



Organization of Women in International Trade

OWIT Newsletter September 2020

□ A message from our President



One of the most important rights and privileges that we have as citizens is the right to vote and elect the leaders who shape our laws at the local, state, and federal level. Regardless of which candidates or party you support, we encourage all OWIT members to exercise your right to vote in the upcoming elections. If you live in the United States, the General Election is Tuesday, November 3rd. And now that the national conventions are complete and the parties nominated their candidates for president and vice president, the beginning of the General Election season is here so PLEASE:



□ OWIT International Corner

Diversity Dividend: How Women's Economic Empowerment Drives Growth

· On September 21, 2020 at 12 EST, the DC chapter of Women in International Trade held a webinar entitled Diversity Dividend: How Women's Economic Empowerment Drives Growth. The session explored the recent WTO and World Bank joint report entitled Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality which can be accessed at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34140>.

· The webinar addressed in particular the data metrics and opportunities for practical collaboration. In the context of COVID-19, women in business are impacted economically in a disproportionate and negative manner. However, they are also a key resource to enable efficient and accelerated economic recovery. This webinar covered the overall findings of the WTO/WB report; as well as specific areas where women's economic empowerment can drive restoration of global trade and our domestic communities. It was moderated by Ms. Penny Haas of UPS and the speakers included: Ms. Emily Beline, WIIT President-Elect; Ms. Caren Grown, the Global Director on Gender at the World Bank; Ms. Nadia Rocha of the World Bank; Mr. Victor Stolzenburg of the WTO; and, Ms. Judith Fessehaie of the ITC. Highlights of the talk are below.

- Women accumulate more human capital than men but have not been able to translate it to their advantage - women across the world hold fewer jobs than men, less than 1 in 2 women work, women are paid less than men, and women are overrepresented in informal employment.

- The WTO/WB report is an attempt to quantify how women are affected by trade, how trade policies affect men and women differently, and highlight the need for sex-specific data so we can understand how implicit biases impact men and women differently.

- Exporters play an important role in employing women— they employ more women in developing countries, i.e., women workers in the readymade garment sector in Bangladesh.

- Trade policy can have some implicit biases against women both as producers and consumers — tariffs amount to a pink tax. Women in developing countries tend to consume more food, which amounts to a pink tax.

A pink tax is a phenomenon often attributed as a form of gender-based price discrimination as many of the affected products are “pink”.

- Targeted policies can help women maximize the benefits of trade and digital technology can help us bypass traditional trade barriers. Firms engaged in international trade tend to employ more women than firms that do not. However, tariffs in the sector that employs the most women (food and beverage) are more than double than the tariffs sector that employs the most men (mining).

- There is a correlation— higher female employment in an industry= higher tariffs. Biases against women and discrimination play a role - women face more arbitrary checks and problems with people in society. Women have less access to finance and education, in addition to legal barriers in some countries (such as not being allowed to obtain a passport).

- Our economy has become more service-oriented - trading services is growing much faster than trading goods. Women-led exporting firms tend to employ even more women and give them more opportunities in mid/high level jobs. And the She Trades Outlook ITC tool can help policy makers move to the operations side.



COMMERCE NEWS

U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Office of the Secretary
www.commerce.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, September 25, 2020

News Media Contact:

Office of Public Affairs, 202-482-4883

The U.S. Department of Commerce Concludes Successful Women's Global Trade Empowerment Forum Highlighting Importance of Women Exporters

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Karen Dunn Kelley closed the final session of the six-part virtual “Women’s Global Trade Empowerment Forum” earlier this week highlighting the vast opportunities available to women business leaders across North America and the benefits provided by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

“The Department of Commerce is honored to facilitate the Women’s Global Trade Empowerment Forum,” said Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross. “Thanks to the steadfast leadership of President Trump, the passage of USMCA continues to further American prosperity by producing fairer trade for the United States, revitalizing the American economy, and benefiting American manufacturers, workers, businesses, and farmers.”

“The Women’s Global Trade Empowerment Forum brought vital resources together to further support two major policy priorities of the Trump Administration: free, fair, and reciprocal trade and the economic empowerment of women,” said Deputy Secretary Kelley. “Our Department was pleased to help nearly two thousand women business leaders take full advantage of the new USMCA trade agreement.”

The series focused on issues of importance to women-led businesses involved in international trade with topics including USMCA provisions, global e-commerce, export finance, and customs rules of origin. The series also focused on services the U.S. Department of Commerce provides through SelectUSA, facilitating business investment in the United States, legal considerations, and intellectual property protections.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Field Ana Guevara added, “This forum, ongoing outreach by the 100+ offices of the U.S. Commercial Service, and our recently-initiated strategic partnership with the Organization of Women in International Trade, are just some of the ways our agency is able to connect women in international trade with the many people, tools, and resources that exist within our extensive global network. We want to ensure that women in business are engaged in our regular initiatives and programs and are part of the local trade ecosystem.”

Program speakers also included Canadian and Mexican Ambassadors to the United States Kirsten Hillman and Martha Bárcena Coqui, U.S. Small Business Administration Administrator Jovita Carranza, Export-Import Bank Chairman and President Kimberly Reed, and senior executives from American firms including UPS, Regions Bank, eBay, among others.

Hosted by: WCL African Law and Policy Association (ALPA)
Co-sponsored by: Institute for African Women in Law (IAWL)

African Legal Conference Fall 2020

Theme: Challenges and Opportunities in Governance, Trade, and Economic Empowerment on the African Continent

Trade and Inclusivity: Small and Mid-size Enterprises (SMEs) and Women's Access to Trade

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020
12:00 PM – 1:15 PM EST



Val Okaru-Bisant

CEO & Founder of Afrocosmo Development Impact, LLC and Adjunct Professor at Catholic University of America

Featured panelists include:



Sitshengisiwe Ndlovu

Founder of Her Economy and Trade, Chapter President of the Organization of Women in International Trade-Zimbabwe



Nadira Bayat

Gender and Trade Expert with the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)



Frida Owinga

Founder of PassionProject and Executive Vice President of the Organization of Women in International Trade

This event is free and open to the public. To register, please go to:
<https://www.wcl.american.edu/secle/registration>



□ OWIT International Past Webinars

The New Normal: Women and Trade Post COVID-19

On August 14th, Speakers Frida Owinga, Hulya Kurt, Nithya Nagarajan, Tshendi Ndlovu and Guest Speaker Tamar Harrigan, moderated by our OWIT President Camelia Mazard, talked about the impact of COVID19 and the New Normal that has been ushered in by the pandemic. The discussion revolved around how women businesses will survive in the new normal, the set of skills required for businesses to survive.



Unlocking Access to Trade and Investments in Africa

On August 27th, the African Trade Insurance Agency ("ATI") hosted a webinar on information about their insurance products/guarantees intended to support growth of SMEs and lenders on increasing trade and investments. Products offered include protection against sovereign risks or unilateral actions by governments that negatively affect business, including expropriation, breach of contracts, and revocation of licenses, among others. ATI also offers credit insurance, covering non-payment or delayed payment to lenders or suppliers of goods and services by private buyers and protection of investors.

The presenter, *Ms. Tusekile Kibonde*, is an underwriter holding over seven years of experience at ATI. Ms. Kibonde has 13 years of banking experience, having worked for the East African Development Bank ("EADB"), where she rose to the position of Senior

Investment Officer. At EADB, Ms. Kibonde oversaw multi-million dollar projects in multiple sectors throughout the region. Her responsibilities included extensive risk analyses, project appraisal and portfolio management, while also developing new business and investment opportunities. Ms. Kibonde also has been a Non-Executive Director of the Access Bank Tanzania Ltd since 2019. Ms. Kibonde is a national of Tanzania and holds a Master of Arts Degree in Accounting & Financial Management from the University of Essex in the United Kingdom and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business Administration from Richmond College in the United Kingdom.



□ OWIT International Upcoming Webinars



USMCA Center's Informational Briefing with Acting Center Director Tamica C. Solomon

**Thursday, October 22nd at 12:00 p.m.
EDT**

Customs and Border Protection launched the USMCA Center in July 2020 for the purpose of serving as a one stop shop for information concerning the USMCA. The staff is trained to support the trade community by providing resources and addressing questions and concerns. Join us for an informational briefing with the Acting Director for the USMCA Center, Tamica C. Solomon. She will provide an overview of the agreement and highlight the USMCA's Center compliance resources. Here are a few of the highlights:

COO Rules
Labor/Value Content
IPR/Digital Trade
De Minimis
Trade Protection
Comprehensive Enforcement
Local Data Storage

Tamica C. Solomon is the Acting Director for the USMCA Center in Trade Policy and Programs at U. S Customs and Border Protection's (CBP).

Tamica has over 15 years of progressive Federal and State public service experience. Tamica joined CBP in May 2017 as an Assistant Field Director for Regulatory Audit and

Agency Advisory Services in Houston TX. Prior to joining CBP, Tamica worked for the Department of Defense National Guard in New Mexico where she successfully led our nation's heroes and saved government funds. Tamica has a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and graduate studies in Public Administration from Southern University Agriculture and Mechanical College in Baton Rouge Louisiana and a Master's Degree in Governmental Accounting from Rutgers State University Business School in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Tamica is a Certified Governmental Audit Professional (CGAP), and a Certified Internal Controls Auditor (CICA) Tamica's expertise in Audit and Risk Management helps advance Office of Trade's mission to facilitate legitimate trade, enforce US laws, and protect the American economy to ensure consumer safety and to create a level playing field for American business.

[Register Here](#)

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-website@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-website@owit.org



Members in the News

How women can thrive in business amidst the numerous challenges

By CPA Caroline Gathii, IRMCert

A research report from the Kenya Association of Manufacturers published in May 2017 states that women owned businesses make about 48% of all Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs). The report continues to state that these businesses contribute approximately 20% of Kenya's GDP. Women business therefore are critical in the contribution to the Kenyan economy and indeed the rest of the world. Women in business face gender specific challenges that are not necessarily faced by male led businesses. These challenges limit the growth of these businesses and when they are not

proactively dealt with, they will curtail the business survival.



Women owned businesses face a challenge of access to credit and capital. The traditional banking model requires that a business has a healthy cashflow and adequate collateral to qualify for loan products. The Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) conducted a research which indicated that women hold only 1 (one) percent of land titles in Kenya, while 5 percent of land is owned jointly with men. This therefore means that there are very few women who can provide land as collateral for their businesses. Other property that could be used as collateral like vehicles are used for both business and family. These therefore poses a challenge of their ability to borrow against such assets. The importance of innovative financing models for women owned businesses is critical for their survival. Designing products like a revolving fund managed by a Business Membership Organization based on a pre-determined criterion is important for these businesses. Encouraging women to save in a credible Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) is critical. They can have the power to use their savings to borrow and grow for their businesses.

Women are nurturers and they have to divide their time between running a business and managing the household. According to a UN Women report, women tend to spend around 2.5 times more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men. In the African society, women are still expected to undertake certain household chores that men are not. These chores limit the time women have to build their businesses. Women should therefore strive to form structures within the household and the business to assist them build bigger and sustainable businesses. Digital transformation is crucial for these businesses. Digitization will help the businesses modify existing processes, enable the businesses to reach more markets as well as enhance customer experience.

Due to the challenges of nurturing and managing a household, it limits the mobility of women to seek markets away from the locality of the home. This leads to inadequate supply chain diversity for women owned businesses. Male business owners are able to travel for longer periods of time and reach further geographical areas as compared to women. Women have to ensure that their homes are still operational even when they are out for business related assignments. They therefore tend to conduct businesses near their areas of residence hence limiting their geographical reach. Women business owners will need to embrace partnerships to widen their business reach. Partnerships will assist women businesses to reach different geographical markets. Business Membership Organizations should enhance their capacity to partnership and knowledge to enable them grow their businesses.

There are challenges faced by women in business relating to information, they include: lack of reliable and accurate sources of information, lack of adequate support networks including business advisors and mentors. These prevents women to fully benefit from business opportunities that are present in the market place. These challenges could lead to business stagnation or worse still to closure. Women require consistent support to enable them access reliable and accurate information. They should be more proactive to seek information regarding their businesses and the business environments. Business

Member Organizations (BMOs) have a fundamental responsibility to provide this information. Proper management and governance of these organizations is critical for building capacity of women in business. Being the go-to organization for reliable information required to run and manage businesses.

BMOs have a mandate to make a difference in the businesses of women and change the course of history. It behooves them to support their members and ensure that their needs are met. Functional and sustainable BMOs are key to assist women to build great and big businesses. The critical mass within these BMOs should create enough momentum to facilitate policy discussion and change. BMOs require proper strategies to advance the women in business agenda. The leadership and management of these entities should be professional and should ensure that the challenges that women face are addressed and resolved.

BMOs should be the unified platform to facilitate women in business in the following areas including outlining a common agenda for boosting women entrepreneurship; providing information on the networking options available and programmes that they can benefit from to increase their skills and competencies to successfully run their business; facilitating local and domestic marketing linkages; capacity building and services to improve skills and grow their businesses; designing innovating financing models to boost access to finance for women amongst other strategies.

CPA Caroline Gathii, IRMCert, is an International Certified Risk Expert with First Idea Consulting Limited President – Organisation of Women in International Trade (OWIT Nairobi)
Email: cgathii@firstideaconsulting.co.ke

Chapter Corner



OWIT Lake Geneva

<p>OWIT AFTERWORK 22 SEPTEMBER 18:30 FAIRMONT HOTEL GENEVA WITH AUTHOR GILL WHITTY-COLLINS</p>	<p>Sep 22nd</p> <p>Why men win at work? Afterwork event in Geneva with author Gill Whitty-Collins</p>	<p>Oct 29</p> <p>App blueprint: How to make your idea a reality! Workshop in Geneva</p>	
<p>OWIT AFTERWORK LAUSANNE 24 SEPTEMBER 18:30 HOTEL MONY</p>	<p>Sep 24th</p> <p>How to keep the work-life balance while working from home in the Covid era? Afterwork event in Lausanne</p>	<p>Dec 10th</p> <p>XMas Twist Afterwork event in Geneva</p>	
	<p>Oct 1st</p> <p>Coaching skills for leadership by Noble Manhattan Workshop in Geneva</p>	<p>Dec 17th</p> <p>XMas Twist Afterwork event in Lausanne</p>	
	<p>Oct 14th</p> <p>Design thinking and business model canvas by InnKick Workshop in TBD</p>	<p>Jan 21st</p> <p>This is the year you start investing like Aysha Webinar</p>	

[Visit OWIT Lake Geneva Website](#)

OWIT LAKE GENEVA SPOTLIGHT: PAMELA COKE HAMILTON INTERVIEW

SPOTLIGHT ON series - OWIT Lake Geneva has launched a new Spotlight On feature on their website, where you will have the chance to virtually meet inspiring people who will share their stories, actions and support for the advancement of women in public and private sectors.

They kicked off their series with an interview featuring the inspiring [Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton](#), Director for International Trade and Commodities at UNCTAD.

You can view the interview [HERE](#).

OWIT-Toronto



OWIT-Toronto held two information-packed virtual events over the summer months. One was a lively session in partnership with [Language Advantage Inc.](#) called *Language and Culture: Gateway and tips to Hispanic Export Markets* focused on the importance of speaking the client's language when developing export plans in Hispanic markets. The webinar provided strategies on accessing the Hispanic export markets through cultural awareness and language. Interested members were treated to 8 sessions of complimentary Spanish lessons through July and August.

Cultural Competency

- TIME
- TRUST
- BUSINESS STYLE

A video feed showing a woman with short, curly grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark top, speaking during a webinar. The background is a simple indoor setting with a window and a lamp.

A timely webinar on *Covid 19: A Call for Digital Transformation* featured five dynamic presenters who emphasized that digital transformation is a critical element to survive through the pandemic and to compete in our digital economy. They addressed how to leverage digital technology for business opportunities and shared helpful tools and strategies. Participants were also introduced to a new business matchmaking service for small and medium businesses called [B2BeeMatch](#), developed by member KC Goundiam and available free to all OWIT-Toronto members for a trial period.



COVID-19: A CALL FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

September 17, 2020 at 1 pm EST

Reserve your spot for this virtual event on
www.owit-toronto.ca



**Karima-Catherine [KC]
Goundiam**
CEO, B2BeeMatch ; CEO, Red
Dot Digital Inc. and Founder,
Tech Canada Advocates



Charlotta Carter
President-CEO,
GRI Technology Solutions,
LLC and PWC Technology
Services, Inc.



Anita Agrawal
CEO & Designer Jewels 4 Ever, Best
Bargains and Professor, School of
Business,
Centennial College



Shelly Bell
Founder/CEO,
Black Girl Ventures



Moderator: Stephanie Dei,
National Coordinator, Canada,
WE EMPOWER



OWIT Ciudad de México

WomanExportingMx

1st E-Business Matchmaking event for
Mexican Businesswomen trading with
Canadian and US companies

OCTOBER 26 TO 30, 2020

Registration – 9th to 28th September 2020.

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FREE EVENT



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WIIT - DC WIIT AWARDS EVENT



We had the privilege of honoring the winners of the 2020 WIIT Annual Awards. The event featured video congratulations from Representative Rick Larsen, WTO negotiators from around the world, and Canada's Ambassador to the US. The acceptance remarks from our awardees were heartfelt and inspirational - we encourage you to take a listen and drop them a note of congratulations. In

between awards, we were treated to cooking demos from the Embassies of China and Thailand as well as a special dessert from guest chef Angela Ellard. We have attached a PowerPoint containing all of the ingredients and steps for each delicious recipe.

Thanks to our wonderful Special Events chairs, Kim Yaeger and Chynna Hawes, for assembling a memorable event.

Click the link for the event recording: https://youtu.be/89Y-b_X69Rk

Click the link for the event recap on the WIIT website:

<https://www.wiit.org/event%20recaps>



OWIT Nigeria

Report On Organization Of Women In International Trade (OWIT) Members Virtual Inauguration Event

The inaugural ceremony was held virtually on Friday, 11th September 2020 at 12pm West African Time. This event which was well attended from all over the world commenced with a welcome address by the President, Ms Blessing Irabor.

Inspiring goodwill Messages were given by great personalities who graced the event, they were Frida Owinga, Executive Vice President, OWIT International; Carolina Gathii, President OWIT Nairobi; Tshengi Ndlovu President, OWIT Zimbabwe; Chief Mrs Nana Okuribido, National Coordinator, Association Of Nigerian Business Women Network; Nwiabu Legborsi Esq., Trade Lawyer and Executive Director; Nigeria Private Sector Alliance. (NIPSA) ; Mrs. Regina Obasa, Former Permanent Secretary, Ministry Of Environment, Lagos State; - Mr Yeshua Russell, County Director, WeConnet International In Nigeria; - Mrs Esther Eghobamien-Mshelia, UN CEDAW Committee Member, Geneva, Switzerland - Convener; Women Arise Development And Humanitarian Initiative (Wadhi) Abuja, Nigeria; Mr Benjamin Acheampong, President, Wealth Creation Group; Dr Yinka Tella, National Public Relations Officer of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization, Americas (NIDOA).

Ms. Frida Owinga and Owit and Ms. Blessing Irabor led the Members' Orientation. Inauguration of Executives and New Members was led by the Legal Adviser Barr. Etinosa Omo Ahanor, with all newly inaugurated electives taking the oath of office.

Ms. Frida Owinga was conferred with the Honorary Membership status, also with the position of Board Advisors and Patron of OWIT Nigeria.

On behalf of Newly Inaugurated Members, Dr Regina Inem, Secretary General OWIT Nigeria gave her comments.

Vote of Thanks/Closing was taken by Mr Kenny Adenugba, Director Planning and Strategy, OWIT Nigeria gave.

The inauguration came to a close with the second stanza of the Nigerian National Anthem.



OWIT St. Louis

In July, OWIT STL hosted a panel discussion on Diversity and Inclusion in the field of Trade Compliance. The recording can be found on our blog here: <https://owitstl.wixsite.com/owitstl/post/diversity-and-inclusion-panel-discussion>

OWIT STL hosts a monthly networking session on the second Wednesday of each month. I would like to extend an invitation to all OWIT members! The event consists of three 15 minute breakout sessions to meet and greet other trade professionals. Parties can sign up for notifications through our website here: <https://owitstl.wixsite.com/owitstl/post/trade-networking-2nd-wednesday-of-each-month>



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 your chapter membership on OWIT International's website <https://www.owit.org>. Create your free member profile today! If you're not a member of a local chapter, please visit <https://owit.org/owit-chapters/> to learn more about our chapters. If you have questions, please contact vp-membership@owit.org.

Call for Volunteers!

OWIT International needs you! We have ten amazing committees that are seeking volunteers. If you are interested, please contact OWIT President Camelia Mazard 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!

Editor: [Deirdre D. Nero, Esq., NERO Immigration Law, PL](#)

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Did You Know...

We have **OWIT chapters** in:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| • Charleston | • Monterrey | • Tampa Bay |
| • Chicago | • Nairobi | • Toronto |
| • Dominican Republic | • New York City | • Orange County |
| • Greater Triangle NC | • Nigeria | • Ottawa |
| • Lake Geneva | • Northern California | • Virtual |
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About Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT)

The Organization of Women in International Trade (<https://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](#)

See what's happening on our social sites!

