



Business and
Professional
Women's
Foundation

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Tammy Duckworth Keynote Speaker at Women Veterans Summit SBA Deputy Administrator, Marie Johns to Speak at Lunch

Washington, DC -- Tammy Duckworth, Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will serve as one of the keynote speakers at the *Joining Forces for Women Veterans* Inaugural Summit on October 21 in Washington, DC. The featured luncheon speaker will be *Marie Johns*, Deputy Administrator for the Small Business Administration. The Summit will be the first of its kind, focusing entirely on the unique needs of women veterans.

Joining Forces for Women Veterans will convene more than 60 participants, including women veterans and government, community and corporate leaders to discuss and seek solutions to challenges faced by women veterans as well as opportunities they present for the workplace. Agenda topics are employment and careers; family and community re-integration; and homelessness. A result of the Summit will be the establishment of a national, ongoing fund to support programs and services for women veterans.

The Summit is sponsored by Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Foundation with support from the McCormick Foundation and Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust (DAV).

"We are very fortunate to have Assistant Secretary Duckworth share her expertise and unique perspective as a woman veteran who has made such a successful transition into the civilian workforce and now works to ensure that all veterans have the resources they need to move forward," said BPW Foundation CEO Deborah Frett.

Duckworth, who will speak in the morning, represents and advises the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs on matters relating to media and public affairs. Previously Duckworth served as the director of Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

A major in the Illinois Army National Guard, Duckworth served in Iraq as an assistant operations officer and also piloted combat missions as a Black Hawk helicopter pilot. During a mission, the helicopter she was co-piloting was ambushed. As a result of the attack, Duckworth lost both of her legs and partial use of one arm. She received many decorations for her actions, including the Purple Heart, the Air Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

Luncheon speaker, Marie Johns has long been an advocate for small business. In her current position, she is instrumental in helping to plan and implement programs that maximize resources to help veterans and their dependents establish small businesses and use their entrepreneurial skills. In 2004 Johns retired from the telecommunications industry after having served as president of Verizon Washington, where she was responsible for nearly 2,000 employees and more than 800,000 customers, including many small businesses.

“We are excited that Marie Johns can address not only opportunity within the corporate industry but those in the small business arena, an area that provides economic opportunity to many women veterans,” said Frett.

“The participants at this Summit are front line players in the launch of a multi-year initiative to leverage public and private support to implement solutions facing women veterans and best utilize their unique talents.” Frett concluded.

For more information on the Summit, visit www.bpwfoundation.org/womenvetsummit or email to womenvetsummit@bpwfoundation.org

Business and Professional Women’s (BPW) Foundation is a 501(c)(3) research and education organization that is transforming the workplace with women and employers. BPW Foundation advocates for successful workplaces that practice and embrace diversity, equity and work-life balance. Through our groundbreaking research and unique role as a convener of employers and employees, BPW Foundation leads the way in developing and advocating for policies and programs that “work” for both women and businesses. www.bpwfoundation.org

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