

THE SOCIETY PAGES

Bi-Monthly Newsletter for Supporters of The Society of Professional Women



Pictures by Todd Photography

Over 150 guests attended November's Trademark interview, "Moms, celebrities and influencers," featuring NBC Today Show host Sheinelle Jones. The interview was conducted by The Main Line Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Bernard Dagenais at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern.

Announcing both a new day, and continuity, for SPW



As I step into the role of Executive Director of The Society of Professional Women, I'm deeply honored to join a community that believes in empowering women to reach new heights. While our focus is squarely on advancing SPW's mission, I've been asked today to share part of my story and why I'm excited about this opportunity.

I'm an immigrant, a woman of color, a mom to a beautiful young woman, and a cancer survivor. Like many immigrants, I came to this amazing country for opportunity. Like many of you, I have navigated personal and professional hurdles that have tested my resilience and strengthened my resolve. My professional path has been multifaceted. Launching a fast-growth corporate career after putting myself through a master's degree in communications at UNC, Chapel Hill, I served as a global communications executive for Fortune 500 companies, where I had to find my voice as a brown woman in the most powerful rooms. My career has included roles leading a nonprofit arts organization, spearheading advancement at a community foundation, founding an initiative dedicated to advancing South Asian professional women, and serving on the Board of A Woman's Place, dedicated to advocating for survivors of domestic violence.

In my role at the Main Line Chamber, I've had the privilege of leading the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Forum, bolstering the Chamber Foundation and furthering the Talent and Education Network, connecting young people to opportunities that shape their futures. An enduring passion to make a difference has infused every role I've ever served. Every role has deepened my understanding of disparities and my

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Director's MESSAGE

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commitment to equity.

These experiences have also reinforced my belief in the power of empathy, collaboration and mentorship to break barriers. They have strengthened my conviction that we have more in common than what separates us, and that we can achieve more collectively than we can individually. SPW embodies this ethos, creating a space where members can share their journeys, celebrate successes, learn from each other and work together to overcome challenges.

While SPW was established to advance gender equity, our mission extends to creating a more inclusive and equitable society for everyone. We recognize, for example, the vital role men play as allies and advocates in this work. By welcoming all individuals regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, and economic or professional background into our community, we work together to the benefit of everyone. We know that the pursuit of equity helps not only individuals, but entire communities, businesses and industries. Whether through mentorship, advocacy, or simply showing up for one another, our collective strength can drive meaningful progress for the good of all.

I'm humbled by the opportunity to build on SPW's incredible legacy, including the work of outgoing Executive Director Nicole Stephenson. Please be sure to read Main Line Chamber President and CEO Bernard Dagenais' note on this transition on page 5.

As we move ahead, I'm excited to work with SPW's sponsors, my outstanding Chamber colleagues and our powerful network of supporters, attendees and advisors that include the SPW Advisory Council. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at vagrawal@mlcc.org. I look forward to supporting your journey and partnering with you to create a future where every individual's potential is realized.

Wishing you a happy holiday season,

Vibha Agrawal

Featured EVENT

SPW Trademark Event

Moms, celebrities and influencers
Thursday, November 14, 2024



Pictures by Todd Photography

NBC Today Show host Sheinelle Jones (center) spoke about lessons learned from some of the most impactful and inspirational people — including the mothers of some of the best known sports figures and celebrities in the world.



Pictures by Todd Photography

Over 150 attendees gathered for the final SPW Trademark event of 2024 at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern, a Doubletree by Hilton.



Pictures by Todd Photography

Comcast Business presented the American Heart Association, the featured nonprofit at the event, with a \$1,000 donation during the event. Pictured (L-R) are Steffanie Gonzalez, Comcast Business; Nicole Stephenson, The Main Line Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Wadsworth, Main Line Health; Jasmine Bender, American Heart Association; and Miles McCaskey, American Heart Association.

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Signature EVENT And WOMEN HELPING WOMEN

Gold Leaf Celebration 2024

Thursday, December 5, 2024



Pictures by Todd Photography

Accepting the 2024 Women in Leadership Award, Lincoln Financial and Lincoln Financial Foundation SVP and Chief Diversity Officer Allison Green Johnson shared Lincoln Financial Group's unwavering commitment to empowering women and other underserved communities, noting that "a rising tide lifts all boats," and "when one of us improves, we all benefit."

Women Helping Women Graduation

Monday, December 2, 2024



Congratulations to the Graduating Class of the Women Helping Women Peer Mentoring Circle 2024!

This year's class included Sally Eaton, Firsttrust Bank; Renee Bowen, Girard Advisory; Gina Mahon, Main Line Health; Sarah Kiley, UnitedHealthcare; Mikaela Potrako, Surrey for Senior Services; Alexandra Pratts, Comcast; Brittany Taglienti, M&T Bank; Kamala Rayavarapu, Main Line Health; Erica Zecca, Quality Degree, Inc.; Valerie Moffson, Automotive Training Center; Nancy Lacoite, Berkshire Hathaway; and Mackenzie Durkin, The Main Line Chamber of Commerce.

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Founded in 1934 by Samuel A. Green, Firsttrust was established to provide opportunities for homeownership when other banks were turning people away. This entrepreneurial spirit remains at the core of Firsttrust today as we continue to support businesses and individuals across the region.

As the region's largest family-owned financial institution, Firsttrust serves business owners, entrepreneurs, and families throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. From large operating companies and real estate developers to local physicians and contractors, we are honored to help thousands achieve success in the place we all call home.

Giving back to our community has always been part of our mission. Firsttrust proudly supports over 300 nonprofit organizations each year, focusing on education, health, housing, and children's welfare in the Delaware and Lehigh Valleys. During this season of giving, we are reminded of the importance coming together to make a difference. Whether it's through volunteering, charitable contributions, or acts of kindness, we support all of those creating a brighter future and spreading holiday cheer throughout the region.

From all of us at Firsttrust, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a prosperous New Year.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



A Message From The CHAMBER



A message about transition from the President & CEO,
The Main Line Chamber of Commerce

When I began my role as President & CEO of The Main Line Chamber of Commerce in 2010, the Society of Professional Women was just completing its first year in operation. The program tapped into something that many didn't know existed – the strong desire for women in business to be together and learn from each other while benefitting from great content.

With this issue of The Society Pages, we say goodbye to Nicole Stephenson, who has helped to lead the Society of Professional Women over the past 10 years. We wish her happiness in her future pursuits. Nicole performed admirably as the third person out in front of the SPW program, and the Chamber staff and Board of Directors are grateful for her service to our members and the cause of helping to empower women.

“I would like to take this opportunity to express my utmost appreciation to everyone at The Main Line Chamber of Commerce, my colleagues, members, sponsors and supporters,” Nicole said. “This last decade with The Main Line Chamber has easily been one of the most gratifying opportunities I've had in my lifetime. Many of you have often heard me say that this was more than just a job to me, it was purposeful work.”

We are pleased to have the talent we need inhouse as we transition to a new Executive Director, Vibha Agrawal. Vibha, who also serves as Vice President for Community Impact at the Chamber, is perfectly equipped for the role. She has already made a significant impact at the Chamber through her contributions with the Talent and Education Network, Government Relations, the Greater Philadelphia DEIB Forum and the Chamber Foundation. She brings a passion for helping women to succeed, a deep knowledge of issues relating to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, and outstanding skills as a communicator and business leader.

Before I even began in my current role, I recognized that SPW was something special. Having interacted with Chambers of Commerce across the state and nation, I have yet to encounter women-in-business programming that is so robust.

SPW's mission: “To accelerate the advancement and expand the influence of women leaders of all professions and generations, strengthen our business community, and support the region's non-profit organizations.”

Among the keys to the success of SPW have been the professionalism of The Main Line Chamber of Commerce staff and the vision of our Board of Directors. While the program has been copied, it has not been matched.

I, the Chamber's Board of Directors and the entire Chamber team expresses our appreciation to the Society of Professional Women Advisory Council. We remain committed to the continued success of this important program and are excited about the years to come. Please reach out to me at bdagenais@mlcc.org or Vibha at vagrawal@mlcc.org with any questions of if you would like more information about SPW.

In service,

Bernard Dagenais

Upcoming EVENTS

Lunch & Share: Personal Branding & Your Authentic Self

Thursday, January 30, 2025, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Radnor Valley Country Club

Authenticity has become a rare commodity in a time when identities are tailored for follows and likes. Join Emmy award-winning journalist Jessica Kartalija and communications strategist Melissa Grimm to learn how having a unique and genuine personal brand can further fuel success and happiness. Together, they will share strategies for developing a personal brand and telling your story in an empowering way that builds trust and brings you closer to achieving personal goals.



Trademark Event: Leveraging AI in Communications: Efficiency, Innovation, and Human Touch

Thursday, February 27, 2025, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Triple Crown at Radnor Hotel

In today's digital era, organizations are embracing AI to revolutionize marketing. Successful business leaders understand the importance of maximizing resources while still delivering impactful messages. AI can enhance efficiency, save time and spark creativity. However, it's vital to recognize the irreplaceable human touch. Crafting emotionally resonant narratives and interpreting nuanced cues require human creativity and insight. Balancing AI's benefits with human expertise ensures impactful marketing and development communications strategies for companies.



Trademark Event: Dark, Dirty, Dangerous: A Vibrant Fireside Chat

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 8-10:30 a.m., Philadelphia Country Club

From ground-breaking viewpoints on recruiting strategies and a game plan for securing funding business growth to successful succession planning for a family business, Karla Trotman has actionable steps to benefit professionals. An entrepreneur, business owner and Black generational wealth advocate shares thought-leading insights from her new book, *Dark, Dirty, and Dangerous: Building the Vibrant Structure of Manufacturing*. Her take on how diverse change-makers and innovators see evolution from a different perspective offers insights into curating content that aims to teach, entertain and build business.



Trademark Event: Harness Fear as Your Superpower: A Transformative Journey

Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Hilton Philadelphia, City Avenue

Imagine facing a challenge so significant that it shakes your confidence to the core. Join Cynthia Gouw, a multiple Emmy-winning broadcast journalist with more than half-a-million subscribers, recognized entrepreneur and *Star Trek* actress as she shares how experiences of intense fear reshaped her perspective on success. Through deeply personal stories, Cynthia will take you on a journey in which she overcame paralyzing fear and used it as a driving force to excel and grow in her career. Come ready to engage, think differently and discover powerful tools for growth and inspiration to reach new heights in your professional journey.



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