isn't working, Sophie can be found dancing to live music with her husband, playing soccer and exploring the world!



## **KALISH NESBITT**

**Program Manager, iFundWomen**

Kalish Nesbitt is a two-time founder, owner of Well-Run Retail, and a startup coach at IFundWomen. She started her entrepreneurial journey in 2017 when she found The POSE Box, a self-care subscription box for women which was inspired by a love for yoga, mindfulness, and passion for empowering others. At Well-Run Retail, Kalish's holistic approach combines mindset coaching and consulting to streamline the sales, marketing and operational processes that increase clients' peace of mind and profitability. Kalish is also the host of the Proactively Present podcast and a certified yoga teacher. Kalish has directly experienced burnout in her transition from corporate spaces to becoming a business owner.

# A WOMAN IN THE WORKPLACE

Women face many barriers to advancement and are underrepresented in leadership roles. Join this panel to learn how to start conversations about equity within the workplace, unlearn polite habits, deal with sticky situations, and create a physically inclusive space.



**LAGINA R HARRIS, Moderator**  
Founder, The Us Space

LaGina R Harris is an entrepreneur who focuses on social impact. A graduate of Stillman College and member of Delta Sigma Theta, she is an accomplished event planner, visual artist and rising media personality. She is the founder of The Us Space, intentional innovation spaces for women of color, women-led businesses, and women-centric organizations to thrive. LaGina is passionate about challenging social norms, amplifying women, and bringing positive change to her community through her brand, LaRae Infinity, and is the creator of the LaRae Infinity Let's Talk podcast as well as the host of the Stomping Ground with LaGina Rae radio show. Currently, she serves on The Ensemble Theatre: One Act steering committee, is an advisory board member for the Lift Collective: Entrepreneurship Program and one of the organizers of Share The Mic Now Texas.



**STACI LATOISON**  
Founder & CEO, Dream Big Ventures, LLC

Staci LaToison, founding partner of Dream Big Ventures, is a venture capitalist and leader in innovation and strategy. Staci leverages her 22-year energy industry experience with Chevron to enable her to shape and influence energy transition goals and fuel her passion for empowering others. As a native Houstonian and first-generation college graduate, Staci earned her B.S. from the University of Houston through the Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship and earned her MBA from the University of St. Thomas with a concentration in international business. Staci established Dream Big Ventures in 2022 after completing Columbia Business School's venture capital and private equity program, where she serves as a global ambassador. Staci is a limited partner in Mendoza Ventures, Portfolia, Softeq Venture Fund, and Urban Capital Network. Her investments include Agility Bank, a women and minority-owned bank in Houston.



**RANIA BILTAGI**  
Director of Public Affairs, Aramco Americas

Rania Biltagi is the director of public affairs at Aramco Americas, the U.S.-based subsidiary of Saudi Aramco, a global leader in integrated energy and chemicals. She oversees the company's activities pertaining to internal and external communications, brand management, corporate social responsibility, and publication development in the U.S. and throughout the Americas. Starting out as an editor/writer in 1998, Rania advanced to take up multiple leadership roles in marketing communications throughout her career. Among her notable accomplishments, she led the Ithra Connect initiative, an initiative that was recognized by UNESCO and received a 2020 Silver Award from the Middle East Public Relations Association. Rania earned a B.A. in communications studies and political science at St. Edwards University in Austin and an M.A. in marketing communications at the University of Westminster in London.



**ANN LAI**  
Vice President, Display Solutions, HP

As the vice president and general manager of the Displays Solutions Business Group, Ann Lai is responsible for innovating thoughtful, unparalleled visual computing experiences for the hybrid world. She oversees product management, strategy and engineering teams that are focused on empowering people to work, live and learn more productively and comfortably through the PC ecosystem of displays and docking. Ann has worked at HP for over 20 years and held various roles in supply chain and product management leadership. She holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, and an MBA from the University of Southern California. She lives in Houston.



**MARIA CHAVARRIAGA**  
Customer Service Manager, Vopak

Maria Chavarriaga is the customer service manager at Vopak Deer Park Terminal, with over 19 years of international experience in operations and technical sales management. She started her career as a field engineer in south Texas, where she learned to understand and enjoy being part of the oilfield workers culture and mindset. Throughout her career, Maria obtained recognition, such as the Chairman Silver award, for developing and implementing technical projects tailored to finding customer operational challenges solutions, and commercial awards for sales and deployment for new technologies. She is a firm believer in employee engagement and team collaboration and a mother of three daughters who raise the bar of her tech knowledge and patience every day.



## MEN AS ALLIES

For those who identify as male, it can be difficult to navigate conversations and actions that focus on supporting and advocating for women. This workshop will focus on building skills as allies to promote female empowerment in the workplace and beyond.



### **AARON LIMONTHAS**

**Vice President, Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Shipt Inc.**

Aaron Limonthas is the vice president of diversity, equity and inclusion at Shipt, Inc. While there, his work has led to over 49% of Shipt being gender diverse, over 38% being racially diverse, and increasing the eNPS score for the organization. Prior to Shipt, Aaron worked at Adidas America, Inc where he served as their head of diversity and inclusion across North America. Under his leadership, Adidas launched their first global D&I strategy, increased funding of grassroots programs that support and empower communities of color by \$120 million, revamped their talent acquisition programming to ensure fair and equitable hiring across Adidas, and upskilled over 90% of their North American workforce on inclusive leadership. Aaron graduated with a B.A. in sociology, women and gender studies from Dartmouth College.



### **W. BRAD JOHNSON**

**Professor of Psychology, United States Naval Academy**

Brad Johnson is a professor of psychology in the department of leadership, ethics, and law at the United States Naval Academy, and a faculty associate in the Graduate School of Education at Johns Hopkins University. He served as a psychologist at Bethesda Naval Hospital and the medical clinic at Pearl Harbor as division head for psychology. Brad has received distinguished awards from the National Institutes of Health and the American Psychological Association and has served as chair of the American Psychological Association's ethics committee and as president of the Society for Military Psychology. He is the author of more than 130 journal articles and book chapters and 14 books, in the areas of mentoring, gender in the workplace, and professional ethics. Brad graduated with a Ph.D. in philosophy, clinical psychology from Fuller Theological Seminary and a degree in psychology from Whitworth University.



### **DAVID SMITH**

**Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins Carey School of Business**

David Smith is an associate professor at the Johns Hopkins Carey School of Business. A former Navy pilot, he led diverse organizations of women and men culminating in command of a squadron in combat and flew more than 3,000 hours over 30 years including combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. David focuses his research on gender, work and family issues including bias in performance evaluations, retention of women and women in the military. He is the author of numerous journal articles and two books focusing on gender in the workplace and inclusive mentoring relationships, most recently co-authoring *Good Guys: How Men Can Be Better Allies for Women in the Workplace*. David graduated with a B.S. in oceanography from the U.S. Naval Academy, M.S. in global leadership from the University of San Diego and Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Maryland.

## SPEED NETWORKING

Who says networking has to be boring? Through fun and professional prompts you'll get to know other attendees at WILC and expand your social network, speed-dating style.



### **JANET MOORE**

**Director of Communication Program, Senior Lecturer, Rice Business**

Janet H. Moore brings 25+ years of global professional experience throughout North and South America, Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. She is a full-time faculty member in, and the director of, the Rice Business communication program. Janet researches how professionals use sartorial and other style elements as professional communication tools. She has led Rice Business study trips to India and Mexico, and guest lectured at the International Space University in Haifa, Israel. As a professionally-trained and certified executive coach, she has also coached professionals at companies like Accenture, Conoco, Goldman Sachs, KPMG and SINOPEC. Janet spent the first 15 years of her career practicing international business law. She graduated with honors from both Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and the University of Texas School of Law, and attended the London School of Economics.

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## BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Creating and maintaining a personal brand is an essential aspect of professional development. Work with a professional coach to define your individuality, maximize your strengths and manage your choices now to create opportunities for the future by differentiating yourself in a competitive job market.



### **KATIE BAIRD**

**Executive Coach, Founder, Baird Coaching**

Katie is a Rice University-trained coach focused on helping executives and emergent leaders thrive through professional transitions with clients working through topics such as C-suite acclimation, personal brand and career vision. Her coaching style emphasizes turning insight into action and builds on her prior work in strategy consulting with Deloitte. In both a coaching and service capacity, Katie is especially passionate about helping women thrive professionally and is an active volunteer with Dress for Success Houston, Camp Seafarer and the Washington & Lee Alumni Admissions Program.

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## PIVOTING AT ANY POINT

Use a professional plateau to transition into a new career and leverage the resources around you.



### **STEPHANIE TSURU**

**Co-Founder, SheSpace**

Stephanie Tsuru spent 25 years in the health care industry before receiving her MLS at Rice. Energized by the strength and potential of women, she co-founded SheSpace, a female focused work and programming space. Drawing on the power of collaboration, she brings her wisdom and passion to a space which advances women's social and professional networks. She is also passionate about literacy efforts, co-founding Houston's state-of-the-art mobile library fleet. An avid runner and community advocate, she co-chairs the Hermann Park Commons Capital Campaign. She recently indulged in her fondness of life-long learning by completing the Rice Leadership Accelerator and the ALF leadership program. Stephanie dedicates much of her time to empowering women. When she is not immersed in SheSpace, she is a proud wife, mother, and grandmother to two girls, Lucy and Stella, and the newest member of the family, Poppy Jane.

## POWER & INFLUENCE

So much of our success is dependent on reputation and maintaining a level of power and influence in our organizations. Join this workshop to discover ways to stand out as a leader and own your power.



### **ANASTASIYA ZAVYALOVA**

**Associate Professor of Strategic Management, Rice Business**

Anastasiya Zavyalova is an associate professor of strategic management at Rice Business and an international research fellow at the Oxford University Centre for Corporate Reputation. She received her Ph.D. in strategic management from the University of Maryland, Robert H. Smith School of Business. Her research focuses on socially responsible and irresponsible organizational actions that build, damage and restore social approval assets, such as reputation and celebrity. Zavyalova has taught reputation management, ESG issues in strategy, organization theory, strategic management and social entrepreneurship courses.

## BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

You are your biggest cheerleader, so you've got to learn to be your own advocate. Join this workshop to learn how to remove "I can't" from your vocabulary.



### **CHRISTA CLARKE**

**Co-Founder & CEO, SpeakHaus**

Christa Clarke is the Co-founder and CEO of SpeakHaus. She builds teams of engaged collaborators and confident communicators through collaborative training experiences, professional coaching, and technology. Christa's background in innovation and leadership and her experience as an internationally certified Project Management Professional has helped her successfully lead multi-million dollar transformation initiatives across various industries like healthcare, medical education, and technology. Christa is a proud Rice University alumna, earning her B.S. in Bioengineering and M.S. in Bioscience and Health Policy. She serves as a Wiess School of Natural Sciences Professional Science Master External Advisory Board Member. Christa is a passionate advocate for women in business and a dedicated community builder. With her infectious energy, Christa empowers and inspires women to confidently share their voices, aspirations and to support each other.



### **SHERHARA DOWNING**

**Co-Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, SpeakHaus**

Sherhara Downing is a captivating speaker, known for her ability to connect with audiences and explore concepts of authenticity, identity, culture and the intersection of communication and business. She is the co-founder and chief visionary officer of SpeakHaus, an initiative to make communication coaching accessible, scalable, and practical for everyone in business. With over 16 years of coaching and corporate training experience, Sherhara has helped leaders from companies like Under Armour, Capital One, Toyota, AT&T to elevate their communication skills. Sherhara holds a B.A. in journalism from Indiana University, Bloomington and an M.S. in integrative marketing communications from Roosevelt University. Her personal mission is to make human connection effortless, and she's dedicated to creating a more inclusive and accessible culture of communication.





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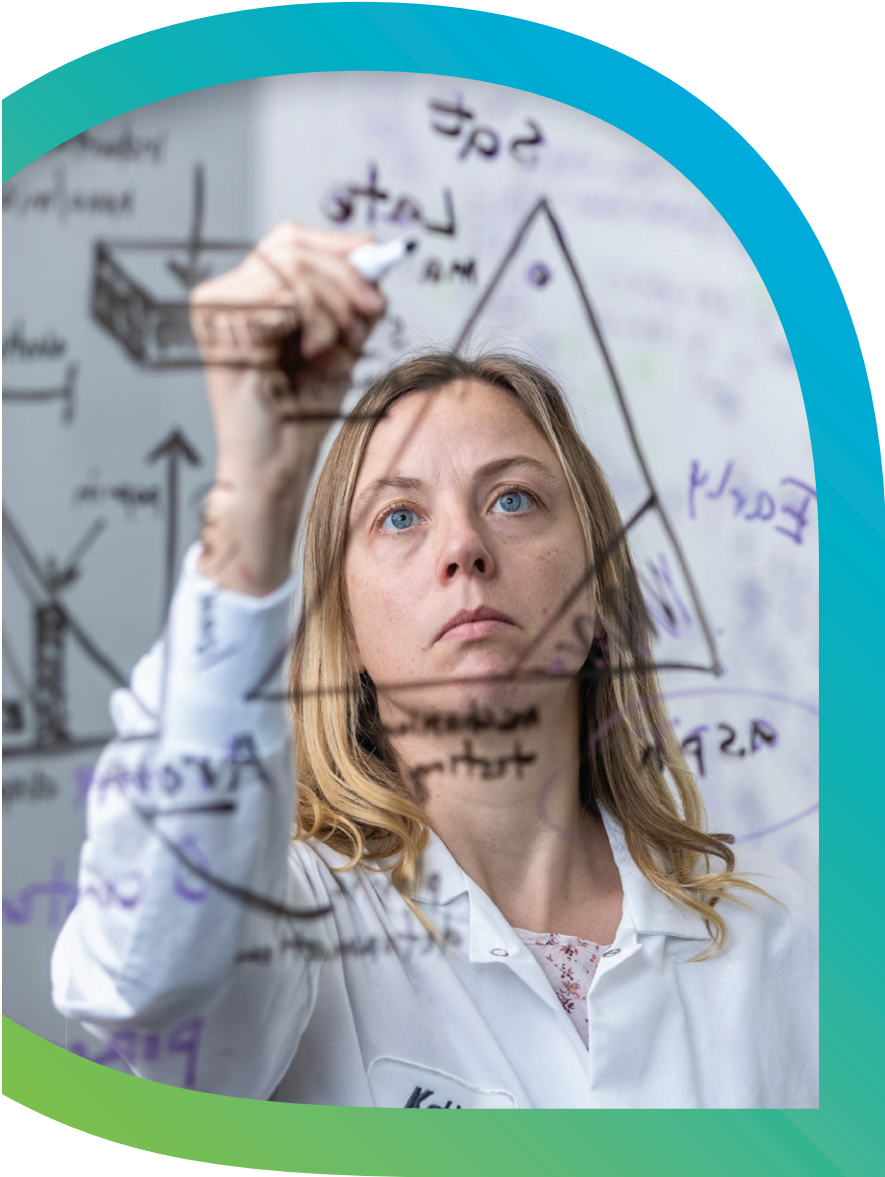
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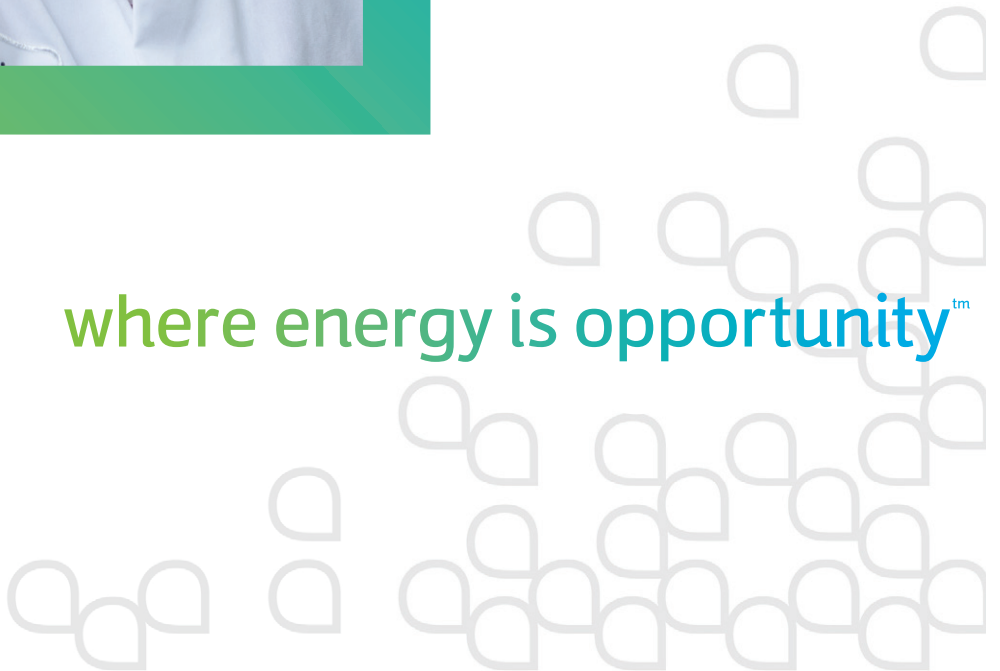




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