



Organization of Women in International Trade

OWIT Newsletter December 2019

Happy Holidays!

□ OWIT International Corner



OWIT International President Farewell!

As I reach the end of my term as your OWIT International President, I want to say thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to serve OWIT International, thank you for your trust in me as your President, and thank you to all who have been so incredibly supportive over the last two years. A special thank you to my executive board!

Executive VP/President-Elect	Cami Mazard
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Virtual	Christine Abely, Esq./Molly
Sponsorship	Tamar Harrigan
VP-IT	Kusum Gurbani
Government Relations	Amanda Wood

We have accomplished quite a bit over the last 2 years, here's a snippet:

- We now have OWIT chapters in Dominican Republic, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe (and many more in the pipeline)!
- We successfully brought back OWIT International conferences; OWITConNairobi (in 2018) and OWITConTampaBay (in 2019) - both were educational, full of terrific networking opportunities, fun, and profitable!
- We held terrific board meetings in Washington DC in coordination with WIIT DC and had Secretary Ross and members of Congress speak.
- We installed new partnerships with other terrific organizations (like FITT, NCBFAA's NEI, and NASBITE to name a few).
- We updated our bylaws and are currently working on a brand new OWIT website with more back end features for our members.

- We installed a new Virtual VP as part of the OWIT Executive team and have grown the virtual network of OWIT as a result.
- We installed a new Social Media VP as part of the OWIT Executive team and have grown our OWIT social media presence on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Check us out (links are at the bottom of the newsletter)!

There is much more for OWIT to accomplish. OWIT International's new leadership team for 2020-2021 will start on January 1, 2020 and will need your continued support!

Wishing you a happy holiday, and healthy and prosperous new year!

Testimonials from Fellow OWITers on the OWITConTampaBay Conference





"This was the best women in business conference I have ever been to. I had just joined the Tampa group and am so pleased I was able to attend. I learned so much and left feeling incredibly inspired."

"The entire event was a huge success!"

"I think the event was exceptionally done -- very professional, engaging and interesting. Everything ran very smoothly!"

"It was an amazing and inspirational event!!"

"Well done! Thanks so much!"

"Organizers did a fantastic job keeping the event on track and the audience engaged"

"Tampa team went way beyond the call of duty, congratulations to all for making us feel so welcome."

"Thank you for all the hard work. It highlighted the great cooperation between local businesses and support for women in international trade."

"You gals rocked it! Excellent service, and I fell in love with Tampa!"

"Great job pulling this all together. You set the bar very high and it was worth the trip and expense."

"The Port tour was a nice added activity to break up the day, and it was really enjoyable and impressive to see the Port by boat and get the inside scoop. The entire day was done so extremely well, from the Conference to the Awards Dinner. It was all so much better than I imagined it would be. Thank you for a great experience!"



"TBOWIT did an awesome job - and covered every detail. And the additional events (Tampa Biz Day and Port Tour) were fantastic. The selection of tour spots for the biz day was first rate. Quality contacts and excellent networking throughout entire conference!"

"Great conference! Well organized and lots of information."

"Again, very well done and professional... Christyna is a great EmCee... Great speakers and awardees.."

"Jennifer Diaz is an incredible woman and leader; OWIT is so fortunate to have her at the helm."



"What a terrific group of speakers! What they had to say was important to any business, and I really appreciated the broad spectrum of issues they addressed. I am so glad I took a day to spend with TBOWIT and learn about how women are making an amazing contribution to global prosperity through trade!"

"I thought that you did an excellent job of providing an informative and entertaining evening."

"LOVED the wine tasting!!! Food was amazing. Wonderful evening, so glad I went."

Summary of OWITConTampaBay by the OWIT Tampa Bay Board

Imagine you were in Tampa this past October 24, 2019. Feel the strong theme, **Year of the Woman**. Listen to the high caliber speakers and panels. Learn from the wide breathe of topics. Be a part of the most important ingredient a vibrant, wonderful audience. OWIT



International's 19th Annual Global Conference under the guidance of the masterful OWIT International President, **Jen Diaz**, was truly a day to celebrate women, trade, growth, and leadership.

Thank you to all OWIT International members who attended. Judging by all of the positive feedback, this conference was, as attendee, Angelique Mathena said, "the best women in business conference I have ever been to!" Attendee Chris Leggett

summed the conference up with, "What a terrific group of speakers! What they had to say was important to any business, and I really appreciated the broad spectrum of issues they addressed. I am so glad I took a day to spend with TBOWIT and learn about how women are making an amazing contribution to global prosperity through trade!"

OWIT International attendees added to the strong networking as the conference emcee, Lissette Campos, explains, "I've participated in many conferences during the last 11 years in my role as a public speaker and moderator & can honestly say the caliber of attendees was amazing."

Superwomen were in the audience and on the stage. Keynote **Dr. Patti Fletcher**, author of *Disrupters*, taught us how to disrupt by challenging our mindsets. Leading by example, **Ilya Marotta**, VP Transit Business, Panama Canal Authority, received a standing ovation after her talk, *A Canal, A Career, A Challenge*. **Kim Farmer** got us up to move our bodies as we face our fears. Getting down to business, panel



discussions featured trade talks on Latin America, Europe, Africa, and 'Trade Tea Leaves' in 2020. Panels also discussed female leadership in typically male dominated industries and leadership lessons from past winners of OWIT International awards. The day featured a dynamo list of panelists who should all be mentioned here. Due to space limitations, however, view the full list at owitcontampabay.com. Each speaker and panelist was authentic and gave insightful nuggets for attendees to use back home. Our speakers and panelists deserve another round of applause!

Kudos also go to **Port Tampa Bay** for providing the conference space and dedicated staff. Says, Mr. Paul Anderson, CEO, Port Tampa Bay, "We are proud to support OWIT International, Christyna and the mission to support and grow women in international trade and are delighted we were able to help you host such a successful conference."

Special thanks goes to host chapter **OWIT Tampa Bay (TBOWIT)** under the leadership of Christyna Doege for all of the hard work and dedication to the conference's success. "WOW, what a conference you pulled off! It was truly wonderful we were able to be a part of the experience and women making history. I was able to see some familiar faces but also meet many new contacts and am so excited to continue the conversations." complimented TBOWIT member, Stefanie Bolinski.

After the conference,



attendees were able to view Port Tampa Bay on a lovely harbor tour with perfect weather. Then it was back to the venue for the TBOWIT Annual Awards Dinner. After a fun networking wine passport mixer, TBOWIT heard from a Florida community pillar, Alex Sink, awarded two university scholarships, and presented the International Person of the Year award to Maryann Ferenc, CEO/Proprietor, Mis en Place, for bringing the world to Florida and Tampa Bay. From attendee, Olga

Pina, "Everything I saw—from the venue, to the speakers, to the attendance, etc.—was a testament to a well-planned and successful conference. The energy in the room was contagious, and all comments I heard about the speakers gave everyone rave reviews."

What more can be said.

"Show Up," every year is the "Year of the Woman".

ISO Photos and Testimonials for our New Website

We are looking for great photos of OWITers and chapter events to include in our soon to be released newly re-designed website. We'd love to include your photos! Send to VP-ChapterSupport@owit.org.

Want to be on our new website? Tell us why you love being a member of OWIT! Virtual Members: We want to hear from you, too! Send your testimonial to VP-ChapterSupport@owit.org.



☐ Chapter Corner



OWIT Nairobi Held an Event on "Vision Boarding" on November 5th, 2019



OWIT Nairobi had an event on the topic, 'Vision Boarding'. The discussion was an interactive session where vision boards and notebooks were provided to each woman who attended. The women were encouraged to plan for their future with specific written goals.

The women were also guided on how to use the Vision Boards for maximum efficiency.

The speaker, **Pat Okello** brought along her personal vision board and used that to illustrate during the session as seen in the photo above.

Trade Tuesday: SheTrades Global 2019 by Mucha Mlingo

Trade can play an important role in driving women's economic empowerment but we need a more inclusive trading system that will allow more women to participate in trade and to reap the economic benefits of global trading.

This week, I am attending my final international event as the President of OWIT Nairobi. As I join thought-leaders who have convened here in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for SheTrades Global 2019, I am excited to be part of discussions to 'chart the next milestone in transforming the global agenda on women and trade.'



2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and two years since the launch of Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment. Significant efforts have been made to speed up progress on women's participation in the economy and trade. To move the needle, collaborative and innovative strategies are necessary to ensure systematic and sustainable change.

[Click to read the rest of the article on](#)

Toronto's 20th Anniversary Gala - an Inspiring Evening



"Wonderful turnout, great range of participants, and a selection of excellent speakers; I loved that panel!" This is how OWIT-Toronto member Aylin Lusi of UPS summed up OWIT-Toronto's 20th anniversary celebration and Awards ceremony held this fall.

An inspiring panel of our chapter's founders, including Candice Rice, Molly Zito, Susan Baka and Gail Morris, shared their international trade journeys and insights

on global trade issues in a fireside chat moderated by Cindie-Eve Bourassa of Global Affairs Canada. This was followed by an equally inspiring Awards presentation to outstanding women who have made a mark in trade.

The 2019 winners are: Isabella Bertani, CPA, JoAnna Townsend Award for Leadership in International Trade; Myra Sable, Sable & Rosenfeld: Woman Exporter of the Year Award; and Hamideh Mahmoudi, Centennial College: Student of International Trade Award.

A big thanks to sponsors: [the Diversity Institute](#) / [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub](#), [EDC](#) and [Jewels4Ever](#), and to supporter [Global Affairs Canada](#).



**Canadian Women's Roundtable
Provides Insights into French Market**



OWIT-Toronto participated in a lively roundtable discussion organized by Global Affairs Canada with Ambassador Isabelle Hudon, the first female Canadian Ambassador to France. She outlined opportunities for exporters to France (with its population of over 60 million), Canada's free trade agreement with the EU, [CETA](#), and Canadian trade missions for women (one upcoming to [Paris and Brussels](#) the end of January).

Attendees also shared their experiences and perspectives. Among the Ambassador's tips for ensuring success: Invest time to get to know potential partners, access government help, understand the culture, and be very confident in your dealings but don't focus on your gender.

"When Trade Policy Affects the Farm" by Michelle Erickson-Jones, VP of OWIT Virtual



My Economy: Farming and ranching are tough jobs. With restricted access to export markets and the current trade war, farmers' earnings across the country are

stagnating. For farmers in Montana, wheat is their biggest agricultural commodity, and it has taken a hit.

My name is Michelle Erickson-Jones. I am a farmer from Broadview, Montana. We raise wheat, barley, corn, sunflower, safflower, as well as forages and a small cow/calf operation.

There's definitely, you know, a lot of things that I love about being a farmer, but certainly being able to, you know, raise crops, raise food, work on the same land that your family's been on for multiple generations is something that is rewarding.

Throughout the country, we've had excessive rain across the Midwest and Montana there's been a lot of problems getting harvest completed. Combining that with our low prices as well as our challenges in the export market, it is made for pretty difficult time for agriculture as a whole.

The trade war has affected us, certainly, on our input side. You know, the cost of steel has risen with the steel and aluminum tariffs. There's also been other inputs that have risen with some of the other tariffs. We've also been impacted by the tariffs into China. China was a rising market for wheat, and especially for hard red spring wheat and soft white wheat out of Montana and the Pacific Northwest. When the trade war started in March of 2018, they stopped buying wheat. And they actually did not return to that market until just last week, they finally bought some soft white wheat, but that is the first purchase of wheat that they've made in over a year and a half. And that's been a substantial loss for us in the wheat industry. Overall, they were roughly a \$450 million market a year. For Montana, specifically, they were about a \$65 million market a year. And they were one that we had targeted for expansion, not to lose our market share.

[Click to read the rest of the article on Marketplace](#)

☐ Members in the News

"New Trade Deal Good for Some U.S. Farmers, but Produce Growers Wary" by Jessie Higgins





"American farmers are split over the new United States Mexico Canada trade deal.

Many celebrated the news that House Democrats and the Trump administration agreed on the [USMCA](#), as it means free trade can continue with America's two largest agricultural buyers.

'This is welcome news and a relief for American farmers,' **Angela Hofmann, co-executive director of the nonprofit advocacy group Farmers for Free Trade**, said in a statement. 'Passing USMCA will guarantee that our farmers' closest and most important markets will remain free from tariffs and red tape.'

But this is not good news for all farming sectors.

Mexico grows more fresh produce than the United States and at a substantially lower cost. So, a free trade agreement opens the door for the cheaper Mexican produce to replace American-grown vegetables and fruits in U.S. markets."

[Click to read the rest of the article on UPI](#)

□ OWIT Partner Corner

A Year in Review: A Look Back on OWIT International's Partnership with FITT

Who is FITT?

[The Forum for International Trade Training](#)

(FITT) is the standards, certification and training body dedicated to providing international business training, resources and professional certification to individuals and businesses. Created by business for business, FITT's international business training solutions are the standard of excellence for global trade professionals around the world.



How are we partnering with OWIT?

<http://www.tradeready.ca/2019/featured-stories/fitt-and-owit-international-team-up-to-support-the-advancement-of-women-in-international-trade/>

What value can OWIT members receive?

OWIT members can access FITT's professional global [trade training](#) with these exclusive member-only discounts at www.fittfortrade.com

- get \$50 off any online courses with discount code **OWITFITT**
- get \$25 off any online workshops with discount code **OWITFITT**

TradeReady Blog - International trade blog featuring global expert content, how-tos, job opportunities and business spotlights. Read by over 50,000 international readers every month. We always save a spot for any OWIT members to post content to expand their reach.

Online Training

There are 6 different topics to choose from that are 100% global in scope. Training is flexible and can be taken online anywhere in the world, in person, or in class.

Below are the list of training options:

- FITTskills online courses: <https://fittfortrade.com/edc-fitt-online-courses>
- FITTskills online workshops: <https://fittfortrade.com/edc-fitt-online-workshops>
- FITTskills Lite – Free course previews taken directly from the FITTskills program <https://fittfortrade.com/fittskills-lite-series>
 - Certified International Trade Professional (CITP|FIBP) designation: <https://fittfortrade.com/certification>. OWIT members can use past experience or online training to become qualified to apply for the CITP|FIBP global designation. Or if they already have 10+ years of experience in international trade, can apply directly

Events:

- Monthly Twitter chats – follow us on [@FITNews](#) or check out the [#TradeElite](#) hash tag to see past conversations.
- Small business spotlights – every month we spotlight and interview businesses on our [TradeReady](#) blog
- Weekly newsletter – Read by over 9,000 people, we hold weekly spots for any OWIT content to reach a new audience. [Subscribe here](#)

OWIT International's Partnership with NASBITE



NASBITE International invites OWIT members to attend the upcoming 33rd Annual Conference + 4th National Small Business Exporters Summit scheduled to hold from March 25 – 27, 2020 in Annapolis, Maryland at “The Hotel Annapolis”. See details below:

- The National Small Business Exporters Summit is a full day event that would hold on Wednesday, March 25th, 2020. Through this program, NASBITE honors outstanding exporters from across the country and we bring them together to share their experiences and tips on how to succeed in international markets. We feature them as presenters and panelists during the Summit. Many of these them have won the President’s E Award or the U.S. Commercial Service Export Achievement Award.
- The Annual NASBITE Conference is scheduled for March 26 & 27, 2020.

To strengthen our partnership with OWIT International, we invite OWIT members who may be interested in presenting international trade related topics at the conference to submit their proposal through the link on NASBITE conference website or here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScUoY8AYWP1hibHvimfcHHMyKGbXbT2v0VhLbOW6nOdm3l5Ng/viewform>. The "Call for Presentation" is open now, the deadline to submit presentation proposal is November 15, 2019.

Lastly, we have sponsorship opportunities for both the Summit and the Conference. If any OWIT member is interested, they can reach out to us for more information at info@nasbite.org.

Don't Miss Out on Any Member Benefits!

Did you know that as a member of one of OWIT's chapters, you are AUTOMATICALLY part of the OWIT International global network? Your complimentary OWIT International membership adds value to your local chapter membership by offering you added benefits and resources, including:

- Reciprocal benefits and member rate for events organized by any OWIT chapter worldwide
- Member-discounted rate for OWIT International webinars and FREE participation in Members' Only webinars on professional development and special topics;

- Access to an expanded network of business and professional contacts;
- Free listing in OWIT International's searchable online membership directory and password to Members-Only section of OWIT International's website;
- Opportunities for professional growth through participation on OWIT International committees.

As a local chapter member, all you need to do is register on OWIT International's website www.owit.org. Create your free member profile today! If you're not a member of a local chapter, please visit <http://www.owit.org/joinus/chapterlist> to learn more about our chapters. If you have questions, please contact info@owit.org.

Call for Volunteers!

OWIT International needs you! We have nine amazing committees that are seeking volunteers. If you are interested, please contact OWIT President Jennifer Diaz at president@owit.org.

- **Chapter Development:** Are you interested in helping grow the OWIT network around the world? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Chapter Support:** Are you interested in helping OWIT chapters learn the benefits of the OWIT network? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Marketing:** Are you interested in helping with OWIT's newsletters and press releases? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Social Media:** Are you interested in helping with keeping OWIT's social media active and up-to-date? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Partnership:** Are you interested in working with OWIT's premier partners to increase the profile of OWIT around the world? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Conference:** Are you interested in helping with OWIT's annual conference to ensure it is a success, with amazing speakers from all over the world, and all members of OWIT around the world attend? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Programming:** Are you interested in helping with OWIT's webinars? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Virtual:** Are you interested in helping ensure OWIT's virtual members who don't have a chapter near them feel included within the OWIT network? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Sponsorship:** Are you interested in helping raise funds for this much-deserved organization via our small business sponsorship, corporate sponsorship, webinar sponsorship, and conference sponsorship? If so, this is the committee for you!
- **Government:** Are you interested in helping to develop and advance OWIT's legislative agenda on trade and women's issues? If so, this is the committee for you!

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Did You Know...

We have OWIT chapters in:

• [Cairo](#)

• [Monterrey](#)

• [Toronto](#)

- [Charleston](#)
- [Chicago](#)
- [Dominican Republic](#)
- [Greater Triangle NC](#)
- [Lake Geneva](#)
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About Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT)

The Organization of Women in International Trade (www.owit.org) is a global association for women in international trade and business. Our 2,000-plus members impact hundreds of millions of dollars in trade and business transactions annually. OWIT's focus is on adding value to our corporate, mid-sized, small business and individual members around the world.



[Click here to visit our website](#)

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