



Embrace and Elevate Systems of Change

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

11-13 June 2025 | Claremont, CA, USA

ILA's 7th Women and Leadership Session Guide

Agenda-At-A-Glance

Tuesday, 10 June 2025		
16:30	Pre-Conference Convening: An Evening to Embrace & Connect <i>Note: Not included in registration. Pay your own way at the restaurant.</i>	Elvira's Mexican Grill, 415 W Foothill Blvd #100, Claremont, CA
Wednesday, 11 June 2025		
7:15-17:00	ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter	McKenna Auditorium Foyer
7:30	Room to Breathe: A Morning Reflection Space	The Hub
8:00-8:50	Continental Breakfast	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
9:00-10:20	Conference Welcome & Keynote: Madeline Di Nonno, President & CEO, Geena Davis Institute	McKenna Auditorium
10:25-10:45	Coffee & Tea Break	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
10:50-11:50	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouped Presentations – <i>Strategies to Enhance the Power of She</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>The Cadence of Faith: A Collective Power Strategy for Women Leaders</i> (Kravis 164) • Grouped Presentations – <i>Critical Strategies for Workplace Success</i> (Roberts North 104) • Grouped Presentations - <i>Exploring Leader Identity, Perils of Gender Awareness, and Cadence of Faith</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
12:00-13:30	Networking Luncheon	McKenna Auditorium
13:40-15:00	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop - <i>Want to Elevate Women Leaders? Here's What Actually Works</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>Socially Conscious Leadership: Workshop on Authentic and Embodied Practices</i> (Kravis 164) • <i>Uncover Meaningful Impacts of Your Leadership Development Program with Ripple Effects Mapping</i> (Roberts North 104) • Workshop - <i>A Leadership Guide to Evaluating Diversity Branding</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
15:00-15:20	Coffee & Tea Break	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
15:30-16:50	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop - <i>Celebrating Soul Success: From Limiting Beliefs to Limitless Possibilities</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>How to Design and Publish a Women and Leadership Case Study: A Model and Guide</i> (Kravis 164) • Workshop - <i>African American Women and Leadership – Developing A Research Agenda</i> (Roberts North 104) • Workshop - <i>Transformation Through Feminist Leadership</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
17:00-18:00	Welcome Reception & Hosted Poster Session	McKenna Auditorium / Flamson Plaza
Thursday, 12 June 2025		
7:00	Steps of Intention: Morning Walk to the Conference	Start at DoubleTree by Hilton – Claremont, 555 W. Foothill Boulevard, Claremont, CA

7:15	Stretch Into You: Functional Movement for Everyday Life	The Hub
7:15-17:00	ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter	McKenna Auditorium Foyer
8:00 -8:50	Continental Breakfast	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
9:00-10:20	Thursday Plenary with Keynote: Darcy J. Totten, Executive Director, California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls	McKenna Auditorium
10:25-10:45	Coffee & Tea Break	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
10:50-11:50	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouped Presentations - <i>From East to West: Lessons and Practices from Women Leaders in Diversity and Complexity</i> (Kravis 102) • Grouped Presentations – <i>Integral Leadership Development and Leader Identity</i> (Kravis 103) • Grouped Presentations – <i>Innovating for Impact: Design Thinking, Systems Change, and Women Leading Transformation in HR and Healthcare</i> (Kravis 164) • Grouped Presentations – <i>Leading From the Core: Adaptability and Liberation in Women's Leadership</i> (Roberts North 104) • Grouped Presentations – <i>Disrupting Silence: Immigrant and Indigenous Women Reimagining Leadership Across Systems</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
12:00-13:30	Networking Luncheon With Special Guest Speakers: Danya Bacchus, CBS News Correspondent, & Renee Washington, Founder & CEO of Resilience Wins Executive Coaching & Consulting LLC	McKenna Auditorium
13:40-15:00	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop - <i>Building Unapologetic Presence - Leading with Heart: Unapologetically You</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>Elevating Personal Growth: Enhancing Leadership for Collegiate Women's Success</i> (Kravis 164) • Panel - <i>ILA Transformative Women Leaders Book Series</i> (Roberts North 104) • Workshop - <i>Embracing Your Excellence</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
15:00-15:20	Coffee & Tea Break	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
15:30-16:50	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop - <i>Shattering Stereotypes: How Muslim Women Are Redefining Leadership Narratives</i> (Kravis 103) • Workshop - <i>Self-Doubt, Saboteurs, and Thinking Traps, Oh My!</i> (Kravis 164) • Workshop - <i>Women Leading Change: How to Be a Successful Change Agent</i> (Roberts North 104) • Workshop - <i>Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Redefining Leadership in the 21st Century</i> (Roberts North 105) • <i>The Women and Leadership Membership Community Journey: A Fireside Chat with Professor Susan R. Madsen</i> (Kravis 102) 		
17:00	Colorful Conversations: A Reflective Connection Session (and Book Raffle)	The Hub
Friday, 13 June 2025		
7:00	Steps of Intention: Morning Walk to the Conference	Start at DoubleTree by Hilton – Claremont, 555 W. Foothill Boulevard, Claremont, CA
7:15	Stretch Into You: Functional Movement for Everyday Life	The Hub
7:15-12:00	ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter	McKenna Auditorium Foyer
8:00-8:50	Continental Breakfast	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer

9:00-10:20	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop - <i>The Gratitude Advantage: Building Trust, Resilience, and Authenticity</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>Leading While Tired: Creating Safe Spaces for Women of Color Leaders to Thrive</i> (Kravis 164) • Workshop - <i>Negative Capability: Reflecting on Personal and Societal Grief as Leaders & Followers</i> (Roberts North 104) • Panel - <i>Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Style of Black Women Leaders</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
10:25-10:45	Coffee & Tea Break	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer
10:50-11:50	Concurrent Sessions	Various Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations - <i>Leading Beyond Labels: Women's Leadership Efforts in Cross-Organizational Teams, for Women of Color in Power, and in Advancing Pay Equity</i> (Kravis 102) • Workshop - <i>Addressing the Intersection of Gender, Achievement, and Leadership Identity Development</i> (Kravis 164) • Workshop – <i>The Power of Mind Wandering in Daily Life</i> (Roberts North 105) 		
12 :00-13 :30	Awards Luncheon, Conference Weaving and Closing Remarks	McKenna Auditorium / Foyer

Detailed Agenda

Tuesday 10 June 2025

16:30 Pre-Conference Convening: An Evening to Embrace & Connect, *Elvira's Mexican Grill, 415 W Foothill Blvd #100, Claremont, CA*

Arriving early? Let's connect! Gather together with other conference attendees for an early dinner at Elvira's Mexican Grill, a "welcoming family restaurant serving traditional Mexican cuisine and modern American fare." A local favorite located within walking distance of the conference hotel, this opportunity is designed for conference attendees to network, reconnect, and celebrate the spirit of Embrace and Elevate. Set in an atmosphere of warmth and inspiration with a touch of Southern California flair, this experience is intended to invite heartfelt connection among women as we welcome each other to the City of Claremont! Cost of dinner is not included in the registration. Price range between \$15-\$60 USD. Questions? Please email dllawhughes@gmail.com.

Wednesday, 11 June 2025

07:15 – 17:00 ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter *McKenna Auditorium Foyer*

7:30 Room to Breathe: A Morning Reflection Space, *The Hub*

Begin your day with intentional reflection in a serene, self-guided space designed for quiet reflection, prayer, or meditation. This peaceful environment offers a gentle start to the day—free from noise and demands—inviting you to center your thoughts, set intentions, and simply be. Come as you are, breathe deeply, and embrace the calm and relax, reflect and recharge before the conference programming begins.

08:00 – 08:50 Continental Breakfast *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer*

09:00 – 10:20 Conference Welcome & Keynote: Madeline Di Nonno, President & CEO,
Geena Davis Institute *McKenna Auditorium*

Welcome

Conference Co-Chair **Sherylle Tan**, Director of Internships and Research, Kravis Leadership Institute & Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology, Claremont McKenna College

Conference Co-Chair **Lisa De-Frank Cole**, Director and F. Duke Perry Endowed Professor of Leadership Studies, West Virginia University

Cynthia Cherrey, ILA President

Conference Weaving

Merike Kolga, Manager, Organizational Learning & Development, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority & Managing Director, Port of Vancouver

See Details at: <https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/7th-women-and-leadership-conference/>

10:25 – 10:45 Coffee & Tea Break *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer*

10:50 – 11:50 Concurrent Sessions *Various*

Strategies to Enhance the Power of She

Presentations

Elevate Girls & Young Women

Kravis 102

Session Chair: **Marilyn Pierce**, Assistant Director, Kravis Leadership Institute, Claremont McKenna College

This session explores diverse strategies to elevate the leadership potential of girls and young women by amplifying their voices, strengthening their resilience, and supporting their professional growth. From a co-curricular sisterhood in South Africa to mentorship for teen mothers and coaching for women of color in career transition, each presentation

offers powerful insights into how targeted support systems can unlock leadership in underrepresented communities.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Silence, Whisper, Loud: Female Students Finding their Voices in a Co-Curricular Program

Anita Maurtin, Director: Strategic Academic Projects, DVC: Academic, University of the Western Cape

This is a case study reflecting on the personal development and growth of a group of high performing female students in their second year of study at a South African university. These young women found their voice in a co-curricular programme, namely the Excelling Programme (EP) that was designed for high performing students in their second year of study. The presentation includes video clips made by the students themselves where the audience can hear the students' voices, literally and figuratively, as they reflect on their personal and professional growth in the annual programme. It provides insights both overt and covert, of how the students found their voice in the sisterhood that developed in the 2024 cohort of the EP.

(2) Empowering Resilience: Mentorship's Role in Human-Centric Leadership Development for Teen and Young Moms

Emi Barresi, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, HEARTH Team Leadership

This presentation explores the transformative power of mentorship and role models in fostering leadership development and resilience among teen and young mothers. Drawing on personal experience, it highlights mentorship's critical role in overcoming barriers, cultivating self-efficacy, and elevating leadership potential in underrepresented communities.

(3) Supporting Leadership Development for Young Women of Color in Career Transition through Coaching

Selene Shen, Career Coach, RFCUNY

How can higher education institutions, nonprofit organizations, and leadership development programs provide targeted support for young women of color career pivoting into the tech industry as women leaders? This presentation strives to deepen the

awareness of the transformative impact of career coaching in fostering early leadership development and facilitating meaningful career transitions. It strives to introduce an effective approach and framework to provide meaningful career coaching practices and early leadership development support for young women of color navigating career pivots within higher education institutions, nonprofits, and leadership development or community programs.

The Cadence of Faith: A Collective Power Strategy for Women Leaders

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership

Kravis 164

Pamela McAfee, Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder, StellaVersed Consulting Firm, LLC

Historically, women have depended on each other, family, and their forms of faith as a way to recover, reflect, and forge ahead to overcome restrictions that were meant to keep them from thriving. A steady and slow growth of women in executive leadership roles is occurring, however, recent data shows these margins of advancement diminishing. This presentation will explore the current experiences of women leaders through avenues of sisterhood, family, and the use of faith to propel them up a forward path or to change course. The cadence of faith is an influential value to women leaders when used as a strategy to overcome blocks and barriers; and can reveal patterns of discovery that strengthen self-confidence in their achievements.

Critical Strategies for Workplace Success

Presentations

Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Roberts North 104

Session Chair: **Sakina Dixon**, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Ecology & Conservation Biology, Texas A&M University

Critical strategies are required to empower women leaders as they pursue their career goals. In these presentations, attendees will learn practical steps to leverage values-based leadership and carefully crafted recommendations for workplace success.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Leading With Intention: How Values-Driven Leadership Empowers Women to Thrive

Debbie Plager, President, The Plager Group

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing work environment, women leaders often face unique challenges that can lead to burnout, disengagement, and misalignment with their core values. This session explores how values-driven leadership can serve as a powerful tool to increase resilience, navigate workplace challenges, and inspire teams. Attendees will learn how to identify their core leadership values, integrate them into daily decision-making, and use them to foster a culture of authenticity, inclusivity, and success. This interactive session will provide actionable strategies that empower women to lead with greater clarity, confidence, and impact.

(2) "I Recommend We..." Leveraging Critical Decisions to Recommend Your Way Up the Corporate Ladder

Wendy Kirk, Senior Manager, Huron Consulting Group

Tina Cipolla, Senior Manager - Transformation Training, WPP

Making a recommendation at work for a particular course of action sounds mundane. The humble recommendation, handled correctly, can help women level up their office game by shining a bright light on their ability to think creatively, synthesize information, and exude the ever-difficult-to-define executive presence. Drawing from extensive professional experience, advanced academic research, and insights from independently engaging with Jeffrey Pfeffer's Paths to Power course, the presenters offer a tactical, repeatable framework to elevate women's profiles within their organizations through compelling, well-crafted recommendations.

Exploring Leader Identity, Perils of Gender Awareness, and Cadence of Faith

Presentations

Elevate Women in Leadership

Roberts North 105

Session Chair: **Lori Peters**, Assistant Professor, Business and Technology, Holy Family University

These sessions focus on the influence of patriarchy on women's individual leader identity development and collective identity work. They dig deeper into gender awareness (and how it can undermine promotion of women to leadership) and cadence of faith (as a strategy to elevate women in leadership).

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Dancing On The Tightrope – A Look At Power, Patriarchy, and Leader Identity Development

Linnea Lewis, Producer & Showrunner/PhD Candidate, Tomten Productions/Gonzaga University

The Leader Identity Development (LID) Model suggests that leaders experience a cyclical process of development, regardless of gender, ethnicity, economics, social standing, or education. This presentation explores the idea that LID in women is different than it is for men, and is dramatically impacted by the influence of patriarchy in society and in the larger subject of leadership as an area of study. It will also discuss six specific barriers to leadership growth opportunities, and how the societal construct of patriarchy significantly impacts a woman's ability to navigate the journey of leader identity development.

(2) How Gender Awareness Can Undermine Women in Leadership

Crystal Hoyt, Professor of Leadership Studies and Psychology, Thorsness Chair in Ethical Leadership, University of Richmond

Conventional wisdom suggests that increasing awareness of gender differences should lead to increased support for gender equalizing policies. However, we show that gender-aware beliefs are adopted to rationalize and maintain the existing gender hierarchy with implications for undermining efforts to promote women in leadership. Across four studies we show that a stronger endorsement of gender awareness predicts greater support for gender aware initiatives upholding the status quo, and less support for policies designed to challenge it, like promoting women in leadership. We also experimentally demonstrate the motivated nature of gender-awareness. These findings have important implications for increasing representation of women in leadership.

(3) Growing Together: A Collective Approach to Leadership Identity Work for Women and Minorities

Rhema Chatiya Nantham

Leadership development could benefit from collective identity work. Growing Together is a collective identity work approach that has relevance to leadership development more broadly, while also being particularly relevant to minority groups, such as women of colour. Women and individuals who are often marginalised could come together in a collective space to do identity work by forming a shared understanding from the similarities in their lived experiences and, simultaneously, exploring the diversities of their identities together. In doing so, they could collaboratively build on their sense of self and expand their leadership perspectives through exposure to theirs and others' lived experiences and leadership aspirations.

12:00 – 13:30	Networking Luncheon	McKenna Auditorium
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13:40 – 15:00	Concurrent Sessions	Various
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Want to Elevate Women Leaders? Here's What Actually Works

Invited Speaker
Kravis 102

Becky Reichard, Full Professor in the Division of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences and the Drucker School of Management at Claremont Graduate University

Many organizations say they want more women leaders—but few have the strategies to make it happen. In this session, Dr. Becky Reichard shares what research says *actually works* to elevate leadership among women and individuals from historically underrepresented groups, including BIPOC and LGBTQ+ professionals. Drawing on decades of evidence in leader development and positive psychology, Reichard presents a clear, actionable framework that links the development of key psychological capacities—like confidence, resilience, and optimism—with the organizational systems that help them grow. From coaching and visibility to structural support and leader development planning, participants will walk away with practical strategies they can implement immediately. This session goes beyond buzzwords to offer grounded, evidence-based tools for building inclusive leadership pipelines that are ready for the future. If you're serious about developing women leaders—not just talking about it—this session is where strategy meets action.

Socially Conscious Leadership: Workshop on Authentic and Embodied Practices

Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Kravis 164

Serena Cheng, Impello CEO, MBA, and PhD(c), California Institute of Integral Studies

Authentic and embodied leadership principles are strongly shaping the development of women's transformative leadership models. Our world is undergoing economic and social shifts, demanding cultivation of socially conscious leaders to navigate change. It is essential to promote women leaders who are rooted in their authentic sense of self and integral values, which they embody in their leadership vision and actions. This experiential workshop is facilitated by a Chinese-American corporate leader and integral education thought leader. She empowers transformative women leadership and community building in "Multidimensional Authenticity" and "Embodied Somatic Awareness" practices, supported by peer sharing and reflection, in this workshop.

Uncover Meaningful Impacts of Your Leadership Development Program with Ripple Effects Mapping

Workshop

Elevate Girls and Young Women

Roberts North 104

Robin Horner, Principal, Radiance

Cynthia Surya, Evaluator, Radiance

You know your leadership work is important, but do you know what changes it helps bring about? Are there long-term benefits? Do they extend beyond your participants? This hands-on workshop will introduce attendees to Ripple Effects Mapping (REM), a community-based strategy that brings program graduates together for interactions in which they uncover direct and indirect impacts of a program. We'll bring examples from sessions we led with graduates of the Young Women's Institute of Minnesota, an initiative that paves the way for racially diverse cohorts of young women and gender-diverse youth to lead and build community power. Attendees will learn how REM can support reflection, evaluation, refinement, and communication about their programs.

A Leadership Guide to Evaluating Diversity Branding

Workshop

Systems of Change

Roberts North 105

Channa Bannis, Chief Marketing Strategist, Marketing 4 Moments

This session helps current and future leaders decipher diversity branding signals and better understand its implications for organizational culture and inclusivity. Participants will be better equipped to make informed decisions about how well current and future employers align with their leadership values.

15:00 – 15:20	Coffee & Tea Break	<i>McKenna Auditorium / Foyer</i>
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15:30 – 16:50	Concurrent Sessions	<i>Various</i>
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Celebrating Soul Success: From Limiting Beliefs to Limitless Possibilities

Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Kravis 102

Lori McDowell, Chief Executive Officer, Reimagine U Strategies

Do you look successful on paper, but don't have the joy and fulfillment you desire? It is time to rethink success and harness the power we all have within us. Learn how to redefine success by tapping into your authentic self and breaking through self-imposed barriers. With thought-provoking exercises, and actionable insights, this session guides you to tap into your intuition, challenge limiting beliefs, celebrate your unique strengths, and open the door to boundless potential in both personal and professional endeavors.

How to Design and Publish a Women and Leadership Case Study: A Model and Guide

Workshop

Systems of Change

Kravis 164

Chair: **Chryst Egan**, Associate Dean, Fulton School of Liberal Arts, Salisbury University

- **Martinella Dryburgh**, Executive Director and Associate Professor of Business Administration, Posey Leadership Institute, Austin College
- **Lori Peters**, Assistant Professor, Business and Technology, Holy Family University
- **Dorine Lawrence-Hughes**, Principal Consultant, Brazen Communication Coaching and Consulting

This team of Sage Business Cases: Women & Leadership authors guide this interactive workshop on publishing much-needed case studies on women leaders. These scholar-practitioners from different professions, disciplines, career stages, and locations, share their case study publishing experience to address: (1) navigating case study publication requirements from initial brainstorming concepts through final review, (2) creating frameworks for successful collaborative partnerships, and (3) reviewing our published case study about women in government and nonprofit leadership as a model to create their own cases. Participants will gain concrete strategies on publication, research teams, and vital issues in women's leadership.

African American Women and Leadership – Developing A Research Agenda

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership

Roberts North 104

Cynthia Sims, Associate Professor, Lifelong Education Administration, University of Georgia

Why is there so little research on women (and men) of color leaders in general and African American (AA) Women leaders in particular? Is intersectional research too “leading edge” and now “bleeding edge” to conduct? Do we lack the know-how to research with an intersectional lens? Are journal editors jettisoning intersectional research? Whatever the reason, we are unprepared to support the majority minority workplace community the US has become for those under the age of 40. We don't know this new generation of leaders

and how best to support them. The goal of this workshop is to develop a research agenda on AA Women, dedicated to meeting the contemporary leadership needs of those with intersectional identities in the workplace.

Transformation Through Feminist Leadership

Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 105

Carol Clyde, Associate Professor, Organizational Leadership Studies, Cottey College

Yolanda Caldwell, Chief Executive Officer & Principal Strategist, Titus Enterprises, LLC

Drawing on leadership and feminist research and best practices, participants will consider Feminist Leadership—what it is, how it intersects with traditional leadership concepts and approaches, and how it might be utilized within a curricular or co-curricular leadership program. The session will engage participants through a discussion and exploration of an evolving model of Feminist Leadership, paying attention to where it's being studied and applied and how it might contribute to their personal or applied leadership practices or educational and developmental initiatives.

17:00 – 18:00 Welcome Reception & Poster Session *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer*

POSTERS

Catholic Sisters are Catalysts for Change Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Sneh Akruvala, Program Manager, Monitoring Evaluation, African Sisters Education Collaborative

Bisha. Saudi Arabia, Schoolgirls: Women Leaders of the Future

Elevate Girls and Young Women

Raheima Alrsheidi, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, University of Bisha

Women in Leadership: Navigating Complexity in a Rapidly Iterating World

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Victoria Brodie, Department Chair, Communication Arts, California Baptist University

Women of the Mountain State: Underrepresentation in the West Virginia State Legislature

Elevate Women in Leadership

Emily Diaz, Research Apprentice, Leadership Studies Program, West Virginia University

Exploring Girls' and Young Women's Leader Identity Development Through the "Girl Boss" Paradigm

Elevate Girls and Young Women

Sakina Dixon, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Ecology & Conservation Biology, Texas A&M University

What's Holding Girls Back? Overcoming Digital Social Comparison & Shaping Leaders of Tomorrow

Elevate Girls and Young Women

Pamela Downs, Doctoral Student in Leadership Studies, Louisiana State University Shreveport

Pivoting from a Burnout Spiral: Elevating Women Leaders in Community College Counseling

Systems of Change

Erika Hernandez, Doctoral Graduate, California Baptist University

Shifting Perspectives of Leadership: Women, Autism, and the Confounding Expectations

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Sophia Jordan, Student, West Virginia University

Other Duties as Assigned: Redefining the Value of Organizational Leadership and Career Advancement

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Heidi Marshall, Manager, Enterprise Training and Compliance, Metropolitan Airports Commission; Adjunct Faculty, Organizational Leadership, The Chicago School

Celebrating the Sweetness of Leadership Opportunities for All- Honeycomb

Elevate Women in Leadership

Mary Ann Pearson, Professor Communication and Leadership, Communication Arts, Dr. Paul & Annie Kienel Leadership Institute at CBU

Gaynell Vanderslice, Founder, Honeycomb Leadership and Mentoring

Motherism an Afrocentric way of Transforming Community

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Lynne Washington, Senior Associate, Religion, Incarnation

Paths to the Presidency: Lessons from the Lived Experiences of Women College Presidents

Elevate Women in Leadership

Caroline Zeind, Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost, Academic Affairs, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Thursday, 12 June 2025

7:00 Steps of Intention: Morning Walk to the Conference, *Start at DoubleTree by Hilton – Claremont, 555 W. Foothill Boulevard, Claremont, CA*

Start your day with purpose on the *Steps of Intention* walk—a peaceful 24-minute journey from the hotel to the convention site. Whether you choose to connect with fellow attendees or walk in reflective silence, this one-mile stroll offers a grounding way to be in community, breathe deeply, and set the tone for an intentional day ahead.

7:15 Stretch Into You: Functional Movement for Everyday Life , *The Hub*

No mats, no workout gear—just you. *Stretch Into You* is a gentle, come-as-you-are session designed to help you incorporate functional stretching into your daily routines. Whether you're at your desk, in the kitchen, or on the go, you'll learn simple techniques to release tension, improve mobility, and enhance your overall well-being—without needing to change clothes or break a sweat.

07:15 – 17:00 ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter *McKenna Auditorium Foyer*

08:00 – 08:50 Continental Breakfast *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer*

09:00 – 10:20 Thursday Plenary & Keynote: Darcy J. Totten, Executive Director, California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls *McKenna Auditorium*

Welcome

Conference Co-Chair **Lisa De-Frank Cole**, Director and F. Duke Perry Endowed Professor of Leadership Studies, West Virginia University

Moderator & Conference Weaving

Merike Kolga, Manager, Organizational Learning & Development, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority & Managing Director, Port of Vancouver

See Details at: <https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/7th-women-and-leadership-conference/>

10:25 – 10:45 Coffee & Tea Break *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer*

10:50 – 11:50 Concurrent Sessions *Various*

From East to West: Lessons and Practices from Women Leaders in Diversity and Complexity

Presentations

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Kravis 102

Session Chair: **Dionne Rosser-Mims**, Vice Chancellor, Troy University

This cross-cultural dialogue unites pioneering insights from women leaders navigating organizational resistance in Western contexts and trailblazing women CEOs steering innovation in China's complex corporate ecosystems. Learn actionable frameworks to address toxic resistance—from policy design to stakeholder coalitions—and discover how China's CEOs leverage collective leadership, strategic relationship-building, and conviction to thrive in family-owned enterprises and fast-paced industries. Participants will gain globally relevant strategies to empower women leaders, bridge divides between theory and practice, and turn adversarial environments into opportunities for systemic change.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Women Addressing DEI Dismantling Among Toxic Followers in Organizations

Taisha Holifield, HR Generalist/Adjunct Instructor, Dentistry/School Business, University of Alabama at Birmingham

This presentation aims to foster collaboration among women leaders and scholars across disciplines to uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations, free from resistance and perceived threats from toxic followers who feel disadvantaged due to current DEI initiatives. The proposal also seeks to empower women leaders and equip them with tools,

resources, and a network to help with navigating the new policies, procedures, and toxic followers.

(2) Leading the Way: Insights from Trailblazing Women CEOs in China

Victor Chen, Research Scientist, Center for Creative Leadership

Ivy Zhao, Deputy Managing Director, Greater China, Center for Creative Leadership

We conducted a focus group study with five distinguished women CEOs from diverse industries and different forms of organizations in China. Amidst a backdrop of declining female executive representation globally, these leaders offered valuable perspectives on how women could navigate and thrive in complex organizational environments:

1. Collective Leadership and Interpersonal Interactions; 2. Navigating "Fight-or-Flight" Dynamics; 3. Strategic Stakeholder Management; 4. Managing Complex Relationships in Family-Owned Businesses; 5. Conviction and Innovation in Fast-Developing Industries.

Integral Leadership Development and Leader Identity

Presentations

Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Kravis 103

Session Chair: **Merike Kolga**, Manager, Organizational Learning & Development, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority & Managing Director, Port of Vancouver

These presentations take a deep dive into how women prepare for leadership positions in different work environments. Whether in the nonprofit organizations, higher education, or in the corporate sector, the presenters propose that women's leadership development requires further research and education in order for women to thrive in the workplace.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Becoming Boss: Exploring Leader Identity and Advancement Barriers for Women in Nonprofits

Melissa Mathews, Associate Professor, Public Policy/Administration, California State University, Long Beach

Nonprofit sector deficiencies in leadership development, retention strategies, and succession planning, and the consequences of these deficiencies for leader diversity,

highlight the need to better understand women and gender-diverse leadership perceptions to advance equity within the sector. This presentation shares findings from research on how women and gender-diverse individuals perceive their roles, leader identities, and barriers to career advancement within the sector. The research study involves 65 current and former participants of a leadership development program for early- to mid-career nonprofit leaders. I will also discuss strategies for future scholarship on women and gender-diverse leaders to advance professional practice.

(2) The Bumblebee Theory: A Powerful Paradigm of Feminine Leadership & Potential

Jennie Riad, CEO, The Beehive Company & Editor-in-Chief, The Beehive

This study explores the experiences of female leaders in higher education to develop a new feminist leadership theory called the Bumblebee Theory. Grounded in the narratives of 17 women leaders, the study reveals five key facets of development: perseverance, identity, human potential, leadership, and organizational impact. The Bumblebee Theory emphasizes the importance of overcoming challenges, navigating identity intersectionality, embracing a holistic view of human development, fostering authentic leadership, and promoting positive organizational change. This theory challenges traditional leadership models and advocates for a more inclusive and equitable approach, recognizing women's unique strengths and perspectives in leadership roles.

(3) An Integral Leadership Development Model: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Transformative Outcomes

Serena Cheng, Impello Chief Executive Officer, MBA, and PhD(c)

There are pressing needs to advance women's transformative leadership development programs alongside the sweeping social, cultural, and generational shifts of the modern workplace. An Integral Leadership Development model that uniquely integrates leadership and professional development with self purpose and personal growth, guides design of corporate L&D and professional programs.

This model is based on the presenter's dissertation and her rich corporate leadership and integral education experience as a Chinese-American woman. She presents on the theoretical and progressive education approaches of an integral model and how she creatively applies it to the curricular and pedagogical design of a women's transformative leadership program.

Innovating for Impact: Design Thinking, Systems Change, and Women Leading Transformation in HR and Healthcare

Presentations

Systems of Change

Kravis 164

Session Chair: **Natasha Turman**, Director, Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program (WISE RP), The University of Michigan

Panelists explore the evolution of change leadership, from historical contexts to the application of design thinking as a modern tool for driving organizational transformation. Examinations include how women are leading transformative action through systems change in Human Resources and healthcare in diverse global contexts.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) From Morse Code to Modern HR

Holly Kasnetz, PhD candidate, Gonzaga University, Enterprise Healthcare Executive, Microsoft

This presentation delves into the transformative power of HR practices that prioritize inclusivity and adaptability, addressing systemic barriers faced by women and underrepresented leaders. Attendees will explore how traditional HR models—marked by biased recruitment and rigid leadership structures—can be replaced with innovative approaches that emphasize mentoring, coaching, and sponsorship as core elements of change. These practices not only develop talent but also foster equitable opportunities and a sense of belonging. Participants will gain actionable insights to build inclusive cultures, enhance leadership diversity, and drive organizational success by empowering a diverse and dynamic workforce.

(2) Design Thinking as a Vehicle for Change Leadership

Jessica Vilay, Doctoral Student, Indiana Wesleyan University

“The most important way to create meaning and drive world change is by making products and services that are more meaningful,” design thinking is one solution (Verganti et al., 2021). This presentation will showcase design thinking in a healthcare setting in the creation of a COVID-19 vaccine clinic during the pandemic. Three women from different

areas of the hospital—administrative, nursing, and supply chain—were tasked with leading a group of volunteers to create a vaccine clinic with a throughput of 6,000–8,000 patients per week. Using design thinking, the multidisciplinary team was able to achieve its task and navigate the change and organizational challenges together (Hvidsten et al., 2023).

Leading From the Core: Adaptability and Liberation in Women's Leadership

Presentations

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 104

Session Chair: **Sarah Smith Orr**, PhD, Teaching Faculty, University of Nevada, Reno and UCLA Extension; Owner, Smith Orr & Associates

This powerful session explores transformational leadership practices that center social change, liberation, and culturally rooted leadership models. Speakers will share innovative strategies for elevating embodied, collaborative, liberatory leadership models in maternal health and environmental protection. Together, they illuminate how women are reimagining systems, leading with justice, and grounding their work in deep cultural strength.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Embodied, Relational, & Liberatory, Leadership: Black Birth Workers Transforming Maternal Health Care

Lesia C. Clark, PhD, Founder & Consultant, Human Capital & Organization Excellence

Drawing on African, Black, and anti-racist feminist frameworks, this session explores how Black birth workers (BBWs) - doulas, midwives, and birth justice activists - embody and practice embodied, relational, and liberatory leadership in maternal healthcare. Despite their vital role in advancing birthing justice and health equity that challenge dominant healthcare paradigms, BBWs remain absent from mainstream leadership discourse and scholarship. Participants will examine the unique leadership praxis of eight BBWs research participants. The session aims to advance the theoretical understanding of culturally rooted leadership models while advocating for greater recognition of BBWs as key stakeholders in maternal health transformation.

(2) Women Leading Transformative Action in Malindi, Kenya Through Collaborative Systems of Change

Emmaculate Kipyasang, Alumni, Mandela Washington Fellowship Program; Admin Manager, The Center for First-Generation Programs, University of Utah

The global waste crisis is a significant challenge, yet in Malindi, Kenya, women are leading a transformative charge to develop sustainable waste management systems. Through Progress Welfare Association of Malindi (PWAM) Kenya initiative, women are championing innovative solutions, fostering community collaboration, and reshaping narrative around garbage removal and handling. Presentation will showcase how women in Malindi are breaking barriers, driving leadership, and inspiring action to create lasting environmental change. Presentation goals: show how women take leadership roles to in a culture frequently restricting women as leaders, to create inclusive and sustainable waste management, how perceptions about waste management shifted and how local communities and businesses are collaboratively engaged.

Disrupting Silence: Immigrant and Indigenous Women Reimagining Leadership Across Systems

Presentations

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 105

Session Chair: **Martinella Dryburgh**, Executive Director and Associate Professor of Business Administration, Posey Leadership Institute, Austin College

Leadership is often framed through dominant cultural lenses, excluding the stories and strategies of women navigating marginalization. This dynamic session explores how Black immigrant women in nonprofit leadership, and Indigenous communities in El Salvador disrupt historical silences to assert their agency. Through research and personal reflection, presenters highlight strategies of resistance, resilience, and radical leadership that reshape institutions and challenge systemic oppression.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) Beyond Borders and Barriers: How Black Immigrant Women Leaders Provoke Change

Giftie Umo, Founder/Executive Director, Girls Leading Africa

Black immigrant women leaders play a vital role in nonprofit organizations, yet their experiences remain underexplored. This presentation examines how they navigate intersecting identities to provoke systemic change, despite facing racial, gender, and immigrant biases. Grounded in intersectionality and tempered radicalism, the study highlights leadership strategies, challenges, and contributions often overlooked in mainstream discourse. By amplifying their voices, this session offers fresh insights into inclusive leadership and organizational transformation, sparking dialogue on equity and systemic change in the nonprofit sector.

(2) An Exploratory Study of the Socio-Economic and Cultural Impact of the Matanza of 1932 on the Nahuat-Pipil Genocide in El Salvador

Sophia D Cortez, Vice President Business Development, Los Angeles Mission

My research examines the ethnocide of indigenous people and its detrimental effects on their cultural capital, focusing on the aftermath of the 1932 Nahuat-Pipil genocide in El Salvador. The research will employ an explorative, interpretative, phenomenological, and political ethnographic approach, specifically targeting the Igualtepec community on Lake Guija. It aims to analyze the evolved political model of imperialism and its consequences, highlighting global indigenous ethnocide. The theoretical framework includes the Coloniality of Power (Quijano, 1992), Coloniality of Knowledge (Mignolo, 2007), Decoloniality (Mignolo, 2017), and Indigenous Method and Theory (Wilson, 2003).

12:00 – 13:30 Networking Luncheon With Special Guest Speakers: Danya Bacchus, CBS News Correspondent, & Renee Washington, Founder & CEO of Resilience Wins Executive Coaching & Consulting LLC *McKenna Auditorium*

Moderator: Natasha Turman, Director, Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program (WISE RP), The University of Michigan

13:40 – 15:00 Concurrent Sessions *Various*

Building Unapologetic Presence - Leading with Heart: Unapologetically You

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership

Kravis 102

Harpreet Ghumman, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, Unapologetically Harpreet LLC

“Building Unapologetic Presence - Leading with Heart: Unapologetically You” explores the critical yet often overlooked internal barriers that prevent women from stepping into top leadership roles despite their exceptional capabilities. Drawing on research from Harvard, which shows that women consistently outperform men in core leadership competencies like resilience, collaboration, and driving results, this session challenges the narrative that women need more skills to lead effectively. Instead, it emphasizes the necessity of cultivating unapologetic presence—the ability to show up authentically, embrace one’s full potential, and lead with confidence in the face of societal expectations and organizational norms rooted in patriarchy.

Elevating Personal Growth: Enhancing Leadership for Collegiate Women's Success

Workshop

Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Kravis 164

Carol Clyde, Associate Professor, Organizational Leadership Studies, Cottey College

Halen Hoelzeman, Cottey College

Hannah Hayduke, Cottey College

This interactive workshop will review the approach of one women’s college to individualize the leadership development experience of undergraduate students by incorporating a "Leadership Development Plan" into all leadership classes. The workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on their mission and values and provide a structured model to actively engage in personal development. Participants will also review the process for instructors and students and engage participants in considering how a similar process may benefit their institution.

ILA Transformative Women Leaders Book Series

Panel

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 104

Chair: **Chryst Egan**, Associate Dean, Fulton School of Liberal Arts, Salisbury University

- **Randal Joy Thompson**, Institute for Social Innovation Fellow, Fielding Graduate University
- **Dionne Rosser-Mims**, Vice Chancellor, Troy University

The International Leadership Association (ILA) and Emerald Publishing present the Transformative Women Leaders book series, a dynamic exploration of women leaders as change agents in their communities and organizations around the world. The book series editors lead this session, providing inspiration and models from women redefining leadership through the power of diverse voices. Books in the series address contemporary and emerging issues of “genderwashing,” embodied leadership, generative leadership, spirituality and purpose, and the power of community. This exploration of women leaders and their leadership styles offers distinct approaches to the challenges women face globally. Learn more about the books and how you can contribute.

Embracing Your Excellence

Workshop

Elevate Girls and Young Women

Roberts North 105

Channa Bannis, Chief Marketing Strategist, Marketing 4 Moments

In this session, participants will explore the importance of embracing their unique excellence by cultivating self-love, conscious building, and the importance of celebrating their milestones along the way. Participants will also learn to lean into their authentic aspirations, push past limiting boundaries, and foster supportive communities for growth and mentorship.

15:00 – 15:20	Coffee & Tea Break	<i>McKenna Auditorium / Foyer</i>
15:30 – 16:50	Concurrent Sessions	<i>Various</i>

Shattering Stereotypes: How Muslim Women Are Redefining Leadership Narratives

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership
Kravis 103

Aasiyah Ghazi, Research Assistant, Graduate School of Education and Psychology,
Pepperdine University

Muslim women are redefining leadership by challenging stereotypes and reshaping traditional leadership narratives. Despite systemic barriers, they are making strides in politics, education, activism, and business while integrating faith-based leadership principles. This interactive workshop explores the historical and contemporary impact of Muslim women in leadership, the challenges they navigate, and the strategies they use to drive systemic change. Attendees will engage in discussions, case studies, and action planning to better understand and support diverse, inclusive leadership models.

Self-Doubt, Saboteurs, and Thinking Traps, Oh My!

Workshop
Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership
Kravis 164

Cheyenne Luzynski, Teaching Associate Professor, West Virginia University

Sophia Jordan, Student, Leadership Studies, West Virginia University

Discover a new way to engage with your inner critic, self-doubt, and cognitive bias with this innovative and reflective workshop. Participants will explore common thinking traps that can paralyze women and girls in their leadership journey. Strategies and tools will be offered as a way to disrupt internal barriers to leadership development and expression. This workshop invites participants to examine their self-doubt, saboteurs, and common thinking traps in order to liberate your leadership practice and amplify the leader within. This engaging workshop is designed to offer reflective tools, and activities that can be shared with others eager to unleash their leadership potential.

Women Leading Change: How to Be a Successful Change Agent

Workshop
Elevate Women in Leadership
Roberts North 104

Hope Zoeller, Founder and President, Helping Other People Excel (HOPE), LLC

Rosalynn Carter said, “A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don’t necessarily want to go, but ought to be.” Successful organizational change requires great leaders as they steer the transformation from a difficult journey into a smooth ride. Harvard Business Review identified five key competencies for change management: demonstrating flexibility and resilience; recognizing growth opportunities; striving for results; leading courageously; gaining buy-in. Research shows women innately have many of these skills necessary to successfully lead organizational change. This session will provide tools and resources necessary to be an effective change agent.

Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Redefining Leadership in the 21st Century Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership
Roberts North 105

Heidi Marshall, Manager, Enterprise Training and Compliance, Metropolitan Airports Commission; Adjunct Faculty, Organizational Leadership, The Chicago School

Jessica Neubauer, Director of Human Resources, AccessPoint RI

Leveraging the experiences of women working in organizational "third spaces," which encompasses roles that exist in the liminal spaces between traditional streams to leadership, we will highlight how women professionals often face a lack of recognition and limited opportunities for career growth but how this can be countered through a new theoretical model of organizational leadership: The System-Servant-Self model. This model emphasizes the need for women to balance their personal goals and values with a commitment to serving others and challenging existing systems. This framework encourages women to be both self-directed and collaborative, advocating for themselves while working to improve the system.

The Women and Leadership Membership Community Journey: A Fireside Chat with Professor Susan R. Madsen

Fireside Chat

Kravis 102

Susan Madsen, Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership, Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, Utah State University

Moderators:

- **Sherylle Tan**, Director of Internships and Research, Kravis Leadership Institute
Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology, Claremont McKenna College
- **Lisa De-Frank Cole**, Director and F. Duke Perry Endowed Professor of Leadership Studies, West Virginia University

In 2010, the Women and Leaders Member Community was created by committed, passionate ILA members to provide space for those interested in convening, discussing, and researching women and leadership. Join this session as Conference Co-Chairs, Drs. Lisa DeFrank-Cole and Sherylle Tan interview Dr. Susan R. Madsen—who led the work to start the Community—for an engaging conversation. It will focus on the origins of the Community and how it has moved forward through the years. The discussion will also highlight the origins of the ILA women and leadership conferences and the initial Women and Leadership book series. This Chat will also dig into thoughts around continuing this important work of women’s leadership even within the current tumultuous times when some would push back on this focus. It will conclude with calls to action for all of us as we continue the work needed to ensure that women are leading more than ever before!

17:00 Colorful Conversations: A Reflective Connection Session, *The Hub*

Join us for *Colorful Conversations*, a relaxed and vibrant gathering where creativity meets connection. This drop-in session features custom coloring sheets inspired by this year’s conference theme, inviting you to reflect, unwind, and engage in meaningful dialogue. Enjoy light refreshments and connect with fellow attendees through artful expression and authentic conversation. Come color, converse, and be inspired!

Book Raffle at Colorful Conversations

Ready to win a fantastic read? Seeking to expand your leadership literature collection? During Colorful Conversations we will be giving away some of the greatest hits from our collective leadership libraries! Come ready to color, convene, and compete in our book raffle! There will be many prizes, but you must be present to win because it’s always more fun that way!

Friday, 13 June 2025

7:00 Steps of Intention: Morning Walk to the Conference, *Start at DoubleTree by Hilton – Claremont, 555 W. Foothill Boulevard, Claremont, CA*

Start your day with purpose on the *Steps of Intention* walk—a peaceful 24-minute journey from the hotel to the convention site. Whether you choose to connect with fellow attendees or walk in reflective silence, this one-mile stroll offers a grounding way to be in community, breathe deeply, and set the tone for an intentional day ahead.

7:15 Stretch Into You: Functional Movement for Everyday Life *The Hub*

No mats, no workout gear—just you. *Stretch Into You* is a gentle, come-as-you-are session designed to help you incorporate functional stretching into your daily routines. Whether you're at your desk, in the kitchen, or on the go, you'll learn simple techniques to release tension, improve mobility, and enhance your overall well-being—without needing to change clothes or break a sweat.

07:15 – 12:00 ILA Registration, Badge Pick-Up, & Information Counter *McKenna Auditorium Foyer*

08:00 – 08:50 Continental Breakfast *McKenna Auditorium / Foyer.*

09:00 – 10:20 Concurrent Sessions *Various*

The Gratitude Advantage: Building Trust, Resilience, and Authenticity

Workshop

Elevate Leadership Development and Education

Kravis 102

Stephanie Johnson, Assistant Director, Laspa Center for Leadership, Scripps College

This interactive workshop explores the transformative power of gratitude practices in leadership development, focusing on how gratitude can build trust, resilience, and authenticity. Rooted in transformational and authentic leadership frameworks, this

workshop will delve into the practice of gratitude as a tool for fostering deeper connections and effective leadership. Through reflection, peer feedback, and actionable strategies, participants will leave with practical tools for cultivating gratitude practices for themselves and their teams.

Leading While Tired: Creating Safe Spaces for Women of Color Leaders to Thrive

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership

Kravis 164

Oluwatosin Martins, Regional Program Director, Center For Employment Opportunities

Women of color leaders face unique systemic challenges that exacerbate leadership fatigue and burnout, yet their resilience and contributions are pivotal to advancing equity in leadership. This workshop explores actionable strategies to address disparities and foster resilience, drawing on recent research into secondary traumatic stress (STS) and transformational leadership. Participants will gain tools to navigate structural barriers, mitigate burnout, and co-create inclusive practices that promote equity and psychological safety. This session empowers women of color to strengthen their leadership identity and lead with conscious impact, even when tired.

Negative Capability: Reflecting on Personal and Societal Grief as Leaders & Followers

Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 104

Fatema Haque, Academic Program Manager and Adjunct Lecturer, Barger Leadership Institute, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

We are surrounded by unprecedented personal and societal grief. From genocides to climate crises, school shootings to political upheavals, our world is filled with sorrow. Yet, we are told that grief has no place in professional contexts. This workshop aims to disrupt this notion and bring forward the necessity of and possibilities in building capacity to individually and collectively metabolize grief. Utilizing the concept of Negative Capability--residing in discomfort with an open mind--participants will engage in meditation,

contemplative art, and small group discussions. Facilitated with gentleness and intention, this immersive experience will help participants develop resilience, foster community, and find strength in shared sorrow.

Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Style of Black Women Leaders

Panel

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 105

Chair: **Cynthia Sims**, Associate Professor, Lifelong Education Administration, University of Georgia

- **Tina Jackson**, Adjunct Professor, Abilene Christian University
- **Marilyn Pierce**, Assistant Director, Kravis Leadership Institute, Claremont McKenna College
- **Emmaculate Kipyasang**, Operations Manager, Smith Orr & Associates

This study explored the link between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles in Black women leaders in the U.S. Due to limited literature, it provided quantitative data on these constructs. It examined how Black women balance their intersectional identity, emotional intelligence, and conflict management. Findings showed leaders with higher emotional intelligence prioritize concern for others, while those with lower levels show less concern. Additionally, weaker intersectional identities correlated with lower emotional intelligence. Identity did not mediate the variables.

10:25 – 10:45	Coffee & Tea Break	<i>McKenna Auditorium / Foyer</i>
10:50 – 11:50	Concurrent Sessions	<i>Various</i>

Leading Beyond Labels: Women's Leadership Efforts in Cross-Organizational Teams, for Women of Color in Power, and in Advancing Pay Equity

Presentations

Systems of Change

Kravis 102

Session Chair: **Katie Flowers**, Director, Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

This session delves into the multifaceted experiences of women leaders, exploring how they exert influence and drive change in organizations. Panelists consider leadership without formal titles, how Black women might uniquely cultivate power, and gender pay disparities within government roles.

This session is comprised of the following individual presentations:

(1) When There's No Title on the Business Card: How Women Lead in Cross-Organizational Teams

Elizabeth Nilsen, Acting Director, Agile Strategy Lab, University of North Alabama

Vertical leadership of a team is a given in most groups within a single organization. In a cross-organizational team, there is often no designated leader at the team's launch; rather, leadership emerges. These cross-organizational teams often convene to address highly challenging issues that are embedded within complex adaptive systems. In this session, the presenter will share the findings from a study of 70 cross-organizational teams on the roles of plural leadership, psychological safety, team cohesion and voice. The ways in which women exercised leadership in these groups – including the degree to which this leadership differed from that enacted by men – will be followed by presentation of some implications for leadership practice.

(2) Root Weaving: How Black Women Build Power When Leading Organizational Change

Nafeesha Mitchell, Doctoral Candidate, Vanderbilt University

Dana Watson, Doctoral Candidate, Vanderbilt University

Contemporary change leadership frameworks often assume that all leaders enter with inherent institutional power. Yet, research consistently highlights barriers Black women face, specifically exclusion from power networks, racialized and gendered biases, and heightened scrutiny in their leadership roles (Chidinma Favour Chikwe et al., 2024). Our presentation intends to address Black women's disproportionate experiences leading through organizational change. Our inquiry bridges three key areas: racialization theory,

power within organizational structures, and elements of broad-based organizing. We leverage organizational change models to frame our approach and situate our wonderings against grassroots organizing practices.

(3) Time Does Not Heal: Analyzing Gender Pay Disparities in Government Roles

Tyler Fezzey, Ph.D. Candidate, Management, The University of Alabama

Research has produced mixed findings regarding where the gender compensation gap will emerge and persist. Employing HLM on two large state government datasets (N=89,752, N=542,004), we accounted for differences within individuals, employment categories, and state agencies to assess the nature of the gender compensation gap across different levels of leadership and over time. We found consistent support for an overall gender compensation gap, although this inequity was attenuated in certain historically women-dominated occupations. We found that the gap was only exacerbated in executive (compared to non-executive) leadership positions and that gender-based pay inequities worsened with tenure.

Addressing the Intersection of Gender, Achievement, and Leadership Identity Development

Workshop

Elevate Women in Leadership

Kravis 164

Mira Brancu, Founder; Associate Professor; Senior OD Psychologist, Towerscope; Duke University; Department of Veterans Affairs

What leads talented women to be ambivalent about leadership despite wanting impactful roles? The answers lie in the mixed messages at the intersection of leadership, gender, and achievement identity, as well as the disparities between organizational messages and women's experiences. The presenter will share insights from personal leadership journeys, expert interviews, and research on coaching women. We will discuss myths around women's leadership, root causes of barriers, and practical strategies for improving leadership development programs to better support women and marginalized individuals.

The Power of Mind Wandering in Daily Life

Workshop

Transformative Thinking on Women and Leadership

Roberts North 105

Paula Lowe, Author and Researcher

Mind Wandering is co-existent thinking that is not about what we are doing. Understanding mind wandering is key piece to understanding presence, a state of focused participation we ask of others and ourselves. For over 100 years, work and education leaders taught us to believe that mind wandering keeps us from being productive. This session challenges that assertion and helps women in leadership understand mind wandering as part of how we get things done where we live, learn, and work. This workshop offers national research on mind wandering in daily life for working adults aged 25-50 with attention to gender and parenting status.

12:00-13:30 Awards Luncheon, Conference Weaving and Closing Remarks,
McKenna Auditorium / Foyer

Awards

Join us in congratulating the following winners of these prestigious ILA Women & Leadership member community awards. Awards will be presented by **Carol Clyde**, Associate Professor, Organizational Leadership Studies, Cottey College

- **Dr. Randal Joy Thompson** - Outstanding Scholarship for Established Scholars Award
- **Dr. Emily Saunders** - Outstanding Scholarship for Emerging Scholars Award
- **Dr. Juanita Johnson-Baily** - Outstanding Practice With Broad Impact Award
- **Dr. Stacy Smulowitz** - Outstanding Practice With Local Impact Award

Conference Weaving

Merike Kolga, Manager, Organizational Learning & Development, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority & Managing Director, Port of Vancouver

Final Acknowledgements and Closing Remarks

Conference Co-Chair **Sherylle Tan**, Director of Internships and Research, Kravis Leadership Institute & Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology, Claremont McKenna College

Conference Co-Chair **Lisa De-Frank Cole**, Director and F. Duke Perry Endowed Professor of Leadership Studies, West Virginia University

AWARD WINNER DETAILS

Dr. Randal Joy Thompson is an international development professional who has led inclusive inter-cultural and international teams for many decades in countries around the world, purposefully building diverse and equitable teams in which team members have a strong sense of belonging.



Her books include:

- *The Igniting Four Forces: Emergent Generative Team Leadership in a Complexponential World*, (2026 forthcoming), co-authored with Kathleen Curran and Jane Feng
- *Women Embodied Leaders: Peacebuilding, Protest, and Professions* (2024), co-edited with Lazarina Topuzova
- *Changing Realities for Women and Work: The Impact of COVID-19 and Prospects for the Post-Pandemic Work World*, co-edited with Chrys Egan and Tina Wu
- *Reimagining Leadership on the Commons: Shifting the Paradigm for a More Ethical, Equitable, and Just World* (2021), co-edited with Kathleen Curran and Devin Singh
- *Proleptic Leadership on the Commons: Ushering in a New Global Order* (2020)
- *Leadership and Power in International Development: Navigating the Intersections of Gender, Culture, Context, and Sustainability* (2018), co-edited with Julia Storberg-Walker. which won the Human Resource Development R. Wayne Pace HRD Book of the Year Award

Dr. Thompson has also researched and published several book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles on leadership. The chapters of her book chapters cover women leaders in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador, Myanmar, and Morocco. Dr. Thompson is currently co-editing the International Leadership Association's Transformative Women Leaders series with her co-editors Chrys Egan and Dionne Rosser-Mims.

She holds a BA in Philosophy from the University of California, Berkeley, an MA in Philosophy from the University of Chicago, an MBA from the Booth School of the University of Chicago, an MA in Biblical Exposition from Capitol Seminary and Graduate School, and a PhD in Human and Organizational Behavior from Fielding Graduate University. She currently is a Fellow In the Institute for Social Innovation at Fielding Graduate University.



Emily Saunders has been supporting various leadership and professional development initiatives at the University of Georgia for over 17 years. As part of the Community Leadership Program team, she specializes in creating and delivering programs to support individual and group learning, with a particular interest in women's leadership development, organization development, creativity, and innovation. Emily is a certified FourSight® mindset facilitator and holds a Foundations of Design Thinking certificate. She also coaches clients using the Hogan Assessment and Global Leadership Profile.

Before joining the Fanning Institute, she co-created and taught professional development and internship courses, worked with numerous student leadership groups, launched two mentoring programs and a university-wide onboarding series, managed multiple alumni boards, and oversaw a successful annual giving program. She is also a 2017 graduate of the inaugural class of the University of Georgia's Women's Staff Leadership Institute.



Juanita Johnson-Bailey is the Centennial Professor of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Georgia and holds the Josiah Meigs Teaching Professorship and the Distinguished University Professorship. She is a member of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame, a Lilly Teaching Fellow, and the recipient of the 2018 Career Achievement Award from the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education.

Johnson-Bailey is the author of *Sistahs in College: Making a Way Out of No Way*, and co-editor of *Advancing Women in Leadership: Shaping Pathways in the Political Arena* and the *Handbook on Race and Racism in Adult and Higher Education: A*

Dialogue. She specializes in researching race and gender in education and workplace settings. She has made significant contributions to the literature in higher education and

women's studies with over 100 publications, which include: *Harvard Educational Review*, *Teachers College Record* (Columbia University), *Journal of Higher Education*, and the *Journal of Negro Education* (Howard University).



Stacy Smulowitz, Ph.D., ABC, is Chairperson and Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Media at The University of Scranton, Executive Director of the Eastern Communication Association and has a freelance strategic communication consulting firm that provides strategic guidance to organizational leaders. Dr. Smulowitz teaches courses in advertising, leadership, teams and organizational communication. Her research focus is on theory and strategy for assessing and promoting excellence in organizational leadership and advancing the equality and leadership opportunities for girls and women. Dr. Smulowitz holds a Ph.D. from Rutgers, an M.S.

from Ithaca College and a B.A. from Wilkes University. She is accredited by the International Association of Business Communicators. Dr. Smulowitz's most recent book is *The communication solution: Leading successful change in higher education*.