



For Immediate Release: October 9, 2017

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WIPP Awards Recognize Sen. Joni Ernst & Exceptional Women Leaders

WIPP's prestigious Annual Leadership Awards, handed out during the organization's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., honor those who exemplify WIPP's mission and go above and beyond in their efforts to advance women entrepreneurs

Oct. 9, 2017, Washington, D.C. — The 2017 winners of Women Impacting Public Policy's Leadership Awards—announced at WIPP's Annual Leadership Conference last week—include a senator who worked on legislation to ensure women federal contractors are getting a fair shake and a woman business owner who has been exceptionally outspoken on tax reform to help entrepreneurs, among others.

WIPP's Leadership Awards recognize those who exemplify WIPP's mission to educate and advocate on behalf of female entrepreneurs, and those dedicated to the advancement of women in business.

“It's always difficult to choose just one winner for each award because so many talented and hard-working women are nominated each year,” said WIPP President Jane Campbell. “We are proud to recognize this year's winners as tremendous leaders who are committed to supporting other women in business.”

This year's winners are:

Congressional Leadership Award: Sen. Joni Ernst, R-IA

This award recognizes a member of Congress who has championed women's entrepreneurship through public policy initiatives.

This year, in response to a WIPP report about women being shut out of government contracts, Sen. Ernst introduced S. 1038, asking the Small Business Administration to conduct a comprehensive study on socio-economic group participation, including women, in these contracts—an important step to ensure that all small businesses have equal access to contracts, increasing opportunities for women-owned small businesses. The bipartisan legislation, co-sponsored by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), was passed by the Senate in September.

WIPP Public Policy Award: Rebecca Boenigk, CEO & COB, Neutral Posture

This award recognizes a WIPP member who sets an example of the power each of us has by becoming actively engaged in the political process.

Rebecca Boenigk, who serves as a WIPP Board Member, has been actively involved in public policy for more than 20 years, fighting for policies that help women small business owners grow and thrive. This year, she testified before the House Ways and Means Committee's Tax Subcommittee about the impacts of tax reform on small business, was quoted in articles and op-eds on tax issues in publications such as *The Atlantic* and spoke at press conferences with leaders including House Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady, among other activities.

Barbara Kasoff Founder's Award: *Dr. Alice Williams, Associate Director, Office of Small Business Programs, Department of Defense*

This award recognizes business owners, community leaders and public officials with a strong record of accomplishment of economic success and advocacy work, educating and empowering women entrepreneurs to harness economic opportunities.

Dr. Alice Williams has demonstrated steadfast support for female entrepreneurs through small business advocacy and mentorship during her career. She has developed major initiatives associated with acquisition strategies and workforce management to help the Department of Defense (DoD) meet its small business prime contracting and subcontracting goals—focusing substantial effort on woman-owned small business initiatives. The results have been impressive. In fiscal year 2016 alone, DoD exceeded its prime-contracting goal and awarded \$57.8 billion in contracts to small businesses, of which \$10.4 billion went to women-owned small businesses.

WIPP Innovator of the Year Award: *Arria Hines, President/CEO Allegheny Science & Technology*

This award recognizes a WIPP member who has effectively leveraged technology for innovation and success in business.

Arria Hines, through innovation and tenacity, has built a successful and fast-growing company that secures federal contracts in the complex fields of energy, intelligence and defense. Her entrepreneurial spirit and demonstrated ability to build trust and forge strategic connections epitomize the qualities of WIPP members across the country.

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About WIPP

Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) is a national nonpartisan organization advocating on behalf of women entrepreneurs—strengthening their impact on our nation's public policy, creating economic opportunities, and forging alliances with other business organizations. www.WIPP.org