

# CONNECT

*Organization of Women in International Trade*

**OWIT Newsletter Winter 2017**

## OWIT Presence Boosted on the Global Stage

**What we think matters.** OWIT was busy over the summer and fall, representing the interests and concerns of members and women in trade.

We're increasingly being consulted for input on global trade issues and international trade agreements, including NAFTA. And we've been speaking at trade events, from Geneva to Ottawa to Vietnam, with more invitations coming up. Here is a snapshot:

- OWIT's International President was asked to moderate panels at two high-level conferences on women's economic empowerment. In March, **Andrea Ewart** moderated a panel on "Government and Institutional Support for Women" at the 6th Global Economic Summit on Women's Economic Empowerment held in Mumbai, India. In September, at the invitation of VWEC, Andrea moderated a panel on "Women Entrepreneurs in a Changing Global Market" at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Public-Private Dialogue on Women and the Economy, the most important event of the 2017 APEC Women and the Economy Forum. Delegates from all 21 APEC Economies attended the Forum. [Read](#) her remarks and the panel highlights.
- Also in September, OWIT-Lake Geneva led OWIT's participation at the 2017 [WTO Public Forum](#) with a panel on "[The Faces of Trade](#)", moderated by member **Hulya Kurt**. During the three day forum, **Susan Baka** of OWIT-Toronto participated in the OWIT panel and another panel, and **Leslie Griffin** of WIT-DC also participated in a panel at the forum.



*Andrea inside Forbidden Purple City, residence of last dynasty of Vietnam, where a dinner for conference delegates was held.*



*OWIT members participating in the WTO Public Forum in Geneva*

- Several OWIT Toronto members met with the Executive Director of the [International Trade Centre](#), **Arancha Gonzalez**, during her fall visit to Toronto. Gonzalez is a passionate promoter of inclusive trade on the world stage. And ITC's [She Trades](#) initiative aims to connect one million women to global markets by 2020 through its mobile app.
- OWIT-Toronto participated in a Canadian NAFTA stakeholder consultation roundtable prior to the start of the renegotiations, presenting member concerns related to labour mobility, border procedures and gender. Stakeholders continue to be updated after each round of talks. Canada is pushing for the inclusion of a gender chapter in an updated NAFTA.
- OWIT-Ottawa board member **Ainsley Butler** & OWIT Toronto Past President **Alma Farias** appeared before the Parliamentary International Trade Committee in Ottawa in October, to present more input on the NAFTA renegotiation and modernization. This covered improving access for SMEs, simplifying customs procedures, facilitating cross-border business travel and incorporating gender rights and capacity-building initiatives. Appearing before the Committee on behalf of UPS Canada, its VP, Public Affairs Aylin Lusi, also an OWIT-Toronto board member, included OWIT in her comments. She referred to UPS's outreach efforts to educate small businesses and entrepreneurs on the potential of international trade agreements for their business, and cited OWIT as an organization it supports both in Canada and internationally as an important additional avenue to connect women in business to the new business horizons brought by international trade agreements.

## OWIT International is in Asia!

### ***OWIT Signs MoU with Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council***

OWIT is very pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the [Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council](#) (VWEC). The MoU was signed in Hanoi on December 6, 2017 as part of the signing ceremony held in connection with the visit of the Premier of Ontario, **Kathleen Wynne**, to Vietnam. The MoU was signed on behalf of OWIT International by **Louise Roberge** of the OWIT-Toronto chapter.

The VWEC comprises entrepreneurs and representatives of women-owned or operated businesses, business organizations, and clubs from across Viet Nam and works to support female entrepreneurs' and women-owned business'

rights; to promote trade, investment, and technology development for female entrepreneurs; and to provide training and capacity building for female entrepreneurs.

The purpose of the MoU is to allow OWIT and VVEC to collaborate on areas related to international trade; and to leverage their respective and collective capabilities for the benefit of women business owners in Vietnam and in the countries where OWIT members reside. Possible activities to be pursued under the MoU include exchange of mutually-beneficial information and promotion of each other's events. In the near future, it is hoped that the partnership will grow to include joint educational programs on international trade and exploration of business opportunities. **Julie Nguyen** and **Louise Roberge** of OWIT-Toronto have played a pivotal role in getting this MoU signed. OWIT International will continue to work with OWIT-Toronto toward eventual establishment of an OWIT chapter in Vietnam.



*Mrs. Nguyen Thi Tuyet Minh, Chairwoman, Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council, and Louise Roberge of Canada, representing OWIT at MoU signing*

### **Asia remains the only continent without an OWIT chapter.**

In 2017, OWIT also attracted interest from Japan, Pakistan, and Singapore in starting chapters. WIT-Northern California and WIIT-DC have provided strong models for Japan and Singapore and WIT-Northern California is actively working to support the start-up of OWIT-Japan.

## **OWIT on the Domestic Front**

Check out an [interview](#) with **Leslie Levy August**, President, WIT Northern California, on Ding Ding TV, the first Chinese American Internet TV channel to focus on content and connection for global entrepreneurs and a platform for US-China business relations. With an audience of 200 million, Ding Ding TV is popular with high tech professionals and innovators in Silicon Valley.



**Jennifer Diaz**, President-Elect of OWIT International and President, Diaz Trade Law, moderated the panel "How to Import into the United States of America" featuring U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) at the Florida International Trade and Cultural Expo (FITCE) in October 2017.

## **Meet Your New Executive 2018-2019**

**Congratulations....and welcome to our incoming Executive Committee:**

- President - Jen Diaz (S. Florida)
- Immediate Past-President Andrea Ewart (DC)
- Executive Vice President - Camelia Mazard (DC)
- Treasurer - Laura M. Santiago, MAIB (Tampa)

- General Counsel/Secretary - Deepti Vithal (New York )
- Assistant - General Counsel - Catherine (Katie) Orr (DC )
- VP, Chapter Development - Frida Owinga (Nairobi)
- VP, Chapter Support - Carol Brewer (DC)
- VP, Marketing - Deirdre Nero (S. Florida)
- VP, Social Media - Dana Stepnowsky (DC)
- VP, Partnership - Joelle Thonet (Lake Geneva)
- VP, Conference - Susan Zimmerman (DC)
- VP, Programming- Samantha Peaslee (Virtual Member)
- VP, Virtual- Christine Abely, Esq. (Virtual Member)
- VP, Sponsorship - Tonya Kemp (DC)

Many thanks to the outgoing Executive Committee for all their work: President, Andrea Ewart; Immediate Past President, Karen Bland; Executive Vice President, Jennifer Diaz; Treasurer, Janet Strong; VP, Strategy, Violette, Ruppanner; VP, Partnership, Angela Marshall Hofmann; VP, Chapter Development, Frida Owinga; VPs, Chapter Support, Carol Brewer & Tamuna Gabilaia; VP, Marketing/Communications/Public Relations, Susan Baka; VPs, Programming, Samantha Peaslee & Suely Piraino Argianas; Secretary - General Counsel, Margaret Heine; Assistant Secretary - General Counsel, Deepti Vithal; and Sabina Zunguze who served as VP, IT in 2016 and early 2017.

## Fall 2017 Board Meeting Highlights

A good turnout of Board members and Chapter Reps from the US, Canada, Mexico, Peru and Africa marked the Fall Board Meeting in September in Santa Clara in the Silicon Valley, hosted in fine form by WIT-Northern California. Among the highlights:

- Development of a 2018 Action Plan with items such as using the website to create awareness of members, via member spotlights, and possibly reinstating the international conference.
- Creation of a Chapter Mentorship Program and Guidelines
- A sneak preview of the 2018 Fall Board Meeting, presented by OWIT-Nairobi
- A networking event in collaboration with the Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce on Doing Business in Silicon Valley and Beyond that featured Laura Ipsen, GM and Sr VP of Oracle Marketing Cloud and one of the original members of OWIT, who encouraged the audience to embrace the organization as a community that is special and unique and one that brought some of the greatest opportunities in her career. "It helped me understand international trade," she said. "And this was not just an organization about policies and regulations but mostly about a community of women supporting other women." In addressing the intersection of trade and technology, Ipsen emphasized how technology has been an equalizer and created more opportunities for small business and women. With trade today increasingly about information and data, and the ability to move it around in new ways, she said it takes organizations like OWIT` to create new pathways and she urged members to jump in with new ideas. "It's fabulous to see how far OWIT has come!"
- A day-long NAPA wine tour that included a special lunch at the Black Stallion Winery.



A big shout-out to **Leslie Levy August, Vicki Wilkerson, Jessica Latham**, and WIT-NC for all the preparation and work to ensure a successful meeting.

## Get Ready for Nairobi in 2018

Start planning now to attend our **Fall 2018 board meeting in Nairobi, Kenya Oct 24 - 27, 2018!** Our Nairobi chapter is planning an exciting program for OWIT plus optional pre and post activities that will include a safari. Spouses and children are also encouraged to come. Watch for the website in February with all the details.

## Chapter Showcase

**Check out what other Chapters are doing and get ideas for your own programming:**

- In October, OWIT-Nairobi had a panel of trade officials from 5 different embassies - Turkey, Thailand, Rwanda, Ghana at US - with the Ambassador of Turkey also in attendance. The topic was "A conversation on accessing global markets by commercial divisions". Participants shared opportunities available in their countries, procedures on how to do business there and trade barriers. Several board members visited the Ambassador of Turkey after the meeting and had an opportunity for OWIT to participate at the Turkish Export Week.
- OWIT- Monterrey held an event/membership drive with the local Chamber of Commerce.
- OWIT-Peru is preparing a workshop on export opportunities with products with good social responsibility practices.
- WIT-DC held a joint event olive oil tasting with a delegation from the European Union.
- OWIT Toronto co-sponsored an event with the World Trade Center in Buffalo in November, entitled Economic Empowerment: Strengthening the Bi-National Region through Diversity and International Trade, with its Chapter President Anita Agrawal part of the panel. The Chapter is also organizing a Trade Mission to Monterrey, Mexico the end of February.



## Best Practices

**From WIT- N California:** As volunteers recognizing that they cannot do it all or be everything to everybody, this chapter focuses on trade compliance (not on international finance, or marketing, or logistics).

Other practices:

- Always do events the same place, same time, same day of month
- Promote networking benefits - encourage members to show up because their career or business can depend on who they meet at events and connections they make
- Have two educational sponsors to ensure younger people get involved as the next generation - subsidize students by giving them steeply discounted rates
- Offer Professional Development sessions too

**From OWIT-Nairobi:** This chapter has 6 board members. They bring on only 3 new ones each year when 3 exit to ensure some continuity. Chair stays on as a Board advisor for a year. The Chapter partners with Women on Boards which provides a 12-week program of governance training. The Chapter also communicates board participation as a privilege to increase profile and networking.

## Useful Resources

### Chapter-to-Chapter Mentoring Program

OWIT International is excited to announce a new chapter-to-chapter mentoring program. Chapters with a record of success in specific areas will be paired with a chapter seeking advice, ideas, and rejuvenation in those areas. Mentoring will be available in such areas as board governance and leadership succession, member recruitment and retention, program development and collaboration, chapter positioning and marketing, and leveraging OWIT International's resources. Kudos go out to the Northern California, Tampa, and Washington DC chapters for offering their insights, expertise, and time last month in our first two mentorships. We're off to a great start!

Carol Brewer, our VP of Chapter Support, will connect chapters and oversee the logistics of the program. She is seeking chapters interested in mentoring as well as chapters interested in being mentored. Please contact Carol at [VP-ChapterSupport@owit.org](mailto:VP-ChapterSupport@owit.org).

### Zoom Pointers

A reminder that Zoom is now available for use by chapters at no cost, and at a discounted rate by OWIT members. Contact [secretary@owit.org](mailto:secretary@owit.org). If you are using this collaborative video conferencing tool, here's a [practical guide](#) on how to use Zoom (and Google docs).

And here are short screencasts of a few of the most useful Zoom features:

- [Audio & video settings](#)
- [Chat, rename, & raise hands](#)
- [Views](#)
- [Alternate Views](#): (this one includes the producer's husband in a bathrobe - you've been warned :-)

Thanks to **Violette Ruppner** for sharing.

**Don't Miss Out On 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](http://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](mailto:info@owit.org).

### **Membership Drive Update**

In May, a membership drive was launched to reverse the trend of declining members being experienced by several chapters. We set the target of 2500 registered members in the OWIT database by December 31, 2017. The three chapters that grow the most by this deadline will be rewarded. Chapter support tools, such as a webinar focused on chapter growth and Action Plan templates, were developed and shared. Kudos to VP, Chapter Support, Carol Brewer for the phenomenal role she has played in this effort. The winners of the membership drive will be announced in January.

### **Get Those Nominations In!**

Every year since 1995, OWIT has recognized women leaders in international trade and business from around the world. We present three awards annually, OWIT Woman of the Year, OWIT Chapter of the Year, and OWIT Member of the Year. Let's once again celebrate the outstanding achievements and contributions of women leaders.

For OWIT Woman of the Year, OWIT will recognize the recipients of our Chapters' award winners. These Chapter award recipients are automatically nominated for the OWIT Woman of the Year Award. For OWIT Chapter of the Year, we request that each Chapter submit 2-3 highlights of events/activities deserving recognition by OWIT. For OWIT Member of the Year, we request nominations of members who have made outstanding contributions to their Chapters this past year.

**Please submit your nominations to the OWIT Secretary, Barbara Aguilar, by January 12, 2018:** Submit to [secretary@owit.org](mailto:secretary@owit.org) (copy to [president@owit.org](mailto:president@owit.org) & [E-VP@owit.org](mailto:VP@owit.org)). View the criteria and access nomination forms [here](#).

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## **Webinars Update**

### **Did you miss these thought-provoking fall webinars?**

Access to the full presentations can be purchased at <http://www.owit.org/programs/store>.

[Click here](#) to read a few take-aways from our recent webinars:

- Leave No One Behind - A Discussion of Women's Economic Empowerment - October 2017
- NAFTA: Rebuilding and Renegotiating - October 2017
- Pirates of the Trade - October 2017

### Upcoming Webinars

We have four categories of webinars for 2018: Hot Topics, Small Business, Doing Business In, and Member Development/Promotion. Contact Samantha Peaslee at [vp-programs@owit.org](mailto:vp-programs@owit.org) if you have speaker suggestions.

### Save the date....and watch for more:

February 6, 2018: 12 pm EST - Members-only Professional Development free webinar with Beth Hand, a strategic advisor who has served hundreds of leaders and their organizations. She is an advocate for women's parity globally for a more inclusive world.

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## Partner Events



### International Trade Centre Initiative: SheTrades SheTrades Global Conference! Liverpool

*June 26-28, 2018*

Premier global business event linking women entrepreneurs with buyers, partners and investors. Previous editions generated over \$80 million worth of new business opportunities.

APPLY NOW: [shetradesglobal.converve.com](http://shetradesglobal.converve.com)

Register with SheTrades – [shetrades.com/register](http://shetrades.com/register) – to become connected with suppliers and partners.

Apply now if you fit the criteria or can nominate someone who does!



### Expanding Global Opportunities Webinar

*January 11, 2018*

<https://www.exim.gov/events/expanding-global-opportunities-6>

### Topics covered:

1. How to compete with your competitors by offering CREDIT TERMS to foreign buyers.
2. How to gain access to CASH through our Working Capital Guarantee Program.
3. PROTECTION against non-payment by your foreign buyers.

### Export Essentials for Minority & Women-owned Businesses, Washington, D.C.

*January 18, 2018*

<https://www.exim.gov/events/export-essentials-for-minority-women-owned->

Join the Export-Import Bank (EXIM), the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC), Capital Region Minority Supplier Diversity Council (CRMSDC) and the D.C. Women's Business Center to learn how to finance exports and grow your business internationally.



## **Global Summit of Women Sydney, Australia**

*Apr. 26-28, 2018 2018*

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN:

[http://globewomen.org/globalsummit/?page\\_id=12826](http://globewomen.org/globalsummit/?page_id=12826)

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## **Call for Volunteers!**

**OWIT International needs you!** We have 9 amazing committees that are seeking volunteers. If you are interested, please contact Incoming President Jennifer Diaz at [jen@diaztradelaw.com](mailto:jen@diaztradelaw.com).

- **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 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 s, 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!
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## **OWIT Newsletter Team**

*Editor:* [Susan Baka](#), [Bay Communications & Marketing Inc.](#)

*Contributor:* Deirdre Nero, [Nero Immigration Law](#)

*Designer:* [Katherine McGregor](#)

*Translation:* Carmen Hiers, [TransForma Translation Services](#)

### ***About Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT)***

The Organization of Women in International Trade International (OWIT) 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. ([www.owit.org](http://www.owit.org))

OWIT International [info@owit.org](mailto:info@owit.org) | [owit.org](http://owit.org)

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