



WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP
COUNCIL
2022

SPEAKER INFORMATION



Barbara Brown

**Principal
Sperling Brown Associates**

Barbara Brown, Principal of Sperling Brown Associates, is an executive coach with a proven track record of transforming individuals into more proficient leaders and communicators, offering strategic insights into effective ways to build relationships and achieve results. A communications and presentations skills expert noted for her vitality and engaging style, Brown's added insight and experience as a professional actor enables her to help clients become the best, most authentic version of themselves in both live and virtual interactions.



Natalia Cardenas

**Luxury Spirits Portfolio Consultant
E&J Gallo**

Natalia Cardenas is a BAR 5-Day graduate, a Certified Spirits Specialist, and is Level 3 Spirits-certified by WSET. She is currently the Luxury Spirits Portfolio Consultant for E&J Gallo Winery.

While studying Journalism at the University of Miami and managing one of Coconut Grove's oldest restaurants, she cultivated a passion for hospitality. Upon moving to Chicago in 2010, Cardenas bartended at the James Beard winning restaurant, The Purple Pig and then at Balena restaurant, another James Beard awarded restaurant group, where she became enthralled with the culinary scene. She discovered that her love of people, history, culture, and travel could all be had within the spirits industry. With a renewed sense of purpose, Cardenas fully invested in this new career path and has never looked back.

Throughout the years, Cardenas has remained a devoted industry champion. She is committed to educating the trade and giving them the tools to succeed. She feels an enormous sense of gratitude for the industry titans who have guided her on her journey and feels a profound responsibility to pay it forward.



Francis Creighton

President & CEO

Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

Francis Creighton was confirmed as the President and CEO of WSWA in September 2022. Prior to joining WSWA, Creighton was the President and CEO of the Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) where he spent over 5 years leading the trade association that represents the U.S. consumer reporting industry.

Creighton has extensive experience in Washington D.C., working in both the legislative and executive branches of government for over 15 years on financial services, employee benefits and campaign finance reform. He also served as Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut. In the private sector, Creighton led government relations for the Financial Services Roundtable, which represents top U.S. financial companies including banks, asset managers, insurers and payment firms. Additionally, he worked for the Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA) on affordable housing and other issues important to the real estate finance industry. Recognized as a "Top Lobbyist" by The Hill newspaper, Creighton has appeared in national and international print, television and radio outlets as a contributor and subject matter expert.

Creighton holds a master's degree in public policy from Georgetown University, where he serves as an adjunct faculty member. He received his bachelor's degree in political science and history from the University at Albany, State University of New York, and also studies at Glasgow University. He resides in the Washington, D.C. area with his wife Julia.



Jessica Cyr

WLC Board Chair

Vice President, Sales Execution

Martignetti Companies

Jessica Cyr is the WLC Board Chair and Assistant Vice President of Sales Operations for Martignetti Companies. She works with both sales and operations to increase efficiencies throughout the company leading projects that include: Sales Manager Certification, Portfolio Manager Certification, Train-the-Trainer, mentoring initiatives, community outreach, Uncorked Newsletter, Bentley

University Women Center and Business Partnership, and various technological roll outs and and/or upgrades.

Starting with a small independent beer supplier, Cyr quickly identified a love and passion for the beverage alcohol industry – one that has continued to grow over the past fifteen years. She started as an On Premise Sales Manager at Martignetti Companies and has worked her way up in roles of increasing responsibility over the last twelve years. Cyr has expanded her dedication to the industry by participating in varying diversity initiatives. She is a founding and current member of the Martignetti Companies Women's Beverage Alcohol Symposium as well as the 2019-2020 Vice Chair of the WSWA Women's Leadership Council (WLC).

Cyr lives in Foxboro, Massachusetts and enjoys the outdoors, exercising, traveling, volunteering in her community, and spending time with her family.



Addy Flint

**Founder
Raendrop Art**

Raendrop Art was developed by Addy Flint, a thirteen year old with chronic illness and a passion for art. She understands the hospital can be an isolating, boring place to spend extended amounts of time. She hopes to provide inspiration, joy and hope to teen patients who are undergoing medical treatment. Flint believes patients should be able to access interesting, age-appropriate art even when a patient is not in Art Therapy. Raendrop Art will provide patients with boxes of project-focused art supplies in conjunction with artist-led classes.

Flint is a student, a multi-media artist, a dog lover and a two-time cancer survivor. But her creativity and passion for art is what defines her. Flint has won art contests at the city and state level and placed third in the Reflections Contest National Art contest across various media. Her current passions are anime and alcohol brush markers.

Yes, we realize Raendrop Art is spelled a bit oddly. Flint's talent for art was passed down to her from her grandmother, Susann Rae. Flint named her organization RAEndrop Art in her honor. Her grandmother passed away in 2020 after an isolated stay in a physical rehab facility during the COVID Pandemic. Witnessing this tragedy solidified Flint's drive to create a community for those undergoing treatment.



Michele Bratcher Goodwin

**Award-winning Author, Advocate, Professor
Social Commentator**

Michele Bratcher Goodwin is the Executive Producer of Ms. Studios, host of the popular podcast: On The Issues With Michele Goodwin, and author of the award-winning book, Policing The Womb: Invisible Women and the Criminalization of Motherhood. She is also a Chancellor's Professor at the University of California, Irvine and founding director of the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy.

Dr. Goodwin is a 2022 Margaret Brent Award Honoree of the American Bar Association, an award named for the first woman lawyer in the United States. She is the recipient of the 2020-21 Distinguished Senior Faculty Award for Research, the highest honor bestowed by the University of California as well as the first law professor at the University of California, Irvine to receive this award. Dr. Goodwin is the 2021-2022 Provost's Distinguished Visiting Faculty Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. She is an elected member of the American Law Institute as well as an elected Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and the Hastings Center (the organization central to the founding of bioethics). She is an American Law Institute Adviser for the Restatement Third of Torts: Remedies.

Dr. Goodwin is an acclaimed bioethicist, constitutional law scholar, and prolific author. She directed the first ABA accredited health law program in the nation and established the first law center focused on race and bioethics. Her constitutional law scholarship appears in the Harvard Law Review, Yale Law Journal, Chicago Law Review, Cornell Law Review, University of Pennsylvania Law Review, California Law Review, Michigan Law Review, New York Law Review, and Northwestern Law Review among others. She is the author/editor of six books.

A sought-after public commentator, you may find Dr. Goodwin's work in print, radio, and television news, including at Politico, Salon.com, Forbes, The Washington Post, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, Chicago Sun-Times, Vox, Mother Jones; ABC News; NBC News; NPR, and HBO's Vice News among others. She is an Executive Committee member of the ACLU and American Constitution Society.



Gina Langone

AVP, National Accounts
Martignetti Companies

Gina Langone is the Assistant Vice President of National Accounts for the Martignetti Companies in the Century Division. Langone has been in the Alcohol Beverage Industry for 30 years. Past positions include 25 years as National Retail Beverage Alcohol Buyer for BJ's Wholesale Club (BJ's Wholesale Club Holdings, Inc. is an American membership-only warehouse club chain based in Massachusetts, operating primarily on the East Coast of the United States) and District Sales

Manager at Winebow of Massachusetts, (Winebow is a distribution network in 20 markets that cover 65 percent of the wine consumption in the U.S).

Langone was the first female Sales Manager in the Century Division (Diageo and Moet Hennessy Spirits) at the Martignetti Companies, she quickly was promoted to Assistant Vice President of National Accounts, Century Division where she spends her time concentrating on key retailers such as Total Wine and More, Costco, BJ's Wholesale Club, Whole Foods, Target, Trader Joe's, and many others. She recently was appointed to the 2022 Event Committee for the Martignetti Companies Women's Beverage Alcohol Symposium, an event she has been invested in for many years. This fall's event was one of the best years yet for the symposium and Langone is looking forward to continuing to advocate for women's advancement in the Alcohol Beverage Industry.

Langone believes alcohol beverage is an amazing industry! Her number one requirement when she was looking to make a change from retail, was continuing to work in this dynamic field. Her retail buying experience highlighted that there are very few Consumer Package Goods Industries as innovative, creative, and exciting as Alcohol Beverage. Langone holds a BA in Communications from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and lives in her native Western Massachusetts with her husband. She is currently navigating her new reality as an "empty nester," as her daughter has departed post-college. Her free time is spent with family and friends, watching her niece's and nephews' soccer matches, and reading, especially on the beaches of Cape Cod.



Cindy Leonard

EVP, General Manager, Fine Wine Division
Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits

Cindy Leonard is Executive Vice President, General Manager, Fine Wine for Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. Leonard leads the efforts on SGWS new fine wine strategy by overseeing the direction for the fine wine selling divisions across the U.S. Prior, Leonard served as Senior Vice President, Supplier Management and Business Development. In that role she was responsible for managing the national Supplier Management and Business Development team, as well as managing programs and promotions for strategic and emerging suppliers intended to

drive results and achieve performance goals. She has more than 30 years of experience in the wine and spirits industry, having held various sales roles for E&J Gallo, Remy Cointreau, and Jackson Family Fine Wines. Leonard joined SGWS in 2000 as a Brand Manager, and since that time has advanced into roles in the Company's Fine Wine Division and Supplier Management teams. She has received the Court of Master Sommelier Introductory Sommelier certification and WSET Level 2 Award in Wines and Spirits with Merit, as well as an Executive Certificate of Leadership Management from the University of Notre Dame Mendoza School of Business, and was a 2018 graduate of SGWS Exceptional Leaders Program.



Theresa D'Addio-Rossi

**Director of Operations
Allied Beverage Group, LLC**

Theresa D'Addio-Rossi is the Director of Operations for Allied Beverage Group, LLC, in Elizabeth, NJ. She owns all operations within the warehouse, beginning at receiving and ending at loading shipments for delivery. Theresa joined Allied Beverage Group in 2019 as the Operations Process Director.

D'Addio-Rossi started her career at Allied when it's new distribution facility opened, responsible for building and directing a new team of 8 employees to operate the most state of the art liquor distribution system at the time. This included an Automated Storage and Retrieval System (ASRS), Order Storage Retrieval System (OSR), Warehouse Management System (WMS) and Warehouse Control System (WCS), all from different vendors. D'Addio-Rossi was then promoted to Director of Operations to lead both the warehouse and process teams in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

D'Addio-Rossi has over 11 years' experience in the supply chain industry, including production and quality control roles at PepsiCo and AAK.

She received her Bachelors of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering with a concentration in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing from Stevens Institute of Technology. She currently resides in North Plainfield, NJ, with her husband, Steve, 2 children, William and Noelle, and 2 dogs, Ellie and Tilly.



Nancie McDonnell Ruder

**Founder & CEO
Noetic Consultants**

In 2002, Nancie McDonnell Ruder founded Noetic Consultants, a marketing and leadership consultancy based in Bethesda, MD, specializing in consumer research, branding, training and executive coaching. Noetic's clients have included Samsung, PepsiCo, Nike, Marriott, Mayo Clinic, Georgetown University and Discovery, Inc.

Ruder wrote *How Senior Marketers Scale the Heights* in 2017 and just launched a new edition, available on Amazon starting November 9, 2022. In this book, Ruder offers senior marketers a fresh take on maximizing their potential. She offers concrete tools straight from the "Jacks" and "Jills" she interviewed and her own 25-year career, which began at the Leo Burnett Company before she founded Noetic in 2002.

Ruder serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, her undergraduate alma mater, and is the creator of the Noetic Art & Science Assessment™. She is an active member of Chief and Vistage and has served on various non-profit boards.



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Michelle Russo **Chief Communications Officer** **U.S. Chamber of Commerce**

Michelle Russo joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce – the world's largest advocacy organization for business – as its first CCO in April 2019. Representing companies of all sizes and across all sectors, the Chamber is the voice of American business in Washington DC, across the country and around the world.

In short order, Russo transformed and modernized the communications function to develop integrated strategies and data-driven campaigns that frame the public debate, elevate issues important to the business community and drive value for its members. Under her leadership, the Chamber has grown exponentially the reach and impact of its work.

Specifically during the coronavirus pandemic, the Chamber has executed a fast-moving and far-reaching communications strategy to articulate the many challenges facing employers, advocate for much-needed financial assistance, educate small business owners on available relief programs, and chart a Path Forward to help Americans safely and sustainably return to work and their lives. The Chamber's thought leadership has been covered extensively by hundreds of stories in local and national outlets including Axios, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and through dozens of TV appearances on CNBC, CBS's Face the Nation, CNN, Fox Business as well as local stations. The Chamber's digital content also has spiked during this period with social media engagements soaring 400 percent and web traffic surging more than 1,000 percent. Finally, the Chamber has convened more than 500 virtual events attracting thousands of viewers every week.

Before joining the Chamber, Russo spent four years in London as executive vice president of Global Communications for leading media company Discovery, Inc., where she supervised cross-functional marketing and communications teams across the U.S., Europe, Latin America, and the Asia Pacific. In addition, she led the top-to-bottom communications and public affairs strategy for the company's groundbreaking first broadcast of the Olympic Winter Games across Europe. Prior to relocating to London, she served as the company's senior vice president of Corporate Affairs & Communications in the U.S. There she built and managed Discovery's reputation as a global media leader, including its debut as a publicly traded company.

Earlier in her career, Russo was a media consultant on two Presidential campaigns and served as the primary spokesperson on media issues at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under both Democratic and Republican leadership. There she led public relations for major policy initiatives, including the relaxation of media ownership rules and regulatory reviews of industry mergers. She also served on the FCC crisis response team after the September 11 attacks.

Russo earned a Master of Arts in Communication Management from the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism at the University of Southern California, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies, with an emphasis in business administration, from UCLA.



Elizabeth Sandler

Founder & CEO

Juliette Works

Elizabeth Sandler is a seasoned senior executive with 25 years of experience in global financial services. Most recently, she was COO for Blackstone Real Estate Debt Strategies (BREDS). Prior to Blackstone, Sandler spent 16 years at Deutsche Bank, where she was COO of Group Risk, COO of Structured Finance and COO of Commercial Real Estate.

In 2018, Sandler started Echo Juliette to use her experience as a strategist and COO to help C-suite teams optimize their performance as both individuals and as a team. Echo Juliette is an authorized partner of Patrick Lencioni's The Five Behaviors® methodology, based on his best-selling book.

In 2020, recognizing the need for additional investment in closing the Gender Leadership Gap, Echo Juliette launched Juliette Works, a subsidiary that provides coaching, mentorship, and strategic guidance to professional women. Sandler is passionate about seeing women have successful leadership careers and offers corporate clients group coaching programs and 1:1 coaching for select executive women.

Sandler is a Certified Professional Coach (CPC), a Society of Human Resource Management Senior Certified Practitioner (SHRM-SCP), and a Qualified teacher of Mindfulness (MBSR Level 1).

Sandler has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Duke University and an MBA from The Wharton School where she currently serves as a member of The Graduate Executive Board. She is also on the board of two public companies (LON:ESYS and NYSE:FSK) and Scholars of Finance, a 501(c)(3) that promotes values-based leadership for university students pursuing finance careers.



Todd Thrasher

Distiller

Thrasher's Rum

For over a decade Todd Thrasher has been at the forefront of DC and Virginia's artisanal cocktail movement, partnering with celebrated chefs to open numerous acclaimed restaurants and bars as owner and beverage director. But in December 2018, the lauded bartender and sommelier launched his most ambitious project yet, Potomac Distilling Company, an urban distillery producing Thrasher's Rum and housing a Polynesian-style neighborhood tavern, Tiki TNT.

He got his break when he began working at Café Atlantico, with José Andrés, and the two became fast friends over the course of a six-year collaboration. He quickly began learning about wine and earned his certification with the Court of Master Sommeliers. Thrasher helped dear friends open Restaurant Eve, which would achieve renown as a temple to New American Cuisine. He became a key partner in the Armstrongs' culinary empire, the Eat Good Food Group.

The Potomac Distilling Co. debuts with three molasses-based rums: traditional White Rum; a dry Spiced Rum; and most anticipated of all, Thrasher's own Green Spiced Rum. Thrasher's motto on the distillery smokestack states Make Rum, Not War, and that is exactly what we will do at the 2022 WLC Conference.



Hillary Wirtz

**Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Breakthru Beverage Group**

Hillary Wirtz is a passionate and energetic fourth-generation owner of Breakthru Beverage Group. She is a results-oriented leader with a knack for identifying opportunities that benefit partners and community members as well as the organization. Wirtz has served in leadership roles in sales, management, learning & development (HR), and community relations supporting the company's philanthropic efforts. In her current role, Wirtz oversees the strategy and implementation of talent initiatives to help shape an inclusive work environment that values the unique perspectives of all people and inspires them to thrive and reach their full potential. Her responsibilities include growing the company's relevance with stakeholders by shaping strategies and programs to build a diverse team that is more representative of the partners and multi-cultural communities Breakthru serves.

Wirtz originally joined Wirtz Beverage (now Breakthru) as Director of Training and then transitioned into sales roles to further broaden her perspective on the organization. Her first such role was district manager for off-premise, E & J Gallo division and then she transitioned to new account development in Chicago. This role evolved into on-premise business manager for key customers as well as community partnerships including organizations such as No Kid Hungry, Equality IL, and Meals on Wheels which further ignited her passion for community service. She is a passionate community ally and is personally involved in several charitable organizations and events. Prior to joining Breakthru, Wirtz taught first grade for 10 years.