



**WOMEN PRESIDENTS'
Educational Organization.**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Susan Johnson
Women Presidents' Educational Organization
sjohnson@womenpresidentsorg.com
212-688-4114 Office
917-601-5778 Mobile

WPEO BESTOWS ANNUAL AWARDS SALUTING ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS, CORPORATIONS AND ADVOCATES

New York, NY (March 4, 2016) – The Women Presidents' Educational Organization (WPEO) announced several honors, recognizing outstanding achievements on behalf of women's business enterprises (WBEs), corporations and women's business advocates. These accolades, conferred at its Annual Awards Breakfast today at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, reflect singular achievement and accomplishment by companies that support a dynamic community of certified women-owned businesses in the Northeast. The Northeast region includes New York, Northern New Jersey, Southern Connecticut and the Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia areas.

The vast majority of Fortune 1000 corporations require women-owned businesses to be certified as such, in order to participate in their supplier diversity programs. WPEO helps its Corporate Members tap into a pool of high caliber certified vendors and connects WBEs in a variety of industries with each other.

Criteria for the winners of the Outstanding Corporation Awards include significant accomplishments in support of WPEO women business owners and the women's business community, innovation, participation in the proprietary Done Deals™ challenge, as well as overall commitment to the mission of the WPEO. Advocate and Star awardees are selected based on significant involvement with WPEO and support of women-owned businesses. The President's Award winners, selected by Marsha Firestone, Ph.D., WPEO President and Founder, and Sandra Eberhard, Executive Director, WPEO-DC, have gone above and beyond in their service to the WPEO.

The 2016 award winners include:

New York Region

- **Con Edison – Outstanding Corporation**
- **Ranjini Poddar, Artech Information Systems LLC – Outstanding Women's Business Advocate**
- **Sharon Olzerowicz, Hired by Matrix – Star Award**
- **Sandy Russell, Verve Professional Services Inc. – President's Award**

DC Region

- **Aetna – Outstanding Corporation**
- **Alicia Thompson, Capital One – Outstanding Women's Business Advocate**
- **Lois Gamerman, Soft Stuff Distributors, Inc. – Star Award**
- **Pam Mulcahy, Dominion – President's Award**

“The theme of our awards program this year is Spotlight on Innovation,” said Eliseo Rojas, Chief Procurement Officer, Interpublic Group and Chair, WPEO Board. “There is a strong connection between diversity and innovation. An inclusive culture helps accelerate new ideas and becomes an incubator for creative thinking,” he said.

“It is a privilege to recognize the success of these extraordinary WBEs, Corporate Members and Advocates in the New York and Washington, D.C. Regions,” said Marsha Firestone, Ph.D., President and Founder. “Collaboration is a valuable resource for innovation. Our programming initiatives, partnerships and advocacy empower WBEs to build relationships with Fortune 1000 corporations that require women-owned businesses to be certified in order to access their supplier diversity programs. WPEO helps our corporate members tap into a pool of high caliber vendors and connects WBEs in a variety of industries with each other.”

Sponsors for the 2016 Annual Awards Breakfast include:

- **Corporate Lead Sponsors:** Bank of America; Con Edison; Microsoft; AIG
- **WBE Lead Sponsors:** Adco Electrical Corporation; Atrium Staffing; HighRoad Press; Progressive Promotions; the Studio

About The WPEO

The Women Presidents' Educational Organization (WPEO) is a regional affiliate of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the nation's premier third-party certification organization for Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs). The mission of the WPEO is to create increased access to business opportunities for WBEs. Its programs develop skills and knowledge for WBEs, advocate in the public and private sectors, foster relationships between WBEs, corporations and the government, and provide full service, third-party certification to women entrepreneurs in areas that include New York, Northern New Jersey, Southern Connecticut, Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. WPEO is incorporated in the state of New York and is recognized as a 501(c) (3) organization. For more information please visit www.wpeo.us or call (212) 688-4114. Follow us on Twitter @WPEONYDC. Like us on [Facebook](#).

#