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A New Year Full of Power and Promise

Message From Your President: *Happy 5th Birthday, CCCEN*

Welcome to 2019, Crescent City Connections! Can you believe that 2018 is over and we're in a new year? New Year's Day stems from an ancient Roman custom, the feast of the Roman god, Janus — the god of doorways and beginnings. It's a time to look both forward and backwards, to reflect on the achievements and lessons we learned, and also to look forward to what's to come with vision and purpose.



What better way to do that than to celebrate CCCEN's 5th birthday this October (and the 70th year of ABWA nationally)! In 2014 CCCEN was the first ABWA league to return to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina after a 9-year absence. And, we have so much to be proud of! We have more than 90 members now, we've raised over \$10,000 towards scholarships and professional development since August, and we've already celebrated multiple national recognitions: Amy Landry's National Top 10 Forever Woman of the Year award AND our first Level III Best Practices award on stage! WOW!!



At left, Amy Landry as a National Top 10 honoree; and right, CCCEN leaders accept the national Level III Best Practices award.

Looking forward, the CCCEN board has exciting plans in store for our membership this year! Our VP of Marketing, Mckenzie Ellis, and her committee are bringing a fresh new website, envisioned to connect you to leadership and learning opportunities like never before. We also are partnering with New Orleans Chamber and Fidelity P.O.W.E.R. for the collaborative [Power Up: Women's Leadership Conference](#), on March 22, where CCCEN will be providing a program on negotiations.



Save the date for our [4th annual Equal Pay Day celebration](#) at Rock 'N' Bowl, April 2, from 4:30 to 7 p.m., where you'll have the opportunity to learn, increase your earning power, and network with tremendous thought leaders throughout the community and beyond. All proceeds will go towards local scholarships and professional development. I encourage you to be engaged and see how we can help you build new skills and reach your fullest potential. How can CCCEN help YOU meet your goals this year and GROW? In 2019, we will truly leave our legacy for years to come. We can't wait to see you soon!

Your ABWA Sister,
Christi Felder, PMP, CSM, PMI-ACP
President, Crescent City Connections ABWA
504-715-8148

Cooking in Style at Board Retreat

By Christi Felder

On January 5, 2019, the CCCEN board and their guests gathered for fun, food and camaraderie at the New Orleans School of Cooking for our 2019 CCCEN Board Retreat. After learning about the rich 300-year history of food in the Crescent City, we toasted to the fabulous work and dedication our league's board members have made to the growth and success of 2018 and coming year.

It was such a blast getting the chance to know our board sisters a little better, and hearing stories and getting the chance to see their many talents at work in a culinary setting!

And, none of it could come without a little friendly competition! We enjoyed the wonderful Sweet Potato & Crab Bisque, thanks to the Dirty Blondes—Amy Landry, Past President/Advisor (Fuel Success Academy); Mckenzie Ellis, VP Marketing/PR (Low Salt Kitchen); and Andy Ellis. Also, who could forget the yummy crawfish bread made by the Blue Mudbugs—Christi Felder, President (Microsoft); Erica Riley; and William Corey? And... ooh-weee! Who could pass up the Dessert Queens—Amanda Polkey, President-Elect (Talent Acquisition and Career Consultant/Coach) and

Congratulations to the Bankers of Death—Cindy Osmer, VP Communications (Hancock and Whitney Bank); Liz Broekman, VP of Programming (Fidelity Bank); and Cliff Osmer for their winning course, Alligator Sauce Piquant! This dish comes from an old Cajun recipe made from whatever can be brought back after a day of hunting on a swamp boat, seasoned to perfection.

We look forward to making many more memories together in the circle of ABWA. If you have interest in serving on a leadership team or future board position, let us know, either at the next meeting, by having coffee with a CCCEN leader, or by emailing us — info@abwaneworleans.org.



Stirring up fun at the CCCEN board retreat are, in left photo, Becky Livaudais, left, and Amanda Polkey; and in the right photo, Amy Landry, left, and Mckenzie Ellis.

Save the Date for the 4th Annual Equal Pay Day

Your CCCEN Chapter will champion the Equal Pay discussion for a fourth year in a row! This year's celebration will be on **April 2** at Rock 'N' Bowl in New Orleans. Stay tuned for more details.



All proceeds will go to benefit scholarships and professional development for business women. Please email info@abwaneworleans.org if you are interested in being a corporate sponsor!

Member spotlight: Melissa Buras

Melissa is a mother of 2 kids, Little Mark and Annabelle, 11 and 7 years old, and wife of 12 years to her husband, Mark. Her hobbies are weight-lifting, mud-riding, playing with her kids and enjoying family time. She is currently writing a book focused on the empowerment of women and is also hosting a women's one-day retreat coming up this March with the same focus.



After almost 16 years of working in the real estate industry and expanding the organization she had a hand in building, Melissa decided to grow her own business and has now found her home and her life-long career at New York Life as a Financial Services Professional. As someone who has always had an attention to detail, is a problem solver, relatable, and is available when you need her, she strives to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals not only professionally, but more importantly, personally and emotionally. Her forward-thinking mentality and open-minded attitude make her very approachable and easy to talk to. Her passion is in educating, motivating and leading others to discover their passions and strengths in all aspects of life.

Having a hand in helping individuals and business owners reach their short and long term goals is incredibly fulfilling for her.

She works with individuals and businesses to help them to create a blueprint for financial success, from creating a budget for the household or business, to providing protection, retirement planning and wealth management services. Melissa's ultimate goal, however, is to educate people about the need for financial literacy and understanding the many different options available in any area of financial services. You can reach her at mburas@fi.newyorklife.com.

January Luncheon

'5 Key Elements to Harnessing Your Health in 2019'

The next ABWA luncheon on **Thursday, January 17**, will feature Melissa R. Burbank, owner and publisher of *Natural Awakenings Magazine* New Orleans and *NOLA Fitness Magazine*. Her presentation is titled "5 Key Elements to Harnessing Your Health in 2019". She is also the Founder/CKO of KICK LLC, New Orleans' newest boutique kickboxing studio, located Uptown and opening this month.

Burbank will discuss what she believes to be the five essential elements to health, highlighting some quick and easy life hacks to implement them in your everyday life. She will also cover several bonus elements for a healthier lifestyle and show how these elements of self-care can harness your



power as a woman from within to finally take control of your life and transform how you live forever.

She was born and raised in New Orleans. She received her B.S. in Marketing and then went on to complete her M.B.A. at Tulane University. Burbank is dedicated to fostering community partnerships via the publications to give a voice to those who encourage a cleaner, greener, healthier lifestyle here in New Orleans, earning her the Leadership Award in the *Buy Local* category of the Love Your City Awards in 2018. [Register today](#) for this luncheon!

Calling All Members: We Need to Hear From You

Website Redesign Ahead

The ABWA CCCEN Board is looking into the opportunity to redesign the ABWA website and requesting quotes from interested vendors.

The vision for the CCCEN website is this: To create a fresh, inviting and modern look that enhances the CCCEN ABWA brand, follows all branding guidelines for Best Practices, and serves to increase retention, simplify manual administrative processes, reduce volunteer burnout, and nurture membership engagement and leadership opportunities.

If you would like an opportunity to submit a proposal, please contact [Mckenzie Ellis](#), VP of marketing. The submission deadline is Friday, February 1, 2019. We will open the ballot for a membership vote to approve a one-time only budget increase on January 17 through February 21.

Student Internship Opening

Members of CCCEN — do you know a student who has a future in management or business? Our chapter is looking to develop and mentor future female leaders. One determined student will be selected for "Business Mentee" for Spring 2019. The intern will experience the unique opportunity to be mentored by successful ABWA board members to learn about operations, strategic planning, finance, human resources, and more. The intern will work heavily with our vice president of marketing.

Our preference is for the intern to be a junior or senior college student or a graduate student studying business. Applications will be accepted until January 31 — for more details, please contact [Mckenzie Ellis](#), vice president of marketing.



Don't Miss These Conferences

All About Leadership

Join the New Orleans Chamber on March 22 for its inaugural Power Up: Women's Leadership Conference at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans. This will be an all-day professional development conference with a [keynote luncheon](#) and [multiple breakout sessions](#) sponsored by our network partners. CCCEN leaders will be headlining a session on negotiating salary.

The conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Early bird network partner and chamber member tickets are \$99 until January 18; general admission tickets are \$125. Registration is available [here](#). Get ready to POWER UP!

Expand Your Thinking at Regional Conferences

The ABWA is dedicated to helping women identify opportunities and overcome challenges, both professional and personal. And next year, we invite you to "Unleash Your Brilliance" by participating in any of the three [ABWA Regional Conferences](#).

The conferences offer professional development courses led by nationally acclaimed authors, speakers and business experts. In addition, you can grow your personal and professional network. The 2019 regional conference events will be hosted in three fabulous locations; Safety Harbor, Florida, March 28-30; Reno, Nevada, April 4-6; and Des Moines, Iowa, April 11-13. Changing women's lives. . . one woman at a time. [REGISTER TODAY!](#)

Congratulations to Lori Jackson on YLC Work

finance for the ABWA Express Network.



The YLC has hosted the Leadership Development Series since 2003. LDS is a rigorous 10-week course that teaches participants the basics of running a nonprofit organization or a YLC project. This year, LDS participants applied that knowledge by working with YLC project leaders to develop strategic plans for each project. They received specific direction about fundraising, community relations, volunteer recruitment, finances, marketing, and other areas that are vital to a successful organization. "We are delighted to announce the 2018 graduates of the Leadership Development Series," said Project Leader Olivia Mertensmeyer. "It has been a great pleasure working with these inspiring individuals who will use the skills they developed in this program to better New Orleans!"

Top Ten Business Women of ABWA - Call for Nominations!

CCCEN would like to hear from you! We are seeking a representative as our league's Top Ten National Woman of the Year nominee. Since its inception in 1953, ABWA has recognized hundreds of women for the coveted award, the Top Ten Business Women of ABWA. This award is intended to underscore a member's professional accomplishments (career advancement and academic achievement), contributions to her community and engagement in ABWA.

This is an incredible national honor, as we were thrilled that our very own Amy Landry was chosen as one of last year's Forever Top Ten Women of the Year recipients! Once the CCCEN board approves the candidate, she will be assigned a seasoned mentor to help with the application process. Completed and signed applications are due to National by May 15. From there, National will select 10 honorees to be recognized at the October National Women's Leadership Conference, October 2-5 in Kansas City, Missouri, where the Top Ten Honoree will be chosen. If you are interested in applying, please contact Carol Newman no later than **February 28** at canewman@bellsouth.net.

To be considered for this award, the member must:

- Be a female and currently employed (part or full-time).
- Have been a member in good standing for at least two consecutive years as of May 15, 2019.
- Have a primary affiliation with the sponsoring league for at least one year as of May 15, 2019.
- Have served on the National Board of Directors and/or on the national/regional conference team and/or served as an officer, committee chair, league advisor for her primary league since 2016.
- Have sponsored at least three members since 2016.
- Have earned at least one Apex Certificate since January 1, 2018 by completing one on-line course in the Apex Campus.
- Have attended at least one nationally sponsored ABWA event (Regional Conference and/or the National Women's Leadership Conference) since 2016.

Mark Your Calendar!

Wednesday, January 2

Awards committee opens for the 2019 Woman of the Year, Protégé, and Top 10 Nominations. Contact: Carol Newman, canewman@bellsouth.net.

Thursday, January 19

Monthly CCC Chapter luncheon, 11 a.m., at The Cannery, 3803 Toulouse St. in New Orleans. Melissa R. Burbank, Owner and Publisher of *Natural Awakenings Magazine* New Orleans and *NOLA Fitness Magazine* will speak on "5 Key Elements to Harnessing Your Health in 2019." [Register today!](#)

Thursday, February 21

Monthly CCC Chapter luncheon, 11 a.m., at The Cannery, 3803 Toulouse St. in New Orleans. Devin Lemoine, owner/president at Success Labs and professional training and coaching consultant. Devine will be speaking about "The X Factor: Women, Influence & Resilience."

Thursday, February 21

Nominating committee begins work to support organizing the 2019-2020 board slate, from March through April. Contact: info@abwaneworleans.org.

Thursday, March 13

Monthly CCC Chapter luncheon, 11 a.m., at The Cannery, 3803 Toulouse St. in New Orleans.

Friday, March 22

Women's Leadership Conference by the New Orleans Chamber, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Hyatt Regency New Orleans.

Tuesday, April 2

Save the date! Fourth Annual Equal Pay Day Event at Rock 'N' Bowl, 3016 S. Carrollton Avenue in New Orleans, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 4-Saturday, April 6

2019 Western Regional ABWA Conference, Reno, Nevada.

Friday, April 12

Breakfast on Financial Wellness; details to come.

Thursday, May 16

Monthly CCC Chapter luncheon, 11 a.m., at The Cannery, 3803 Toulouse St. in New Orleans.

Thursday, June 20

Monthly CCC Chapter luncheon, 11 a.m., at The Cannery, 3803 Toulouse St. in New Orleans.
Guest speaker, Kelli Shilling, Outback Services.

The ABWA Proud Code of Conduct

The ABWA Proud Code of Conduct was developed as a means of guiding all members in making ethical decisions. The broad statements of the Proud Code of Conduct that are listed below are not expected to cover all conduct for all situations. This is why the Proud Code of Conduct was created as a living and fluid code.

- All members will serve as goodwill ambassadors for the American Business Women's Association.
- Members will not allow their personal beliefs and convictions to interfere with the representation of ABWA's mission.
- Members will always treat other members, their colleagues, guests, vendors and sponsors with honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and in good faith.
- Members will maintain compliance with ABWA National, Chapter and Express Network Bylaws.
- Members will not use their personal power to advance their personal interests.
- Members will strive for excellence in their professions by maintaining and enhancing their own business knowledge and skills, and by encouraging the professional development of other members.

Vision Statement

ABWA Crescent City Connection Express Network

"The vision of ABWA CCCEN is to be recognized nationally and globally as an exemplary league that best connects Greater New Orleans career minded women by creating an empowering space that inspires women to increase their earning potential, develop leadership and business acumen skills, and to create meaningful, lasting relationships that enable members to grow into the very BEST versions of themselves."

Core Values for the American Business Women's Association

1. Giving Members a Voice
2. Treat People With Dignity (Proud Code of Conduct)
3. Lifelong Learning
4. Focus on Creating Value for Members
5. Achievement
6. Visionary Leadership
7. Focus on the Future
8. Focus on Results
9. Manage by Fact
10. Manage for Innovation



ABWA Mission Statement: "The mission of the American Business Women's Association is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition."

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 https://twitter.com/abwa_neworleans  <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6655932>

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