



THE

NEXT >

SEVENTH ANNUAL

Women in Business CONFERENCE

CHAPTER

JUNE 13, 2024

9:00 am to 2:00 pm

NIU Center | Naperville, IL

Our Speakers



Elaine Hand, President, InnerView LLC

Innerview Inc. owned and operated by Elaine Hand, has been in business since 1995. She works within organizations on Human Resource Management as well as Leadership and Management Development. Her seminars have proven over and over again the philosophy that all companies have two major concerns: Systems and People. No matter how much money an organization spends on top of the line, high quality systems, the organization is only as good as the people who own, operate, manage, and work for them. Elaine has facilitated workshops and conducted seminars on basic management, strategic planning, generational diversity, internal and external customer service, time management, team building, leadership, motivation and employment assessment strategies. She has spoken at national, regional and local conferences.



Denise Schoenbachler, Ph.D., Interim Dean, Northern Illinois University College of Business

Denise D. Schoenbachler, Ph.D., has been on the faculty of Northern Illinois University since 1992 and served as dean of the College of Business from 2006 to 2016. Her 30-year academic career at NIU has included the position of chair of the Department of Marketing, professor of marketing and coordinator for the interactive marketing area of study. She also held the Douglas and Cynthia Crocker Endows Professorship in Business, with responsibility for building and managing the Women's Leadership Institute in the NIU College of Business.

After retiring from the college in 2022, Schoenbachler agreed to take on the role of Interim Dean in July 2023. Throughout the last year, she has been integral in leading our search for a permanent dean candidate, as well as the college's AACSB accreditation visit in 2023.



Sheri De Shazo, RN MBA MHA LSS-GBc, FACHE, President, Advocate Sherman Hospital

Sheri De Shazo has served as President of Advocate Sherman Hospital service area in Elgin Illinois, since 2020. She holds a Masters in Health Care Administration and Master of Business Administration, as well as Bachelors of Science in Nursing. She has led strategic initiatives and market growth, leadership development, and regulatory compliance, while improving clinical services and operations in academic, ambulatory, and acute care settings

within several health systems.

Sheri is currently Co-Chair, Illinois Hospital Association Committee on Health Disparities, the American Hospital Association Maternal & Child Health Governance Council (Alumni) and also serves as a Board member for Greater Elgin Chamber, Saint Charles Chamber of Commerce and the Alignment for Continuing Education. Sheri is a 2022 Daniel Burnham Fellow of Leadership Greater Chicago and a Board-Certified Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

She enjoys reading, family time, music and practicing martial arts.



Anna Haghooie, Managing Director, Valtruis, Operating Partner, Welsh, Carson, Anderson & Stow

Anna Haghooie is a Managing Director at Valtruis, a Welsh, Carson, Anderson & Stow (WCAS) company and an Operating Partner at WCAS. Valtruis is a unique platform that invests in and partners with disruptive leaders whose mission is to align and transform healthcare through value-based care.

Previously, Anna was a Managing Director of the Blue Venture Fund and Sandbox Industries where she managed over \$900M in capital across four funds.

Anna currently serves on the boards of Wayspring, InStride Health, Oncology Care Partners, Tuesday Health, and TailorCare. She previously served on the boards of Contessa, PWN Health, ExactCare, naviHealth, Change Healthcare, Quilted Health, Somatus, ZeOmega, and SonarMD. Anna earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a MBA with honors from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Anna is a Fellow in the Health Innovators Fellowship at the Aspen Institute and lives in Chicago, IL with her husband and two children.



Dr. Nakia Hall, Owner, Next Level Core Solutions

As a Next Level leader who has been in the trenches advocating for and executing sound, effective and servant leadership, Dr. Nakia Hall is a well-respected speaker, facilitator, thought partner, strategist, and owner of Next Level Core Solutions, a leadership development firm based in Chicago, IL. She holds a specialty in supporting leaders, policy makers, teams and stakeholders in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion, board and leadership development, team culture building and human inclusion implementation.

Additionally, she provides strategies to aid in strategic planning, as well as framework establishment and building.

Dr. Nakia holds an Educational Doctorate degree in Ethical Leadership and certification in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University. She has delivered numerous presentations, workshops, and keynotes for conferences and leadership teams. As a trusted strategic advisor, she has also formally mentored and trained a number of middle level managers and senior leaders who were seeking leadership development. She has authored several articles and her resilient advocacy has caused her to be featured in multiple media outlets including NPR Illinois, Chicago Tribune, NBC-Chicago and more.



Ashley Davis, Owner, Stronger Together

Ashley Davis is the owner of Stronger Together, an all-women's gym in Bloomington, IL. She has owned the gym for just over 4 years, and it has become her mission to help women learn that being strong is more important than being THIN. She is a certified personal trainer and strength coach who is centered on women's fitness. Ashley did not start out in the fitness industry nor is she a former athlete. She did not come into fitness until after her children were born and she was in her 30's.

"I wanted to be the mom who played with their kids at the park and not the one who sat on the bench. Once I started, I turned that drive from wanting to do it for my kids to wanting to do it for myself. When I changed my focus from my kids to myself, I noticed a change in my drive and my goals. I wanted to see how strong I could be, I wanted to challenge myself to be the best version of myself I could be, and when the drive changed, I saw myself with different eyes."

She started working at the gym she now owns and is able to help other women change their lives. Due to this shift in her work life, it set her whole life on a different path.



Andrea Beach, Founder and CEO, Axxess Network and Beachfront Custom Development

Andrea Beach is the founder and chief executive officer of several companies, ranging from custom software and mobile app development to healthcare and IoT networks. Often featured as a change agent and force of nature in the business world, Ms. Beach has an impressive history of being ahead of the curve on technologies and trends that drive consumer behavior.

A leading authority on technology, business and consumer behavior, Ms. Beach has advised Fortune 500 companies, mentored a variety of startups, and created engaging

activations for some of the world's largest brands.

Her track record includes owning over 21 companies, predominately in the technology space, but also ranging from healthcare to marketing and IoT networks. She's credited with inventing the first global platform capable of programming and sending personalized mobile communications in 147 languages, conceptualizing campaigns to support online voting in real time, consulting on cybersecurity issues, and implementing one of the world's first examples of dynamic, location-based text messaging.

Having spent decades studying and working with the world's leading authorities in business, leadership, communication, health, relationships, beauty and spiritual endeavors, and reaching a level of success most only dream of, Ms. Beach has now turned her focus outward to help others by collapsing decades of knowledge and experience into the most effective strategies, methods and proven tips that have the most impact fastest. Her latest endeavor, Life Unleashed! is helping millions of people worldwide live their ultimate dream lives, and she considers it her greatest achievement and lasting legacy.



Maria Pinto, Designer, Maria Pinto Designs

A visionary fashion designer, artist and business leader, Maria's passion for art and fashion was evident even at childhood. As a shy and introspective girl, she found solace in museums, where she studied various artists' creative expressions and techniques.

Her dedication to art led her to study both fashion and fine arts at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago, where she was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2017. To this day, Maria believes that art is all-encompassing,

whether it appears on a canvas or a dress.

Her journey in the world of fashion began with an internship in New York City under the guidance of renowned womenswear designer Geoffrey Beene. Beene's focus on fabric, tailoring, and minimalist design greatly influenced Maria and continues to shape her work today. Upon returning to Chicago in 1991, she launched a line of embroidered and beaded scarves and wraps, which quickly gained popularity among leading boutiques such as Ultimo, Bergdorf Goodman, Barneys, and Saks. Even Mick Jagger became a fan, wearing one of Maria's scarves during a performance at Soldier Field.



Laura Barnard, Founder, Behavioral Marketing Expert, Speaker, Author, BREAKTHRU Brands

Laura Barnard, the visionary Founder of BREAKTHRU Brands, embarked on a mission to transform the landscape of leadership. With a philosophy rooted in breaking barriers and championing equity, Barnard leverages her extensive experience in leading global brands to build a future where diverse voices in leadership are not just heard but celebrated and amplified. Her journey, influenced by her academic pursuits in Psychology at Harvard and an MBA in

Marketing & Strategic Management from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, reflects a deep understanding of the intersection between brand power and leadership dynamics. As a former Division I athlete and a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community, Barnard infuses her work with energy, collaboration, and a relentless drive for inclusivity. Her approach is not just about developing leaders; it's about nurturing authentic and bold leaders to shape a more equitable world.