



Why the WIPP Annual Leadership Conference is Important to Me

A few years ago, I went down to one of WIPP's first national meetings in Washington, D.C., because I was looking for a balanced organization, one that was not ideological, but fact-finding and problem-solving. WIPP is very much that, and the organization has fought hard to sustain nonpartisanship. I am very pleased to have been asked to take an even more active role in WIPP's work representing women business owners in Washington, D.C.

- Georgia Berner, President and CEO, Berner International Corp

WIPP's annual meeting is a "don't miss it" on my calendar. The programming is right on target with what we should know to advocate economically for our businesses. It is vital to be involved at this level, and WIPP makes it easy. This annual meeting gets us focused and targeted –and pumped up -- for the next year of activities. And the icing on the cake is the great networking opportunities with other dynamic women business owners.

- Mary Schnack, President, Mary Schnack & Associates

WIPP's national conference provides a unique opportunity to hear from the country's leading experts, policy-makers and political leaders. Because WIPP is known as the premier voice for women business owners on Capitol Hill, its annual conference attracts only top-level speakers, and as an attendee, you have the opportunity to truly have your voice heard. Each year the conference gets better and better. It is an investment in which you receive a significant ROI – as some might say – it's priceless.

- Susan Solovic, CEO, Susan Solovic Media

I joined WIPP to be part of an organization that was making great strides improving the business environment for women-owned businesses, and when I attended my first WIPP annual conference, I experienced firsthand how that happens. Now, a few years later, I am confident my voice is heard on the issues important to me. I'm a bottom-line, issue-driven business woman— and appreciate WIPP's practical approach to educating our legislators, regarding what we need to be successful and drive economic growth.

- Gloria Berthold Larkin, President, TargetGov at Marketing Outsource Associates, Inc.

The annual WIPP Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. is an empowering couple of days in our Nation's beautiful Capitol city. As women business owners, we have a responsibility to learn about and understand public policy and stay connected to the people who are creating legislation that affects our businesses and our lives. The Awards Ceremony is the highlight of this very important Conference, where women business owners from all over the United States are recognized for their valuable achievements throughout the year. This is one event that I make sure that I never miss—make sure you don't either.

- Julie Reiser, President & Co-founder of Made in USA Certified; WIPP Awards Chair

We need to take a step back and realize that as members of WIPP we are not just doing policy work, or non-profit work, or volunteer work – we are changing history.

– Magdalah R. Silva, President & CEO, DMS International, Inc.

Last year as the economy was spiraling downwards, WIPP joined the NWBC to take a different perspective by measuring the impact of women entrepreneurs on the American economy. We were pleased to discover that women-owned businesses provide almost \$3 trillion to the economy. That's trillion, with a t. We also found that 20 percent of women-owned businesses hire more than one employee, and the remaining 80 percent do not. This year, WIPP is joining again with the NWBC to find out why more women are not hiring and to discover what the barriers are. If they are federal policies, this study will enable the NWBC to make recommendations to change those policies. We know that Access to Capital is a problem as the economy struggles to improve; we are going to address this issue at a summit the NWBC and WIPP are hosting at the end of the WIPP annual conference. Economic experts, policy makers, bankers and other lenders will meet with women entrepreneurs to get to the heart of this particular challenge.

We look forward to the Summit, the results of the new study, and continued support of the growth of women businesses through identifying and removing those impediments and encouraging women entrepreneurs to hire.

- Margaret Barton

Since there have been so many changes and growth opportunities for WIPP during this past year, I am looking forward to hearing from each of the Committees and Councils on WIPP's growth. I want to learn about WIPP's strategic planning for the future, and how I, as a member, can become more involved.

I always look forward to the Annual WIPP meeting to be able to meet with Florida Congress Representatives (House and Senate) to re-emphasize the importance of our Economic Blueprint and see what they intend to do to help us. One of the other highlights each year is to hear from Ann Sullivan, who gives us an update on the issues in Washington DC that impact small businesses.

- Nicolina Stewart, CPA, PFS, CLU, ChFC, President and CEO, Capital Management Advisors, Inc.

I gain valuable insight at every annual WIPP conference, from the first one where my eyes were opened to the process of legislation and how to have an impact, to the most recent where thanks to WIPP's untiring advocacy and creation of Give Me 5, the probability of participating in the \$6 billion government procurement market became a reality. Nowhere else could I have the access, the relationships, the success.

- Gloria Berthold Larkin, President, TargetGov at Marketing Outsource Associates, Inc.