And, Still We RISE

Shirley Chisholm - Ruby Bridges - Susan La Flesche Picotte - Sojourner Truth - Madam CJ Walker - Rita Moreno - Mae Carol Jemison - Nanny of the Maroons - Kamala Harris

BELA's 4th Annual Women's Symposium

Friday March 25th, 2022

10am-1pm

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Monique Greenwood

Monique Greenwood is the former magazine editor-in-chief of Essence who traded her writing pen in for a spatula and opened Akwaaba Bed & Breakfast Inns in 1995. Her impressive collection of historic B&Bs have included locations in Brooklyn, NY; Cape May, NJ; New Orleans, LA (sold after Hurricane Katrina); Washington, DC; Philadelphia, PA; and The Mansion at Noble Lane, a boutique resort on a 22-acre former Woolworth estate in Pennsylvania's Poconos Mountains. Monique recently sold her Cape May and Washington, DC, locations and will double-down in Philadelphia, where she's renovating a historic building to open a tea room and event space, and in the Poconos, where she's adding four new cabins. All ranked "5 stars" on Trip Advisor, the Brooklyn inn was selected the winner of The Travel Channel's Hotel Showdown.

Akwaaba has been featured in countless magazines and newspapers, including Country Living, Travel & Leisure, National Geographic Traveler and Brides magazines, as well as on every major network. In fact, the company and Monique were the subjects of their own reality show, called Checked Inn, on Oprah's network OWN. The motivational speaker, author of two books and inaugural Endowed Chair of Entrepreneurship at Howard University--her alma mater--Monique continues to blaze new trails. Up next: a home collection for a major, national department store chain featuring the Akwaaba Inns brand.

PANELISTS

Mairi Adrian

Spiritual Life Coach | Blooming Soul Inc

Blooming Soul INC is dedicated to support individuals in nurturing their relationship with themselves and through that live their life up to their full potential.

Ariane Alaia Cruz, MSc

Philanthropy Fellow | Philanthropy New York

Ariane is determined to inspire cultural shifts within the third sector (nonprofit and philanthropy) and toward a reparative and radically inclusive future, particularly through language as praxis.

Evelyn Alvarez

Senior Director of Family Initiatives and Early Childhood | Ramapo for Children

I create and lead workshops for parents and educators.

AnnaLiisa Ariosa-Benston

Artist and Entrepreneur | Satellite Art Shown/ Opal Arts Platform

Step and pivot - no challenge is without a solution.

Iymaani Aytes

Founder & Principal Consultant | The Aytes Agency

I help companies and organizations reach their strategic goals through: Strategic partnerships, Hi-impact engagement strategies Arts Program Development.

PANELISTS

Crystal Barrow, JD, CPC

Career Coach | Shape Your Success Coaching

It's never too late to do work you love! Create it! Claim it! Own it!

Renisha Bishop

Administrative Manager, Equity Research | Piper Sandler & Co.

Do your homework and over prepare - readiness, especially for opportunities, is essential.

Chloe Anne Blaise

Master in Public Health, Birth/Postpartum Doula, Certified Lactation Counselor

I believe that black women being able to access care is the bare minimum! Black women are owed and entitled to elite quality care. "If you are silent about your pain, they will kill you and say you enjoyed it" - Zora Neale Hurshton.

Asha Boston

Filmmaker/Non-Profit Foundation | Filmmaker/The Dinner Table Doc

Never be afraid to tell someone exactly who you are and what you intend to do.

Bianca Brooks

Tv Host and Writer | PBS, New York Times

"I heard it through the grapevine, great things take time."

PANELISTS

Hannah Brooks, MD

Doctor, Chief Resident | Columbia University Medical Center

I take care of all patients, from birth to death, to help address and prevent chronic disease and promote health and wellness.

Cassandra Brown

NY Program Manager | Girls Leadership

I am unapologetic in my commitment to cultivate environments where girls of all abilities can develop and rock!

Shanté Carlan

Portrait + Lifestyle Photographer | Shanté Carlan Photography

Everyone has a story, it's my purpose to help authentically spotlight yours.

Kinshasa A. Coghill

Certified Low Vision Therapist, Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist | Helping You Maintain Your Independence

I enjoy working alongside visually impaired individuals to increase and enhance their independence, efficiency and safety.

Nanthale Collins

Marketing Data Analyist | Vimeo

Vimeo business is to help bring video to all business and I collaborate to communicate data that comes through the business that will inform the B2B Marketing Strategist on marketing tools, traffic to the cite and creating and monitoring business metrics.

PANELISTS

Chelsea Crisafulli, AIA LEED AP BD+C

Architect | FXCollaborative

I seek to participate in projects that focus on using the built environment for the betterment of the communities it serves and stand firm in my belief that women's and girl's voices are powerful and have a place in every design conversation and beyond.

Dominique S. Crump, MSW

Systems Consultant | CDW - Digital Velocity Solutions

Your existence is a priority. Speak what you seek until you see what you've said; just be ready for the lessons that come along with the journey of your desires. Remember, your existence IS a priority.

Catherine Del Castillo

Program Manager | Girls Leadership

We help girls practice using the power of their voice and celebrate their most authentic selves.

Deidra Demens

CIYT (Certified Iyengar Yoga Teacher) | Deidra Demens

I teach therapeutic women's yoga classes to help women through all stages of women's health from menstruation, prenatal, postnatal, and menopause.

Dr. Sandra J. DuPree

Executive Director | Hyde Leadership Charter School - Brooklyn

Professional and Personal motto: To whom much is given, much is required.

PANELISTS

Vonnetta Ewing

Sr. Director of Talent Acquisition | Take Two Interactive Software, Inc.

Always do your best and know that your best is good enough.

Sherley Garcia

Influencer Marketing Manager | Gallery Media Group

My motto: The only thing worse than failing, is not trying at all.

Rosa Garcia

Entrepreneur | Rosa's At Park, 31 Agency

I love to empower women, show them the great opportunities that can happen when you have a positive mindset.

Sherida Gayle, LMFT

Psychotherapist | Empowerment Counseling & Psychotherapy Services, LLC

As a therapist, I assist clients holistically and believe that like our fingerprints each individual is unique and no two people are alike.

Bria Grant, Esq.

Business and Legal Affairs Associate | The Source Magazine

Formal education can earn you a living, but self-education will earn you a fortune!

PANELISTS

Deborah Hall

Director of Post-Secondary Success | MESA Charter High School

I support young people in successfully entering adulthood with the skills to navigate college, career and life so that they can reach their greatest potential.

Kenya Harley, BS, CT(ASCP)

Senior Cytologist | Atrium Health

My hope is that each girl is hopeful about her own future and has the opportunity to explore her unique interests/talents despite society's attempts to stratify and limit her.

Naimah Jabali-Nash

Freelance Producer | Fearless Minds Productions

"Be yourself, everyone else is already taken." (Oscar Wilde)

Quincy S. Jackson

CEO/Founder | The Quincy Group

Always continue to lift others as you rise - TQG

PANELISTS

Rajni Jacques

Global Fashion & Beauty Director | Snap

Rajni Jacques is a New York-based fashion director, creative director, and public speaker.

Arienne J. Jones, Esq.

Senior Policy Advisor | Cook County State's Attorney's Office (Illinois)

I work to realize a reimagined justice system -- one that's infused with grace and mercy and where people aren't permanently defined by their worst moment.

Jaye Jones, PhD

Director of Strategic Initiatives | Lehman College - City University of New York (CUNY)

Bloom where you're planted.

Deja Knight, MA, MPH

Doctoral Student | Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

I conduct research on and advocate for Black women's sexual health and well-being.

PANELISTS

Ashlee Korsberg

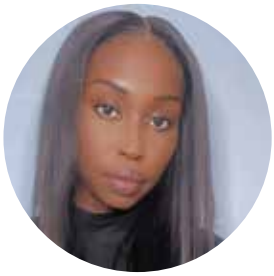
Associate Consultant, Health Data Informatics | The Segal Group

I provide insight to employers on their population's health and help employers improve their health benefits.

Gwendolyn Lewis

Community Coordinator | FDNY Office of Recruitment and Retention

Thirteen women joined FDNY, bringing the total number of female firefighters to the highest number in the department's 157-year history on International Women's Day. FDNY's total number of female firefighters was brought to 134 – 1% of the department's more than 10,000 firefighters. You can be in the next newbies class to make history; you can do this.



Veronica Lorya

Manager, DEI Partnerships & Engagement | Prada Group

I live my life in its fullest expression with the hope to inspire and liberate others to live in their truth.

Anne-Marie Malcolm

Middle School Principal | Madiba Prep Middle School for Social Justice and Innovation

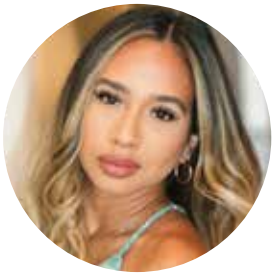
“I want to build a community where women of all races can communicate and ... continue to support and take care of each other. I want to give women a space to feel their own strength and tell their stories. That is power.” -Beyonce

Angie Max

Accessibility and Inclusive Design Lead for Products and Technology | PwC

I’m a purpose-driven leader focused on having a human-centered mindset and building trust through accessible and inclusive products for everyone.

PANELISTS



Emaryst Mero

Media Planner | Cage Point

Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

Khayriyyah MuhammadSmith

Associate Program Officer | ELMA Philanthropies Services (U.S.)

I strive to help girls and young women of color across the world access education and sexual reproductive health resources so they can make empowered decisions for themselves.

SFC Kameisha Muir

Deputy Station Commander | United States Army

I provide guidance and mentoring to young women who are interested in pursuing a career in the Armed forces, educating them about various professional and personal growth opportunities that are available to help them achieve their goals and aspirations in life.

Marjorie Nemes-Galarza, MSc

Community and Economic Development Consultant

If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

Dr. Stacia Nicholson

Postdoctoral Research Scientist | Columbia University Medical Center

The race is not to the swift, but to those who endure.

PANELISTS

Iro Omere

U.S. Congressional Candidate - Texas District 4 | Omere For Congress

[My mission is...] To represent the people of the United States through policy creation.

Ellisa Oyewo

Social Media Marketing Management/ Editor-in-chief | Co-founder of C.O.R.E/ Founder of Chasing Fame LLC

Authenticity is the key which unlocks your path, purpose + power.

Candice Prentiss, PMP

Founder & CEO | CAP Global Works, LLC

We are women. We get up and dust ourselves off.

Kim Reynolds-Williams

Vice President, Executive Leadership Strategy | Teach For America

I help leaders and organizations be the best version of themselves.

Virginia Rhodes, M.S.

ARC Network Project Director | The Women in Engineering ProActive Network

I work towards creating a world where all people can safely and passionately live their authentic selves and express their intersecting identities within their workplace.

PANELISTS

Jessie Rigaud

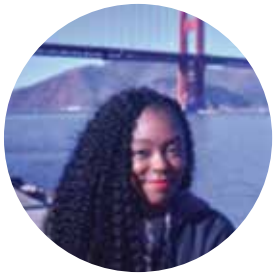
Human Resources Business Partner | DailyPay

The only constant in life is change. Be adaptable while always staying true to yourself.

Dr. Peggy Roberts

Founder and CEO | Trust Women's Healthcare

I educate, elevate and empower women across the lifespan.



Javon Robinson, MPA

Philanthropy Fellow | Philanthropy New York

One of my goals in life is to use my knowledge and skills to uplift BIPOC communities.

Luisa Rodriguez Aponte

Education Consultant/Analyst

I am committed to promoting and creating programs that support students and families as they navigate the education system and empowering them to advocate for their needs.

Xiomara Romain, PhD

VP, Organizational Impact and Executive Director | LIFT

I help elevate the voices of parents working to achieve economic mobility.

PANELISTS

Archit Sarpangala Hegde

Senior Manager, Strategic Planning | Prada

When we give in a way that inspires others to give, everyone succeeds.

Jamilia Simon

Business Owner | JS Designs

JS DESIGNS was created by Jamilia Simon, a designer with an affinity for fashions that are quality and affordable.

Dawn Simon

Area Senior Manager, Marketing | Kings Plaza

I oversee the marketing, public relations, advertising and events at Kings Plaza.

Jenn Small

Business Management Consultant | J Small Services

Having mentors is key for success! Learning from others with experience is extremely valuable.

Catherine Stahl

Senior Development Director | Girls Leadership

I raise funds for community-based nonprofits and help volunteers and donors become champions of causes.

PANELISTS

Hannah Tall

Founder & CEO | Grow Tall

My life's work is rooted in community care and revolves around creating access to resources and opportunities that'll support young people and communities of color in thriving.

Francesca Tse

Program Manager | L Marks

I believe we should always strive to evolve and grow in our careers and know no limits in the things we want to do or create

Dr. Nadra Tyus

Health Scientist Administrator | National Institutes of Health (NIH)

I help community organizations and researchers to obtain funding for health disparities research.

Noemi Valdez

Associate Director | CCS Fundraising

I believe in the strength of mentorship and in leading by example.

Dr. Mavel Velasco

Professor Emeritus of Hispanic Studies | Virginia Wesleyan University

I try to help young people in general to learn to think critically and young women in particular to know they have the power to achieve whatever they set out to do.

PANELISTS

Kiara Whittle

Assistant Scientist | Opentrons Labworks

I believe representation matters and that we all belong in high places. Find a way or make one.

D. Woods

Multi-hyphenate Artist & Founder and CEO of WoodGrane Entertainment | D. Woods WoodGrane Entertainment

I aim to collaborate with global artists to empower other creatives and the youth within the Black community to realize, reach and unlock their full potential through artistic experiences.

Shea Zéphir

Creative Dir. + Performing Artist | ART LIVING

ART LIVING is a virtual museum offering a new multimedia catalog space to unveil Black artists of movement of the body and their full stories as performing artists.

Stefani L. Zinerman

Assemblymember | New York State Assembly

A tireless advocate for civil rights and justice and champions education access, food justice, housing stability and maternal health.

Turner

Turner is a North America-based, international construction services company and is a leading builder in diverse market segments. The company has earned recognition for undertaking large, complex projects, fostering innovation, embracing emerging technologies, and making a difference for their clients, employees and community.

With a staff of 10,000 employees, the company completes $12 billion of construction on 1,500 projects each year. Turner offers clients the accessibility and support of a local firm with the stability and resources of a multi-national organization.

Esi-Kilanga Bowser-Santiago

Senior Project Manager

No such thing as luck, this is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

Cecilia Figueroa

Project Engineer

It always seems impossible until it's done.
- Nelson Mandela

Lateaka Hatche

Project EH&S Manager

Strive for progress not perfection!

Stephany Lorenzo

Engineer

Be your own advocate & always believe in yourself even when no one else does.

Amy Molloy

Community & Citizenship Program Senior Specialist

I am one of the voices of the community within Turner and the voice of Turner within the community.

Eden Oyewo

Project Engineer

Never be limited by other people's limitation.

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Nelly Vasquez

Business Development Manager

Those who have a voice must speak for the voiceless.

Goldman Sachs

At Goldman Sachs, we connect people, capital and ideas to help solve problems for our clients. We are a leading global financial services firm providing investment banking, securities and investment management services to a substantial and diversified client base that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and individuals. The work we do at Goldman Sachs affects financial markets, industries, and the communities in which we live all over the world, so we're committed to acting with integrity and operating with a focus on sustainability and philanthropy.

Elise Dunn

Vice President, Human Capital Management

Be intentional.

Zeina Elhaj

Associate, Diversity and Inclusion

My work and passion are focused on creating a world and environment where all people can bring every part of themselves to work.

Courtney Riley

Vice President, Global Investment Research

Keep going, keep growing.

Victoria Rodriguez

Vice President, Diversity Recruiting

I search for talent in innovative ways, seeking to create opportunities for diverse professionals within our firm.

Vimeo

In 2004, we created a place for creative pros to beautifully and easily show off their work. We call it Vimeo. and as the years went on, we continued to evolve. We were the first to support HD video. We acquired innovative companies like VHX, Livestream, and Magisto. And we launched a host of new products: from Vimeo Create to our For Hire marketplace. Today, Vimeo is much more than a viewing destination. It's a start-to-finish video platform giving creative professionals, businesses and organizations everything they need to make and market amazing, impactful video.

Erika Burbach

Director, Sales Engineering

"You don't ask, you don't get." Asking for help can create community and a support system.

Dani Duval, MA

Senior User Researcher

Why not me?

Olivia Fowora

Sr. Governance, Risk, Compliance and Privacy Manager

Helping organizations and individuals meet their full potential.

Kaivalya Gorla

Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) Analyst

Focus on the step in front of you, not the whole staircase.

Linda Gregier, CSM

Senior Program Manager

I empower product and engineering teams to tell stories with their data and engineering projects.

Elennis Sanchez

Sales Development Representative

"I am not throwing away my shot"
-Lin Manuel Miranda via Hamilton

Vimeo

In 2004, we created a place for creative pros to beautifully and easily show off their work. We call it Vimeo. and as the years went on, we continued to evolve. We were the first to support HD video. We acquired innovative companies like VHX, Livestream, and Magisto. And we launched a host of new products: from Vimeo Create to our For Hire marketplace. Today, Vimeo is much more than a viewing destination. It's a start-to-finish video platform giving creative professionals, businesses and organizations everything they need to make and market amazing, impactful video.

Dominique Scott

Employee & Sustainability Communications Lead

You don't know what you don't know, until you try.

Traci Mathieu

Data Engineer

The path to success is never a straight line.

Gap Inc.

Ashley Lockwood

Manger of Product Development & Production

try fast. learn fast. think big.

Jeremy Ricketts

Business Operations Manager

Every step is a step forward

Kerry-Lynn Riley

Senior Director, Merchandising

Be a leader as a learner

Stephanie J. Williams

Director of Marketing, Commercial Plan

Information and intuition is always the winning combination. Staying informed and staying true to yourself will never steer you wrong.

NYC Dept of Education

The Impartial Hearing Office [IHO] of the New York City Department of Education [DOE] is an administrative trial office which operates to offer students with or suspected of having a disability, due process through the special education impartial hearing process as mandated under the federal Individuals with Education Disability Act [IDEA] (34 CFR 300.511), New York State Law (Educ. Law § 4404[1]), and the Regulations of the [New York State] Commissioner of Education (8 NYCRR 200.5[i]-[k]). It is the largest special education due process trial office in the United States handling tens of thousands of cases per year.

Sharon Ainspan

Operations Manager

'…whatever we learn has a purpose and whatever we do affects everything and everyone else…'

Erika Layne, Esq.

Interim Director of Case Management (Agency Attorney)

"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." - Walt Disney

Srivani Nainar

IT Director

My job is to manage DOE IT applications and provide help to staff related to IT matters.

Tsui Ng, Esq.

Special Projects Attorney

Professional mission statement: to increase the presence of diverse women in the legal profession.

Farah-Lise Rousseau, Esq.

Interim Executive Director (Agency Attorney)

I never fail, I either succeed or I learn.

Cheryl N. Williams, Esq.

Senior Executive Director

While many leaders are leaders only because they are subject matter experts, I believe that being able to couple knowledge with providing guidance, autonomy, and opportunities for growth for an amazing group of individuals will be a big part of the legacy I will leave once I depart this world.

Business of Beauty Panel

Veronica Bonilla

Blogger/Entrepreneur
VeroBonita.com &
Brooklyn Petite

I help women build confidence, no matter what shape or size they are. I love reminding them of their beauty. That fashion doesn't define who and what they are, there's beauty in everything even the ugly moments.

Genesis Davis

Eyelash artist/educator
Doll Life Lashes

"Your life won't change unless you do"

Amanda Gaines-Manley

Hair Culturalist
Control The Cool

Time will pass whether you do it or not, so you might as well do it!

Sassy Smith

Makeup Artist, Beauty Educator & Mentor
Sassy Smith Beauty

Success Leaves Clues

Brenda Varela

Founder & Licensed Esthetician
The Bar Skincare

I'm on a mission to create a safe & diverse space to guide people towards healthy skin through mental wellness, knowledge, consistency, and self-love.

Blue Table Talks

Building Leadership in Careers

Cheryl N. Williams, Esq.
Senior Executive Director | NYC Department Of Education Hearing Office

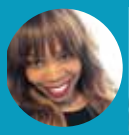
College & Grad School Chat

Etenish Abebe
Law Student | Boston University School of Law

Deja Knight, MA, MPH
Doctoral Student | Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Kia Turner
Doctoral & Law Student | Stanford Graduate School of Education & Yale Law School

Finding Passion & Purpose In Your Career



Michelle Mathison
Career Coach | See What Matters LLC

Interviewing Tips & Skills

Crystal Barrow, JD, CPC
Career Coach | Shape Your Success Coaching

Blue Table Talks

Starting A Business

Iymaani Aytes
Founder & Principal Consultant | The Aytes Agency

CLOSING SISTERHOOD CIRCLE SPEAKER

Martha Banks Hall

Martha Banks Hall is the Creator of Vision Words; a company that creates products that inspire and empower people to achieve their goals and dreams in life. Martha attributes her successes to having incorporated a daily regimen focused on mindfulness and living with intention, this includes the use of affirmations, meditation and journaling. Maintaining this practice has become life changing.

As a speaker, coach and workshop facilitator, Martha works with women who want to learn how to harness the Law of Attraction in their lives. By creating products based on the power of positive words, Martha has helped thousands to use affirmations to create the life they desire. Her speaking experience spans from one on one coaching, to 50 person webinars and workshops, to thousands of conference attendees.

A Master Manifestor, Martha moved from San Francisco, where she was born and raised, to New York City to follow her lifelong dream of living in the Big Apple.
She currently resides in Harlem with her two daughters. Her book It Didn't Run Me Over will be released in the Fall 2022.

Special thank you to our partners for BELA's 2022 Women's Symposium:

Vimeo (NASDAQ:VMEO) is the world's leading all-in-one video software solution. Our platform enables any professional, team, and organization to unlock the power of video to create, collaborate and communicate. We proudly serve our growing community of over 260 million users — from creatives to entrepreneurs to the world's largest companies. Learn more at www.vimeo.com.

So much gratitude to Rachael Coba Sr. Producer, Live Production, New York, USA (EST) who made Live Streaming of this event possible!

Thank you to the Women's Symposium Committee Members for all of your contributions to making this a successful event:

Staff Committee Members:

Kikelola Afolabli-Brown, Nicole Apostolakos, Ashley De Leon, Laurel Dietterle, Elizabeth Holmes, Laura Kaplan, Cassie Magesis, Katherine Moreno, Adanna Perry, Kim Peters, Stephany Rodriguez

BELA Women's Symposium Student Committee:

Amynie Albert, Kayla Ambroise, Stacyan Augustin, Princess Aurelien, Regina Barnes, Morgan Cameron, Shakila Cantebury, Mariana Cuevas, Taliah Favourite, Kamara Fraser, Jaylin Gonzalez, Nicole Gonzalez, Victoria Henderson, Airiel Henry, Crystal Hernandez, Aliyah Isaacs, Sherani Jawalapersad, Fatou Kamara, Yemisi Kolawole, Neriah Laborde, Annalyne Lesfloris, Kiana Lewis, Aiyana Lockley, Gabriella Maldonado, Mya McNeil, Niah Moore, Vanessa Pinnock, Brealavon Pullar, Aubrey Russell, Nykeibia Sharp, Destinee Simon, Zari Smith, Nakai Steele, Kaelyn Sumpter, Paisley Walcott, J'shai Watson, Asarina Whittington, Yakeisha Williams, Kaylah Wright, Kyler Wright