



United Around the Globe to Foster  
International Trade and Advancement  
Of Women in Business

# CONNECT

Organization of Women in International Trade

**OWIT Newsletter May 2018**

## OWIT Around the World!

### OWIT-Nairobi Updates

*Members of OWIT Nairobi received the 'Exceptional Women of Excellence' Award at the Women Economic Forum (WEF) 2018 at New Delhi, India.*



From left to right: Mucha Mlingo, President; Kezy Mukiri, VP Programs; and Evelyn Kasina, IT Sector Champ

### About our "Exceptional Women of Excellence" Award Winners...



**Mucha Mlingo, OWIT-Nairobi - President**

Mucha is the Founder of Premier Training Services Ltd (PTS). PTS provides high impact training solutions in Sales, Service & Leadership. Mucha has a Master's in Finance from the University of Brunel and she is currently working to complete a Master's in Organizational Psychology with the University of London. To read more about Mucha, [click here](#).

**Kezy Mukiri, OWIT-Nairobi - VP, Programs**

Kezy is the CEO of Zuri Ignite - a brand management firm which is the leading champion of Sustainable Event Management in East Africa. She is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a Senior Partner at Mukiri Global Advocates (MGA) which specializes in providing tailor-made legal, tax and business consultancy services. Kezy is passionate about Internationalization of Trade as well as building strong brands and sustainable enterprises on the African Continent. During her consultancy work, she has worked with some of the region's most vibrant brands, MNCs, government institutions, International Organizations and MSMEs. To read more about Kezy, [click here](#).

**Evelyn Kasina, OWIT-Nairobi - IT Sector Champion**

Evelyn Kasina is CEO and the Lead ICT Consultant of Eveminet Communication Solutions Limited. Eveminet is an ICT consultancy firm that strives to ensure that Technologies integrate with businesses. It avails technologies to businesses which enhance growth and brand visibility in the market. Evelyn's sustainable development goal is based on her vision is to see her country Go Green by embracing technology and becoming paperless. She also aspires to Empower, Engage and Educate the women in the rural counties to leverage on technology for trade. To read more about Evelyn, [click here](#).

**OWIT-Toronto Updates**

To celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, OWIT-Toronto organized a networking reception and panel discussion on Canada's Progressive Trade Agenda, hosted by the Ontario Ministry of International Trade.

Guests were treated to a distinguished panel of speakers including: C.J. Scott, Manager, Export Support, Ministry of International Trade, Ontario, David Usher, former Canadian Ambassador and current Director General for Trade Negotiations

at Global Affairs Canada, Susan Baka, President, Bay Communications & Marketing and VP-International, OWIT-Toronto, and Danielle Goldfarb, Senior Fellow, Conference Board of Canada.

The panel explored the history and current status of the Government of Canada's Progressive Trade Agenda, as well as some of the practical obstacles faced by women in trade today. Participants discussed existing opportunities for women exporters to secure assistance and guidance from government agencies at the federal and provincial levels, as well as through independent and non-governmental organizations such as OWIT.

### OWIT in Vietnam

Julie Nguyen, Ms. Nguyen Thi Tuyet Minh and staff of Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council (VWEC) met on February 27, 2018 at Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) office in Hanoi to discuss activities between VWEC and OWIT-International / OWIT-Toronto in the coming year, including webinars, conferences, and trade missions.



### OWIT-Chicago



The 3rd Annual O'Hare Airport tour sponsored by the OWIT Chicago chapter and the Chicago Department of Aviation was a great success! We met Africa Bell, Director, Base Metals Center, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, along with Adam Rod, Assistant Commissioner-Planning for the City of Chicago, Makila Hainer, Planner and Molly Monserud, Planner. We also got to go inside a 747-8F, one of the world largest Cargo planes. Fun fact: this plane can hold 140 metric tons of freight which is equivalent to about 14 rail cars.

### OWIT-South Florida

On Friday April 27, OWIT South Florida hosted a happy hour at Seasons 52 in Coral Gables to welcome the new board and spend time with new and old friends! Not only did we have a great time, but we signed up three new members! Kudos to Membership Chair Suely Argianas for organizing the event. More happy hours are planned, so stay tuned!



**Women in International Trade (WIIT) and the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) Team Up to Present Program on**

## Women Seizing New Opportunities with Africa



(L-R) Mary Bezzini, President, Godman Power Group, Inc; Mucha Mlingo, President, OWIT Nairobi; Florie Liser, President and CEO, Corporate Council on Africa, and WIIT-DC Board Member; Thione Niang, Founder, Give1Project; H.E. Arikana Chihombori-Quao, Permanent Representative of the African Union Representational Mission to the United States; Assistant Secretary of Commerce Erin Walsh; and WIIT-DC President Leslie Griffin

On March 15, 2018, WIIT and OWIT, along with the Virginia/Washington, DC District Export Council (DEC) and the Commercial Service/Virginia and Washington, DC presented a program on "Women Seizing New Opportunities with Africa." This program featured discussions on U.S.-Africa partnership, as well as female economic empowerment. To read more about this program and the event in the March 21st issue of The WIIT Weekly, [click here](#).



(L-R) Jennifer Diaz, President, OWIT International; U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross; WIIT-DC President Leslie Griffin

## WIIT and OWIT Members Network and Have Some Fashion Fun at Ann Taylor Connecticut Avenue

Earlier this March, both WIIT and OWIT members came together at Ann Taylor DuPont to network and enjoy some fashion fun.



They got to hear from an Ann Taylor stylist on how to pack for international travel, different strategies for mixing and matching and more.

For more pictures, please check out WIIT's weekly issue [here](#).

## WIIT interviews Jennifer Diaz, President of OWIT

**WIIT:** Jen, it's been great having you and other OWIT and chapter representatives in DC this past week. You've been in your role as OWIT President for about two months now. What are your goals for the organization over your two-year term?

**Jen:** My goals are to ensure chapters know where other chapters are located around the globe, to ensure the OWIT International presence is widely known, to ensure we get together more often, and to make sure our conference comes back with a vengeance.

Thanks to our rock star, the DC chapter's Suzie Zimmerman, who is our OWIT VP of Conference, we are making sure that this October we'll have an awesome celebration in Nairobi, Kenya where all the OWIT chapters can come together at a conference. This will be the 18th OWIT conference, but we have not had one for ten years so we're long overdue!

The October activities will include a capacity-building workshop for local entrepreneurs on the 24th, the one-day conference on the 25th, and our all-OWIT board meeting on the 26th. The idea is to engage every OWIT member around the globe, help them understand their connection to OWIT and all the other sister chapters, and learn how to get more involved. Of course, we wanted to add some additional fun so we're tacking on a safari option from October 28-30.

You won't want to miss it! More information can be found [here](#).

To read the rest of WIIT's interview with OWIT, [click here](#).



## WIT-Orange County at the NASBITE conference in Baltimore



Simona Racek is the event and outreach chair for the Women in International Orange County (WIT-OC). She is also the Founder and Managing Member of Just Down The Street, LLC. Simona is an entrepreneur, New-to-Business and New-to-Exports, and she managed in the past two years to build her export company and her dietary supplement brand for export using resources offered by federal, state and local agencies.

On March 22, 2018, Simona's presentation demonstrated how she went from ground zero, to building an export company and a brand, to her first distribution contract and her first international sale. Simona also made sure to mention OWIT during the presentation and encouraged everyone in the room to sign up and support women in trade. To read more about Simona's presentation on LinkedIn, [click here](#).



### The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)

has officially launched the online essay series, "Reshaping Trade through Women's Economic Empowerment".

Susan Baka, President of Bay Communications & Marketing Inc. and VP-International with OWIT-Toronto, contributed a piece on how women's trade organizations, like OWIT, are undervalued.

Here is an excerpt from Susan Baka's article, "The Unsung Women Facilitating Global Trade":

"Women's trade organizations and networks encourage and facilitate participation in the global marketplace immensely. The Organization of

Women in International Trade (OWIT), a non-profit body with 20 chapters in Canada, the United States, Latin America, Europe and Africa, is a great example. OWIT is dedicated to advancing global trade opportunities for women, whether they are business owners, professionals, executives or service providers. OWIT acts as a collective forum to address systemic barriers women face by actively supporting education, facilitating information exchange and networking, staying at the forefront of trade and technological developments, and building partnerships and alliances with peer organizations and associations to inform and advocate for change within the broader global community. Trade missions, new chapter mentoring, government education and student involvement are also among OWIT's efforts."

To read the rest of the article, [click here](#).

To read the full CIGI essay series, [click here](#).

## OWIT Past Webinars

### **Virtual Panel and Discussion: MAY 2 at 12:00pm ET**

On May 2, the Virtual Chapter hosted its first virtual panel/discussion event, open to all OWIT members. Speakers, including Jennifer Diaz, Andrea Ewart, Sinmi Esene, Deiadra Swartz, and Samantha Peaslee, presented on the topic of "Current Issues in Trade," which meeting participants then had the opportunity to discuss. Meeting participants also had the chance to introduce themselves and connect with other OWIT members.

All OWIT members are invited to participate in future virtual panel/discussion events - stay tuned for announcements! If you are interested in presenting at a future virtual panel/discussion, please contact [vp-virtual@owit.org](mailto:vp-virtual@owit.org).

### **Women in Trade: A Global Perspective on Where We Are and How To Get To Equality" - Speakers: Cindy Covell, Laura Escalante and Kelley Sanabria APRIL 24 at 12:00pm ET**

CT Strategies' Kelley Sanabria, Cindy Covell, and Laura Escalante conduct a webinar interview with OWIT on the theme of Women In Trade.

Recently three CT Strategies' team members had the opportunity to engage in a discussion with the Organization for Women in International Trade (OWIT) on the topic of 'Women in Trade: A Global Perspective on Where We Are and How to Get to Equality'.



Representing CT Strategies was:

- Cindy Covell, who most recently served as the Executive Director, Regulatory Audit in the Office of International Trade at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP);
- Laura Escalante, who represented the Ministry of Foreign Trade for Costa Rica as a Trade Facilitation Coordinator, and;
- Kelley Sanabria, who worked as an International Trade Specialist at the Office of International Trade, U.S. CBP.

All three women have extensive public sector experience in international trade and spoke about: the importance of having an equal representation of females in the trade industry, the past and current state of diversity in the trade and customs sectors, how senior female leadership can help elevate female employees, the role of male leadership in pursuing workplace equality, and how women can help elevate themselves and each other in the workplace.

To read highlights of the webinar interview and to watch video clips from the seminar, please visit CT Strategies [here](#).

### Highlight a Woman Leader - YOU!



Create a 60-second (or less) video showcasing how OWIT International has been of value to your professional growth. Post it on our Facebook page before August 1, 2018. (Please note that all postings are reviewed by OWIT International before going live, so you will not see the video go up immediately). Our best submissions will have their videos featured at OWIT International's October 25th Conference in Nairobi, Kenya: Bridging the Gap - Empowering Businesses to Go Global.

Visit [www.owit.org/programs/nairobiconference](http://www.owit.org/programs/nairobiconference) to learn more about the Nairobi Conference and related empowerment and networking events!





## SAVE THE DATE:

### Bridging the Gap - Empowering Businesses to go Global

October 24-25, 2018 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya

In response to global demand and burgeoning trends in trade modernization, OWIT International is bringing back its 18th Annual World Conference. In recognition of Nairobi's vast potential to engage in global trade, OWIT International has selected its OWIT Chapter in Nairobi, Kenya as the host for this year's annual conference. On October 24-25, 2018, OWIT members around the globe will converge with supporters and experts in their field to empower both the local community and business leaders throughout the world. Day One will be comprised of a capacity-building workshop for local women entrepreneurs seeking to take their business across borders. Day Two is a conference for trade practitioners and policy makers from around the world for discussing best practices, what's next for the future of trade, and what women's roles should be in that future.

For more information about the OWIT Conference and Capacity Building Workshop, or to register, please contact [VP-Conference@owit.org](mailto:VP-Conference@owit.org).

### OWIT Seeks Website Assistance for Nairobi Conference Promotion



The Organization of Women in International Trade ([OWIT.org](http://OWIT.org)), of which WIIT-DC is the largest chapter, is united around the globe to advance women in international trade and business.

OWIT is 100% volunteer run and currently has a website built on Code Ignitor with a PHP framework.

OWIT is currently planning its annual conference in Nairobi, Kenya and very much needs assistance in getting its website ready! If you want to help a great organization with some website updates, please contact President Jen Diaz at [President@owit.org](mailto:President@owit.org). The volunteer position is virtual.

## Upcoming Webinars

**International Trade Centre -  
SheTrades Initiative:  
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 to become connected with suppliers and partners.



For those unfamiliar with the NCBFAA Educational Institute (NEI), it provides the industry with well-regarded customs and export certifications, which require the accumulation of continuing education credits for annual renewal, thus increasing the participant's knowledge base and professionalism. One element of the continuing education program is the provision of regularly scheduled webinars that are available to certified persons as well as any others with an interest in the industry specific topic.

The NEI hosts several of these webinars a year, encompassing a wide variety of industry topics from eBonds and ADD/CVD, to Sanctions and Carnets. They are looking for qualified speakers to present on relevant topics for 2018 and would like to extend an invitation to OWIT members! If you or someone you know is interested, please email NEI Director Cecilia Ferrara ([Cferrara@ncbfaa.org](mailto:Cferrara@ncbfaa.org)) for more information.

To get a sense of the type of topics the NEI typically presents on, you can view their 2017 webinar list [here](#).



Export Development Canada (EDC) and FITT have teamed up to deliver [EDC-FITT International Trade Training](#), a powerful tool for Canada's next generation of trade leaders.

And we want to give OWIT members exclusive 20% off discounts for all EDC-FITT online [courses](#) and [workshops](#)- use discount code OWIT20at checkout to save.

This new online platform will make it even easier to access FITTskills online courses, workshops and other resources, so you can continue to get the practical training to upgrade your skills on the job!

[Explore EDC-FITT Training](#) today to save and accelerate your career!  
Act now, your **20% off discount (OWIT20)** is only available **until May 28, 2018!**

## Call for Volunteers!

OWIT International needs you! We have 9 amazing committees that are seeking volunteers. If you are interested, please contact OWIT 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!

### **OWIT Newsletter Team**

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

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### **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))



*This photo represents some of the dedicated and hard-working women at OWIT that work "behind-the-scenes" in managing our programs & webinars, sponsorships, conferences, our chapter support and much more. Our team rocks!*

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