



For Immediate Release

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Historic Organizations Merge to Improve Workplaces for Women and Families
Nonprofit Focuses on Workforce Development and Workplace Policy

May 21, 2009, Washington, DC -- Business and Professional Women/USA (BPW/USA) will merge with Business and Professional (BPW) Foundation effective July 1, 2009.

BPW Foundation is dedicated to promoting and advocating for successful workplaces for women, families and their employers. BPW Foundation defines *successful workplaces* as work environments that embrace and practice diversity, equity and work life balance.

On Friday, May 15, 2009, BPW/USA members approved a friendly merger with its sister organization, BPW Foundation, ensuring that their advocacy and support for working women and families would continue. This merged organization represents over 143 years of combined experience and will offer membership opportunities.

“In this economic climate, the best business decision was to consolidate the two organizations’ assets in a fiscally sound manner, to continue our shared vision and improve workplaces for women,” said BPW/USA President, Diane Polangin. “This pragmatic business decision allows the united organization to thrive in today’s economy.”

BPW Foundation Chair Roslyn Ridgeway said, “The missions of BPW/USA and BPW Foundation have always been closely linked. Energized by the merger, BPW Foundation will continue transforming today’s workplaces by focusing on issues that impact women, families and employers.”

“BPW Foundation brings together women, employers and policy makers to create change and expand workplace options, in order to develop an equitable and diverse workforce,” Ridgeway added.

“BPW/USA has always been at the forefront on issues important to working women. A merger with BPW Foundation will improve programming and resources for working women *and* employers seeking to create equitable workplaces,” says Polangin. “BPW Foundation will continue to focus on public policy and will rely on grassroots activists to ensure that key issues are addressed at all levels.”

“Through our groundbreaking research and unique role as a neutral convener of employers and employees, we strive to redefine today’s workplace. A *Successful Workplace* is one where working women can succeed and businesses can profit,” said Ridgeway. “BPW Foundation is leading the way to develop and advocate for policies and programs that ‘work’ for women and for business.”

With an enhanced mission, BPW Foundation will continue to support workforce development programs and workplace policies that recognize the diverse needs of working women, communities and businesses. Examples of ongoing work include:

- *Successful Workplaces Digest*, a publication showcasing policies and best practices of companies that are improving the workplace. The *Digest* also highlights BPW Foundation's role as the bridge between working women and employers to establish and sustain work environments that quite simply 'work' for women and families.
- *Women Joining Forces: Closing Ranks, Opening Doors®*, a program that provides resources and research to women veterans transitioning from the military into their civilian lives. The focus has been educating veterans and employers on the support necessary for a successful re-entry into the workforce. This unique research shines light on issues that are impacting all working women including pay equity, benefits such as paid sick leave and healthcare as well as career training and continuing education.
- The *Young Careerist* research project, an examination of the needs and challenges of Generations X and Y in today's multi-generational workplace. This primary research gives voice to a distinct group of working women who are vital to developing a diverse and skilled workforce. This project dovetails with WJF program research.
- *Women in non-traditional careers*, an issue that BPW Foundation has historically studied. Research and program development will continue to ensure that women are represented and have access to careers in non-traditional industries.
- *Career Transition Resources*, an integrated focus area that addresses the three types of transition that women typically face: life-cycle induced, career-focused and market or workplace-induced. Resources include BPW Career Center which highlights the policies of women and veteran friendly employers, as well as financial assistance for professional development, training and education.
- *Advocacy for workingwomen and families*, a cornerstone for the work of BPW Foundation that will continue to inform and guide our research and programming and vice versa. We will mobilize our grassroots network in support of policies that promote successful workplaces for women and employers.

Business and Professional Women's Foundation is creating successful workplaces by focusing on issues that impact women, families and employers. Successful Workplaces are those that embrace and practice diversity, equity and work life balance.

BPW Foundation supports workforce development programs and workplace policies that recognize the diverse needs of working women, communities and businesses. BPW Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) research and education organization.

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