



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Elevate Your Skills
Amplify Your Network
Empower Your Community



September 22, 2023
University at Buffalo Alumni Arena



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

EVENT ITINERARY

- 12:00pm** **Aspiring Leader Student Registration**
- 12:15pm** **Aspiring Leader Student Session**
Aspiring Leader Students: Bull Pen, Alumni Arena
- 12:30pm** **General Registration**
- 1:00pm** **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
ALL: Alumni Arena
Sheri Scavone CEO, WNYWF
Christine Bonaguide and Bridget Williams, Event Chairs
- 1:15pm** **Spark Talk**
Jillian Hanesworth, Poet Laureate
- 1:35pm** **Session 1**
Aspiring Leaders: Alumni Arena
Emerging Leaders: Center for the Arts
- 2:25pm** **Session 2**
Aspiring Leaders: Alumni Arena
Emerging Leaders: Center for the Arts
- 3:25pm** **Session 3**
Aspiring Leaders: Alumni Arena
Emerging Leaders: Center for the Arts
- 4:20pm** **Unlock Your Network**
ALL: Alumni Arena
- 5:20pm** **Closing Remarks**



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

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A VOICE FOR EVERYONE

Letter from Co-Chairs

Dear Supporters and Guests,

Welcome to the 2023 Women's Leadership Summit. We are so excited to be with you and all of our incredible presenters, moderators, mentors, and other friends today. The mission of the WNY Women's Foundation is to create opportunities for each woman to learn, earn, lead, and thrive. Today, we are excited to create a space for open and inspiring conversations surrounding the experiences, lessons learned, and goals that women can accomplish when serving in positions of leadership in the workplace and in the community.

In 2023, 28 of the 100 largest employers in Western New York are led by women executives. In the macro sense, however, women CEOs run only 10.4% of Fortune 500 companies, 8.2% of S&P 500 companies, and 5.8% of Global 500 companies. While those numbers may not surprise you, we hope that they will fire you up!

As Co-Chairs of this event, we would like to thank our CEO, Sheri Scavone, her staff, and our Committee, whose dedication and passion brought this event to life. Thank you also to our Board members, especially Chair Teresa Bair, for their commitment to our mission. Thank you also to our amazing speakers. We look forward to them sharing their experiences, challenges, and triumphs as they have navigated being women in leadership. Most of all, we thank you – our sponsors and guests. Your support funds the WNY Women's Foundation's efforts to create significant change in the lives of women in Western New York and beyond. We believe this is a unique time in history for women, and this afternoon we celebrate the incredible strides that are possible when women join together.

Your Co-Chairs,
Christine Bonaguide and Bridget Williams



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STUDENT SESSION

Bull Pen, Alumni Arena

12:15PM Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace

Learn practical strategies to navigate office dynamics, foster collaboration, and make a lasting impact in your career. Handle workplace challenges with professionalism by asserting your presence, communicating with confidence, and building strong relationships with colleagues and superiors. Attendees will leave with the tools to navigate the complexities of the modern workplace with poise and ambition while fostering a positive work culture to influence organizational success.



Emily Burns Perryman is the lead of PR and communications at Millennium Trust Company in Chicago and is actively involved in social change efforts, co-founding Unite by Night and serving on boards for the National Federation for Just Communities of Western New York and the Western New York Women's Foundation. Emily holds a B.A. in Advertising and Marketing Communications from SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology and a MA in Social and Public Policy with a Nonprofit Management professional certificate from Empire State College, earning the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Academic Excellence in 2020.

During her tenure as President and CEO of the United Way, Arlene Kaukus co-founded the WNY Women's Foundation to eliminate barriers women face. Arlene holds two Master's Degrees, one in Social Work and another in Business Administration, and has held executive leadership roles, including 8 years as President/CEO of United Way. Previously she directed the UB Career Design Center and, currently, serves as the Director of Alumni and Industry Engagement at UB. As a certified Executive and Leadership Coach, Arlene enjoys helping individuals design fulfilling lives that promote growth and positive change.



In 2017, Cynthia Bass became Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion of Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), eventually leading to her appointment as Chief Diversity Officer. Cynthia focuses on embedding DEI into ECMC's culture, collaborating with leadership, and representing the institution at community events. She holds degrees in Human Resources and Organizational Leadership and is deeply involved in community leadership roles and council memberships related to diversity and inclusion. Cynthia's efforts have earned her various accolades, including being recognized as one of the "2022 Top Diversity Officers in Healthcare."



OPENING SESSION

Alumni Arena

Poet Laureate



JILLIAN
HANESWORTH

Jillian is the first ever Poet Laureate of Buffalo, New York, a community organizer, recording artist and activist. Currently Jillian travels the country performing poetry and speaking on various topics including; art for activism, the impacts of storytelling and finding your purpose to create your own lane. Jillian also oversees “Buffalo Books”, a nationally recognized program which aims to improve access to culturally relevant books for residents of the east side of Buffalo.

Sheri is honored to have joined the WNY Women's Foundation in January 2014. Sheri is a licensed PT, earned an MS Executive Leader degree in Health Systems Administration and has an advanced post-graduate certificate in Palliative Care. She gives back to her community by sharing her time and resources on the Boards of Broadview Federal Credit Union, GLYS WNY and Niagara Lutheran Health Services. Ms. Scavone also serves on the UB School of Social Work Dean's Advisory Council, UB Early Childhood Research Center Advisory Board, the Charity Navigator Advisory Council, as a Governor's appointee to the NYS Child Care Availability Task Force and provides thought leadership on numerous local, NYS and national coalitions and organizations.

CEO of WNY WF



SHERI
SCAVONE

OPENING SESSION

Alumni Arena

Event Chairs



**CHRISTINE
BONAGUIDE**

Christine is a partner at Hodgson Russ LLP who provides corporate, transactional, governance and contract law advice to companies in a variety of industries, including healthcare. As a member of the firm's healthcare practice, she assists clients with transaction structuring and contracting arrangements. Christine also has extensive experience with legal issues facing family-owned and other privately held businesses.

Bridget, an estate planning attorney has a particular focus on family business and succession planning. She earned a B.A. from New York University and an MBA from the University at Buffalo, graduating Summa Cum Laude from the University at Buffalo School of Law. Recognized as a Super Lawyers, Rising Star in 2022 and 2023, Bridget is deeply engaged in her community. She serves on several boards, including Convergence Council, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Humanities New York, Planned Parenthood of Central & Western New York, and Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center.

Event Chairs



**BRIDGET
WILLIAMS**

ASPIRING LEADER SESSIONS

Alumni Arena

1:35pm Session One: “Managing Up, Down, & Across Your Organization”

Learn practical strategies to navigate office dynamics, foster collaboration, and make a lasting impact in your career. Handle workplace challenges with professionalism by asserting your presence, communicating with confidence, and building strong relationships with colleagues and superiors. Attendees will leave with the tools to navigate the complexities of the modern workplace with poise and ambition while fostering a positive work culture to influence organizational success.

Moderator



TERRY KIRBY-
CHIMWAZA

Terry Kirby-Chimwaza is a project director for student support service grants at SUNY Erie Community College with 15 years of experience working with programs that support the academic, personal, and vocational needs of at-risk students. Originally from Syracuse, Terry relocated to the WNY area to attend Buffalo State University and went on to receive a BA in Communications and MS in Higher Education Administration. Once considered an at-risk student herself, as neither of her parents attended college, Terry is inspired daily by the courage, tenacity, and resilience displayed by the students she serves and has made it her mission to ensure that they have the resources needed to be successful.

Sarah Gilson has over twenty years of Organizational Development and Human Resources experience in a variety of industries including manufacturing, banking, academia, and staffing. She focuses on understanding an organization’s strategic objectives to align talent best practices to help move the business forward. She is a firm advocate for women’s leadership initiatives and is involved in mentoring and coaching female leaders, has held many leadership roundtables, and has founded a local women’s leadership group.

Presenter



SARAH GILSON

ASPIRING LEADER SESSIONS

Alumni Arena

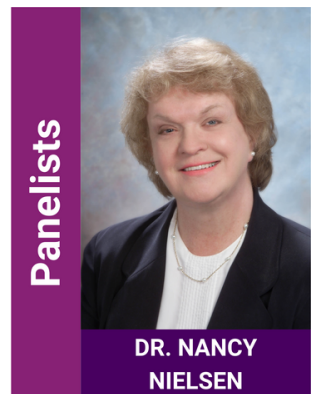
2:25PM Session Two: **Aspiring Leader Panel:** **"Through the Looking Glass: Lessons Learned from Lived Experience"**

Led by successful women leaders who have navigated various industries, this panel offers a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities young professionals encounter as they embark on their career journeys. Drawing from their real-life experiences, the panelists will share valuable insights and personal anecdotes, providing a candid and authentic exploration of the professional landscape. Attendees will gain practical advice on building resilience, fostering self-confidence, and embracing growth opportunities during this pivotal stage of their careers.



Mercedes Wilson is a wife, mother of 4 awesome children, an author, advocate, host of 7Life with WKBW Channel 7 and entrepreneur. When she was just 28 years old she was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer, which changed everything. From that battle, For Our Daughters Inc, a non-profit geared at teaching youth how to advocate for their health and wellness was birthed. They have served over 6,000 young women across WNY. Mercedes is also the host of the new digital platform for Channel 7 called "7Life" which highlights all of the great people and places across WNY.

Nancy H. Nielsen, MD, PhD is senior associate dean for health policy and clinical professor of medicine at the University at Buffalo (UB) Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. She holds a doctorate in microbiology from Catholic University in Washington, D. C. and a medical degree from UB. She is an internist and infectious disease specialist. Dr. Nielsen is a nationally recognized authority in medicine and an outspoken advocate for the uninsured and affordable health insurance for all Americans. She is a sought-after media commentator on issues of public health, physician responsibility, the need for high quality health care, the coronavirus pandemic and emerging infectious diseases. A past president of the American Medical Association, she served for two years as senior advisor in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



ASPIRING LEADER SESSIONS

Alumni Arena

2:25PM Session Two: **Aspiring Leader Panel:** **"Through the Looking Glass: Lessons Learned from Lived Experience"**

Panelist



**DR. ELLEN
GRANT**

Dr. Ellen E. Grant, PhD, LCSW-R, a dedicated SERVANT LEADER, currently serves as the Executive Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, Diversity & Inclusion at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. With over 25 years of experience in health, behavioral health, education, and human services, Dr. Grant has held diverse leadership roles, including Deputy Mayor to Mayor Byron Brown and CEO of Niagara Falls Medical Center. As an author and licensed clinical social worker, she published "The Female Worker's Fourteen Commandments for Powering Up Your Career" in January 2021. She also founded Women Who Lead, a mentoring program for women, and initiated the DivHERSity Award program for young girls in local schools.

Erika Brason, the owner and founder of Rebel Ride Indoor Cycling & Strength, transitioned from a 20-year career in local broadcasting to the world of small business. Her boutique fitness studio on Transit Road in East Amherst, open since 2017, offers a unique fitness concept. Erika holds a degree in broadcasting at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. During her broadcasting career, Erika worked as an anchor and reporter for both WIVB, channel 4, and WGRZ, channel 2, covering a wide range of stories, including politics, historic events, and community features. She attributes the studio's success to her dedicated staff and is proud to share her story as a woman-owned business, inspiring other young women to pursue their dreams.

Panelist



ERIKA BRASON

Panelist



ANN EVANKO

Ann E. Evanko is the former President, and Managing Partner of Hurwitz Fine P.C., currently she is listed as Special Counsel. Ann is listed in Business First's "Power 250" and "Power 100 Women." In 2016 Business First awarded Ann with the Lifetime Achievement for Women of Influence. She was the 2019 recipient of the Edwin F. Jaeckle Award, the highest award the University at Buffalo School of Law and the Law Alumni Association can bestow, and is recognized as one of the Top 25 Women Lawyers and Top 50 Lawyers in Upstate New York by Super Lawyers. Ann was a founder and past President of the Western New York Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York. She is a former Chair of the WNY Women's Foundation and currently serves as an Emerita Advisory Board Member of the organization.

ASPIRING LEADER SESSIONS

Alumni Arena

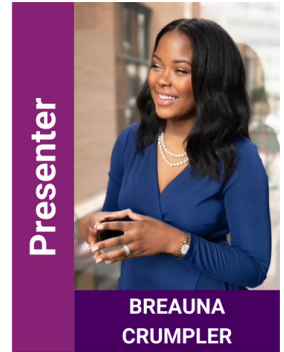
3:25PM Session Three: "Networking 101: It's Who You Know"

In the fast-paced and competitive business landscape, building and nurturing a strong network can be the key to unlocking exciting opportunities and career growth. Led by seasoned professionals and networking experts, this engaging session provides practical tips and actionable insights to help attendees navigate the world of networking with confidence and authenticity. This session will empower you to develop your personal brand, forge meaningful relationships, and leverage your connections to accelerate your professional journey.



Alexis Webster, Major Gifts Officer at Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, holds a BA in Communications from the University at Buffalo and an MS in Public Relations Management from Buffalo State University. Her natural aptitude for communication and active listening led her to a career in Communications and Public Relations. With a background in community engagement, brand awareness, and relationship building, Alexis is committed to her community and actively serves on various boards and committees. She is dedicated to making a lasting impact for future generations. In her free time, Alexis enjoys travel, culinary exploration, and pursuing her passion for wine.

Breauna O. Crumpler, Vice President and Private Client Advisor II at Bank of America Private Bank in Buffalo, specializes in wealth management, leading a team of specialists in investment management, estate planning, lending, and philanthropy. Committed to community impact, she founded the Seattle Chapter of the Black Professional Group, and in Buffalo, she serves on various leadership councils and boards, including Explore & More-The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Children's Museum, WNY Women's Foundation, and SUNY Erie's Foundation. Breauna holds an MBA and is a member of the National Black MBA Association.



Carolyn, the founder of Carolyn Human Communications LLC, launched her business in 2012 after a decade of experience in newsrooms and PR agencies. Focusing on nonprofit clients in Western New York, she specializes in strategic communications, public relations planning, and video production, driven by her passion for compelling storytelling. Her company is a certified Women Business Enterprise (WBE) in New York State. Carolyn actively contributes to her community, currently co-chairing the 21st Century Fund at the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and serving on the board of the WNY Women's Foundation. She's also a Buffalo Business First 40 Under 40 honoree.

Unlock Your Network

Alumni Arena

An exhilarating and unique speed networking session designed to connect ambitious professionals with experienced women leaders across our region. This session offers an unparalleled opportunity to build meaningful connections, seek guidance, and glean insights from accomplished women who have made significant strides in their respective fields. During this fast-paced and interactive session, participants will have the chance to engage in one-on-one conversations with a diverse group of Experienced Leaders. Whether you're seeking career advice, exploring new opportunities, or simply eager to practice your networking skills, this event is the perfect platform to unlock your full potential and accelerate your professional growth.

Instructions for the Session:

Once we reconvene in the Alumni Arena please sit at your assigned table (as indicated on your nametag). You will have the opportunity to engage and connect with four different Experienced Leaders. We have compiled a group of over 60 incredible women including politicians, lawyers, CEOs and more, and they are very excited to give back to their community. This is a wonderful opportunity for aspiring leaders to practice their networking skills and for emerging leaders to interface with their colleagues. There will be facilitators to help keep the conversations flowing and questions on the table in case you get stuck! Don't forget to exchange business cards which you can keep in the back of your leadership journal!

EMERGING LEADER SESSIONS

Center for the Arts

1:35PM Session One: "Leading With Differences in Mind"

This leadership development opportunity is for those who want to be intentional about building effective relationships with their team specifically across racial and gender differences. The session will focus on how to cultivate a team culture that is high-performing and inclusive. Leaders will leave understanding how values, mindsets, and assetbased thinking interconnect and build diverse, long-standing, strong teams.

Moderator



ALLISON
WAINICK

Allison brings nearly 25 years of experience in medical associations and non-profits, specializing in federal government affairs, public relations, education, and diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI). In Buffalo, she joined The Jacobs Institute, becoming the Director of Communications & Community Engagement, where she developed STEM education programs. Allison now serves at the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, overseeing governance and DEI efforts, including a leadership program for early-career physicians. She holds degrees from GWU and Syracuse University and actively engages in advocacy and travel with her two children.

Deb Hanmer has dedicated her professional career to education and nonprofit leadership. Deb is a sought-after leadership coach in both the public and private sector and specializes in developing effective management and support systems within organizations. Before starting Breakthrough, Deb oversaw student support services for a network of schools in Washington, DC. Deb holds a Bachelors of Arts in History from Dartmouth College, a Masters of Public Administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University and a Masters in Educational Leadership from Cambridge College.

Presenter



DEB HANMER

EMERGING LEADER SESSIONS

Center for the Arts

2:25PM Session Two: "Changing the Game: Women Redefining Systems for Gender Equity"

This engaging panel brings together accomplished women leaders who have successfully challenged traditional norms and paved the way for gender equity in various industries. Through insightful discussions and inspiring personal experiences, the speakers will shed light on the current state of gender disparities in the workplace and explore effective strategies for driving change. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of their unique role in reshaping organizational cultures and systems to create a more inclusive and equitable environment.

Moderator



SIOBHAN
SMITH

As Co-President of Catapult, Siobhan Smith is informed by her two-decade career as a senior human resources and organizational development executive in a number of international corporations. This experience brings unique value to her work with Catapult clients in developing actionable strategic plans, creating customized development plans, and improving the effectiveness of their leadership teams. Siobhan holds a bachelor's degree in industrial organizational psychology and a master's degree in organizational communication & development from Canisius College. Additionally, she is a certified executive coach and is a certified practitioner for both the Hogan assessment and Leadership Versatility Index.

EMERGING LEADER SESSIONS

Center for the Arts

2:25PM Session Two: "Changing the Game: Women Redefining Systems for Gender Equity"

Panelist



APRIL
BASKIN

April N. McCants-Baskin, a Buffalo native, is a dedicated advocate for equity and social justice. She represents Erie County's diverse District 2, serving as Majority Leader and later as the youngest and first freshman Chairperson in the Erie County Legislature's history from 2019 to 2023. Her focus includes jail system reform, body cameras for deputies, and initiatives like ending the shackling of youth detainees. Baskin also champions healthcare equity, leads MWBE policy reforms, and played a pivotal role in securing a \$100 million Community Benefits Agreement for Erie County residents. Connect with her on social media for updates and engagement.

Rene Petties-Jones is the President of the National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, Inc. and a member of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo's Racial Equity Roundtable. She currently serves on the PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) Northeast District Board of Directors as their first ever DEI Officer, and is Vice Chair for the National PRSA Diversity Committee. Rene is currently Chair of the Board of Directors for the National Federation for Just Communities serving affiliates from across the country and internationally. Rene currently sits on the Superintendent Advisory Board for the Williamsville School District, the Alberti Center for Bullying Prevention, the Editorial Advisory Board for the Buffalo Healthy Living Magazine, the President's Advisory Council for Buffalo State University.

Panelist



RENE PETTIES-
JONES

Panelist



GWENDOLYN
BORK

Gwendolyn A. Bork is the owner and Impact Strategist of the Queen City Collaborative since September 2018. She also is an Independent Financial Advisor with The Legend Group (Lincoln Investment) since September 2016. Gwendolyn is the president of FOCUS: For Our Community Unity & Support, Lancaster & Depew Addiction Prevention Coalition. She is a NYS certified addiction recovery coach and published author, 'Walking the Fine Line' (2004). She was honored in 2022 by the NYS senate as the "Woman of Distinction", presented by Senator Gallivan. In 2023 she was an "Athena Award" finalist for Leadership by the Buffalo Niagara Partnership.

EMERGING LEADER SESSIONS

Center for the Arts

3:25PM Session Three: "Networking Your Way Up: Prioritize Relationships to Elevate Your Career Amidst the Busyness"

In a world driven by perpetual motion, women face the daunting task of balancing work, commitments, and networking in their career journey. Today's Hustle Society teaches us that busyness is good, it is a status symbol, a sign of productivity. But it has a downside that leaves women frustrated, burned out, not performing optimally, and keeps them from having time for what's important to achieve next level success. This session offers a transformative escape from the busyness cycle. You will discover a three-step process for building a career that is productive, fulfilling, and enjoyable while learning to prioritize networking to drive success in your respective field.

Moderator



ROSANNA
BERARDI

Rosanna Berardi is a lawyer, mother, and entrepreneur. She built her immigration law firm, Berardi Immigration Law, from her home apartment to a multi-million-dollar company in 17 short years. She is a sought-after speaker and has been featured in Forbes, The Los Angeles Times, Politico and The National Post. She is an Adjunct Professor at SUNY Buffalo School of Law. Rosanna is also the CEO of High Wire Woman, a consulting firm that provides systems and solutions to working women.

Peggy Sullivan is a consultant, author, speaker, and founder of SheCAN!, a national nonprofit organization for professional women. She is the author of Happiness is Your Responsibility and the forthcoming book, From Busy to Badass. Peggy has delivered keynotes and consulted worldwide for organizations including Google, Bank of America; Blue Cross Blue Shield; Ingram Micro Women; Merrill Lynch, United Healthcare; and International Jewish Federation. She has appeared in Forbes and on FOX, CBS, and NBC and ABC. Peggy received numerous awards including the 2021 Woman in Leadership Award and the Distinguished Marketer Award from Marketing 2.0 in 2022.

Presenter



PEGGY
SULLIVAN

Unlock Your Network

Alumni Arena

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SUMMIT PRESENTER

Cynthia R. Bass

Chief Diversity Officer, Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, ECMC



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Jane Griffin



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WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

**The WNY Women's
Foundation creates
opportunities for
each woman to
learn, earn, lead,
and thrive!**



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

ADVOCACY

VOICE

LEADERSHIP

**ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT**



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

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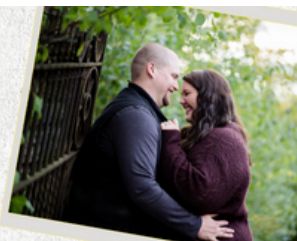
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WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION



- Develop your skills
- Grow your community
- Illuminate a pathway to leadership

An initiative of ALL IN, Ready, Set, Lead! is a data-informed program that addresses the gender gap in leadership by facilitating career, personal, and community development for women and gender minorities in the first five years of their careers.

Program Includes:

- 6 months of structured mentorship
- Four unique educational sessions
- Formal coaching
- Networking and community development among cohort
- Investment of \$500 per Aspiring Leader



Aspiring Leaders

Learn more and apply here!



Mentors

Learn more and apply here!



For More Information:

VISIT wnywomensfoundation.org/mentorship | EMAIL sydney@wnywfdn.org

2023

Fall IN Fashion

The exclusive event you LOVE, inclusively CHIC!



NOVEMBER 3rd
12pm-3pm

The Powerhouse
@Buffalo Color Park
140 Lee Street
Buffalo, NY

This popular event will feature a diverse, high fashion runway show, luxurious auction items, and exquisite cuisine at one of the area's hottest venues!



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

VISIT

wnywomensfoundation.org

EMAIL

suzanne@wnywfdn.org

For More Information:



G
A
M
E

CHANGEHER

The WNY Women's Foundation (WNYWF) is partnering with Game ChangeHER to help transform female lives through leadership promotion and pathways. Additionally, WNYWF will receive great exposure through many different channels associated with UB Women's sporting events!

Join us for our pack the house nights on the following dates:

Soccer – October 15th at 1pm

Volleyball – October 20th at 6pm

Basketball – TBD Day in February

**ELEVATING FEMALE LEADERSHIP
THROUGH ATHLETICS**



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
Strong Women. Stronger Community.

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