

**Northwest Ohio Women's Business Council
Presents 2023**



**ENCOURAGING • CELEBRATING • SUPPORTING
WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**



NORTHWEST OHIO **WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL**

Our mission at the Northwest Ohio Women's Business Council is to recognize women entrepreneurs who have achieved success and contributed to the economic well-being of our community. In accord with this mission, we introduce the Women's Entrepreneurial Distinction Ovation Award (WEDO) to amplify the voices of women business owners and encourage women's economic development.

We believe in the power of narrative, and that by sharing the inspiring stories of women entrepreneurs past and present, we can create a more equitable future. We think that every individual deserves to participate fully in our economy across their life cycle and build sustainable wealth through generations so that all communities can prosper without exception. We hope you will join us in our mission.



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Sena Mourad Friedman
Co-Chair



Rhonda Sewell



Linda Fayerweather



Olivia Holden



Stayce Fowler



Aby Sadowy
HerHub Chairperson



Megan Reichart



Meg Ressler



The Northwest Ohio Women's Business Council is part of Women of Toledo's Economic Development Initiative. Established in 2014, Inclusive for Women Inc dba Women of Toledo is a 501c3 nonprofit organization serving the Greater Toledo community that advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion with a focus on economic empowerment. The organization offers programs and services that help tackle issues critical to women's economic advancement and interrupt various biases in the workplace, marketplace, community, and family. Learn more at www.womenoftoledo.org

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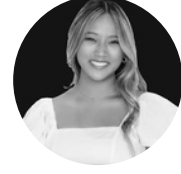
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Women of Toledo's Staff Team

The Women's Business Council members are filled with gratitude and appreciation for the generous support of the WOT team. We give these incredible women a standing ovation for giving their time and talent!



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WEDO Awards

Women's Entrepreneurial Distinction Ovation Awards

Welcome!

On behalf of Women of Toledo and the Northwest Ohio Women's Business Council, we thank you for joining us for the inaugural WEDO Awards, celebrating and honoring outstanding women entrepreneurs throughout Northwest Ohio.

The forty-six WEDO nominees are a diverse and accomplished group of women. We are grateful to our judges for performing the difficult task of selecting our 2023 awardees.

Today, our country is experiencing unprecedented growth in new business start-ups and women are leading the way, founding an average of 1821 new businesses per day in 2022. Nearly 13 million women-owned businesses operate in the United States today, employing 10 million people and generating 1.8 trillion dollars in revenue. As owners of 42% of small businesses in our country, the economic impact of women entrepreneurs is profound.

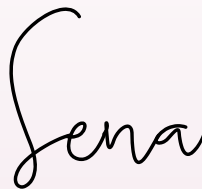
Women-founded businesses are not a new phenomenon in the Toledo region; throughout our history, strong, visionary women have established and grown businesses that supported their families, built our economy, and served our community.

Not a new story, but a story seldom told. Tonight, we begin a new tradition; we will tell the inspiring stories of five tenacious, creative, and courageous women, who, by pursuing their dreams, have created jobs, enhanced our sense of place, and enriched our community.

As we gather to hear the stories of five remarkable women entrepreneurs, let us also reflect on the accomplishments of the women who went before them, and commit to sharing the stories and support that will inspire women to pursue their dreams.



Sandy Spang
Co-Chair



Sena Mourad Friedman
Co-Chair

Program

4:30 - 5:15

Networking

5:15 - 6:30

Welcome

*Kathy Tucker, Mistress of Ceremony.
Vice President, Women of Toledo*

Introduction of Judges

*Olivia Holden
Committee Chair for WEDO Judges*

Chair of the Board

Remarks from Co-Chairs
Sandy Spang & Sena Mourad Friedman

Awards Presentations

Rising Star - *Noor Alexandria Abukaram*
Second Act - *Erin Curley*
Trailblazer - *Ambrea Mikolajczyk*
Thriver - *Jeraldine Stewart*
Legend - *Tina Butts*

Closing

*Nina Corder
Managing Director, Women of Toledo*

Meet the WEDO Judges

The Women's Business Council is privileged and honored to have these iconic women, who graciously took on the difficult task of judging the WEDO awards.



Global

Dr. Soon-Young Yoon

UN Rep of the International Alliance of Women



National

Athena Golianis

PINKK Chicago & AGW Idea Group



County

Crystal Harris Darnell

DEI Lucas County Board of Commissioners



Local

Pamela J. Moore

The University of Toledo Business Incubator



Local

Deborah Barnett

Business Coach & Community Leader

We wish to recognize and honor all of our nominees:

Each of these women represents the economic force of women entrepreneurs of our community.

Abby Sarabia, Creator's Club

Aegela (Angela) Fisher, Aegela Centers for Middle Eastern Dance

Angela Lucas, TolHouse

Chrys Peterson, Chrys Peterson Consulting, LLC

Crystal Taylor, Crystal Clear Communications, LLC

Dawn Bentley, CAIRE, LLC

Denise Phillips, Gathering Volumes

Diana Patton, Diana Patton Consulting, LLC

Donnetta Carter, The Social Butterfly

Dr. Maleigha Watts Mortermore, Toledo Naturopathic

Drew Scott, Spec Results Academy

Erica Scharer, Village Patisserie

Jennifer Bak, J Bak Studios

Kathy Calamunci, Cookiecutterie

Keri Porter, Discover 4x4 Adventures LLC

Laurie Gross, Gross Electric

Marcy Bowman, Remedy Barefoot Massage Studio

Martha Quiroga, The Shaman & The Bear / Moving Into Freedom

Meg Ressner, Meg Ressner & Associates

Mehrnaz Bosch, M Browz Academy and Spa

Melanie Blanc, Blanc Slate Beauty

Patrice McClellan, The Ronald Group, LLC

Robin Mahle-Piccione, Robin Mahle-Piccione

Sarah Jones, Blue Bird Studio

Sheila Eason, Elevate People Solutions

Stephanie Boutte, Ternion Schools

Susan L. Hague-Rogers, 3D Visual Solutions

TaShara B., BodyMe By Chee Boutique & Spa Beauty Health and Wellness Co

Terrie Landry Cook, Simply D'Vine Boutique

Terrie Jensen, Terem Marketing LLC

Tracee Perryman, Center of Hope Family Services, Inc.

Vanice Williams, First Light Consulting LLA DBA First Light Child Care Center

Noor Alexandria Abukaram

Rising Star Awardee

A woman, age 25 years or younger, who has founded a successful business with promise for the future.



"I am grateful for the recognition and humbled to be amongst such incredible women entrepreneurs. This award not only celebrates our achievements but also ignites a flame of hope in aspiring entrepreneurs. I am honored to be a part of a movement that is forging the path for equity and access for all entrepreneurs. Thank you to the WEDO Awards and to everyone who has supported my journey this far. Let's continue to rise together."

When you are a runner, you run, a sport that requires only shoes and stamina. Noor Alexandria Abukaram's entrepreneurial spirit was sparked when in 2019 as a 16-year-old she was disqualified for running with her hijab on at an Ohio track meet. After shaking off her embarrassment, she founded Let Noor Run - which fights discrimination and injustices, hindering those from doing what they love. In 2021, Ohio Senate Bill 181 was unanimously passed to end discrimination against religious expression for student-athletes.

As a successful social media influencer and product representative, Noor's reach is international. Her corporate partners include Nike and "Gonna Need Milk". Ms. Aburkaram has been featured in the Washington Post, The New York Times, Good Morning America, Time Magazine, CNN, Sports Illustrated, and ESPN, and is now at Ohio State University pursuing a career in design and sports. She represents the future of women not only in sports but also in standing up for what is right.

Follow Let Noor Run at:

Website – letnoorrun.com

Instagram – [@nooralexandria](https://www.instagram.com/nooralexandria)

Facebook – Noor Alexandria Abukaram

Erin Curley

Second Act Awardee

A woman who draws from previous life and work experiences to find success as an entrepreneur.



Erin Curley is the owner and sole inspiration at Engage Studio Architects. She discovered her love of design in high school and went on to become a trained, qualified architect and a member of the prestigious American Institute of Architects.

When her career in Toledo took a change in 2019, she opened her own firm. In less than a year she was successfully running Engage Studio Architects in a pandemic. She has grown this business year after year, with new projects that are predominately community enhancements. She has made this happen with her own grit and capital.

"This award provides an opportunity to spread awareness of how vital ALL voices are in designing our communities through architecture and inspire the next generation of women to believe in their dream and pursue it with passion."

Follow Engage Studio Architects at:
Website – engagestudioarchitects.com
Instagram – [@engagestudioarchitects](https://www.instagram.com/engagestudioarchitects)
Facebook – [engagestudioarchitects](https://www.facebook.com/engagestudioarchitects)

Ambrea Mikolajczyk

Trailblazer Awardee

An innovator, creator and leader, who has broken new ground as a woman entrepreneur.



"I feel so incredibly honored to receive this inaugural award, to be recognized for the hard work I do in the community restoring forgotten architecture and contributing to many causes in order to move the needle forward in my hometown is something I will always treasure."

Ambrea was working in Corporate America for the largest pharmaceutical company in the world as a sales manager. Something inside of her kept screaming, "There is more." Meanwhile, she and her husband Kevin were purchasing run-down, forgotten about houses and working to make them whole again. Ambrea fell in love with the entire process of managing a budget, schedule, vendors, and materials, partnering with sub-contractors, and organizing a team to bring the properties online.

In 2015 she was renovating a former Tobacco factory in Downtown Toledo's Warehouse District, and people in the community took notice and asked if they could hire ARK to help with the renovations to their homes, businesses, and buildings.

This is when Ambrea realized this was the answer to "there is more.". In 2017 she resigned from her successful career to launch *ARK Restoration and Construction*.

It is challenging being a woman and navigating in an industry dominated by men. Ambrea has had to prove that she is worthy, knowledgeable, and capable of being in this space. Recently, she was competing to be the chosen developer for the Spitzer Arcade and Nicholas buildings with ARK's partner out of Cincinnati, *The Model Group*. Selected from a field of eight development teams Ambrea and The Model Group demonstrated skill and capacity and were selected to redevelop these iconic Toledo landmarks, proving Ambrea is a true trailblazer.

Follow ARK Restoration at:

Website – arktoledo.com

Instagram – [@ark_restoration](https://www.instagram.com/ark_restoration)

Facebook – [arkrestore](https://www.facebook.com/arkrestore)

Jeraldine Stewart

Thrivers Awardee

A woman whose entrepreneurial leadership has grown and sustained a business, meeting increasingly higher levels of achievement in revenue, job creation and market share.



"Winning this award just solidifies the fact for me that, with God, ALL things are possible!"

Jera Stewart, owner of Jera's Heavenly Sweet Bakery, started with a passion for baking, learning from her mom. Having successfully raised her children, she and her husband decided to go big and opened a location on Summit St in downtown Toledo in the One SeaGate building.

When she won the competitive JumpStart pitch competition grand prize, she used her winnings to move her bakery to a promising new location. Then the pandemic hit. Using retirement savings and PPP grants, she continued following her dream.

Jera did pop-ups, deliveries, and more to continue the business while building the new location.

In March of 2021, her husband of 35 years died and her business became the lifeline to keep her moving forward, and move forward she did. Now, with over ten employees, she is a popular spot for coffee and sweets with both the neighborhood and University of Toledo students. Her secret to success is that she never takes "no" for an answer. Her desire to give back has her making over 200 cakes for community foster children to enjoy having a real birthday cake. At 66, she is the first to say, you are never too old to make a difference!

Follow Jera's Heavenly Sweet at:

Website – jheavenlysweet.com

Instagram – [@jheavenly_sweet](https://www.instagram.com/jheavenly_sweet)

Facebook – [jerasheavenlysweet](https://www.facebook.com/jerasheavenlysweet)

Tina Butts

Legend Award

A woman we celebrate for a lifetime of entrepreneurial achievement, community impact, and support of the success of others.



"I transform every passion that I have into a business. That's why I love what I do and I hope to inspire you!"

For Tina Butts, providing bail bond services is more than a financial transaction. Tina provides criminal and janitorial bonds, travel checks, and guardianship documents to help ensure that the criminal justice system is fair, equitable, and accessible to everyone, regardless of financial means. Tina founded "*Here's your turning point, LLC*," an addiction recovery and mental health treatment center to help families in crisis. Her personal, professional, and community experiences led Tina to create "*The Movement*". When the Covid Pandemic hit our community in March 2020, Tina saw the need to help black and brown people understand the importance of vaccinating against COVID-19.

Thousands received the vaccine through her efforts. In one afternoon, 500 people received the vaccine. Today, *The Movement* has enlisted the assistance of thousands of volunteers who have registered hundreds of voters and coordinated holiday baskets, bikes, and backpack giveaways. Through all of Tina's companies, she has partnered with *Toledo Public Schools*, *Pathway, Inc.*, and many other community agencies to provide help and a voice to those in need.

Follow Tina Butts Bail Bonds at:
Instagram – @tinabuttsbailbonds
Facebook – Tina Butts Bail Bonds

Nominations for 2024 WEDO Awards

Open now!

We invite you to act now to nominate a woman entrepreneur or yourself for the 2024 WEDO Awards.

Nominate at: [NWOWBC.com](https://nwowbc.com)

Award Definitions

Rising Star

A woman, age 25 years or younger, who has founded a successful business with promise for the future

Legend

A woman we celebrate for a lifetime of entrepreneurial achievement, community impact, and support of the success of others.

Second Act

A woman who draws from a previous life and work experiences to find success as an entrepreneur

Trailblazer

An innovator, creator, and leader, who has broken new ground as a woman entrepreneur

Thriver

A woman whose entrepreneurial leadership has grown and sustained a business meeting increasingly higher levels of achievement in revenue, job creation, and market share.

Why Support the WE-DO Awards?

Every entrepreneurs should have an equitable opportunity to develop, launch, and grow a business that creates wealth for themselves, their families, and their community. In 2021, Toledo's entrepreneurial services community partnered with Forward Cities to create an equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem scorecard for our community.

The scorecard measured four essential categories for a healthy entrepreneurial ecosystem: people, programs, networks, and narratives.

The area with the greatest need for improvement was creating narratives pertaining to the ecosystem's authentic storytelling that highlights its personality and diversity.



One of the ways for improvement is to develop an award and/or recognition of excellence for diverse entrepreneurs and ecosystem leaders.

We believe that investing in gender equality, women's economic development and empowerment can help eradicate extreme poverty, build vibrant economies, and unlock human potential on a transformational scale. We aim to support these efforts, as we continue to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusivity to bridge the equity and network gap in all areas of the marketplace and workplace in our community.

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Celebrating Our Community

At Mercy Health, we strive to improve the health of our communities. That's why we're proud to celebrate the 2023 Women's Entrepreneurial Distinction Ovation Award recipients on their entrepreneurial achievements and positive impact on our community.



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Equality Starts With You.

Greater Toledo Community Foundation created a specific fund to support the removal of barriers to equity and access for all in our community. If you are a nonprofit organization in the Greater Toledo Region that has a program that supports this mission, you are encouraged to apply for funding by July 2nd.



For more information, contact Artisha Lawson at **419.241.5049** or visit toledocf.org/equity-access-initiative

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Congratulations to the 2023 WE-DO Awardees.
Thank you for leading the way and making a difference!

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Key4Women is a proud sponsor of the Northwest Ohio Women Business Council and congratulates its honorees.

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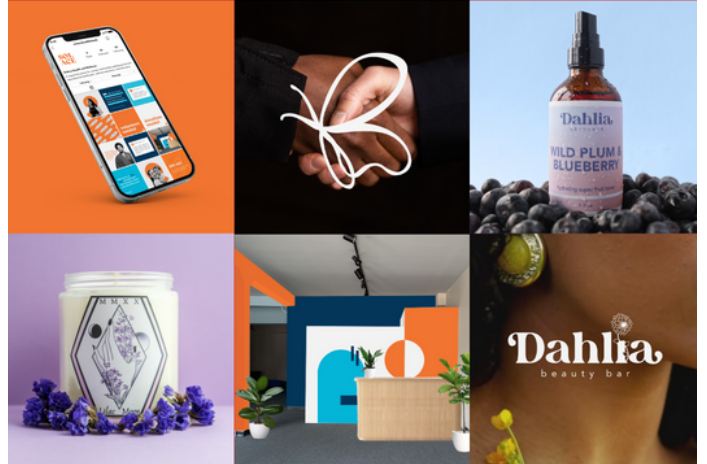
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Thank you for your Partnership!



Program Partners

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WEDO Awards

Women's Entrepreneurial Distinction Ovation Awards

Thank you to our SWAG Bag partners!

Angie Williams, Sales & Marketing Consultation

Diana Patton, RISE Global Summit Admission

Dr. Hope Mitchell, Mitchell Dermatology

KPK Unlimited, Custom Apparel & Gifts, Tote bags

Lucas County Port Authority, Two Airline Tickets

Manhattan's Pub & Cheer, Gift Card for Rental Space

Meg Ressler, Women's Summit Program Admission

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Ragazza Boutique, Apparel Gift Card

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Sena Mourad-Friedman, Business Counseling

Sojourner's Truth, Advertising Package

The Onyx Café, Gift Card for Event Space rental

The Stalwart Magazine, Advertising Package

Plate One / Plate 21, Gift Cards



Few Ways to Get Involved with Women of Toledo



Find Your Circles

Our circles are welcoming with the goal to support our community's sense of belonging. Our monthly includes Young Women of Toledo Circle (ages 12 to 24), Advocacy Circle, Legacy Circle, Mentorship, and Business Roundtables.



Young Women of Toledo

Our Young Women initiative offers an opportunity for intersectional and young women ages 12 to 24 to share, discuss and debate constructively to help build empowerment. YWOT program activities include the Circles group, a Summer program-Girls Hub, and two BIG IDEAs forum.



Economic Advancement

We believe investing in gender equality, women's economic development, and empowerment can help eradicate extreme poverty, build vibrant economies, and unlock human potential on a transformational scale. We aim to support these efforts in all areas of the marketplace and workplace in our community.



HerHub

Join over 200+ women-owned businesses, authors, and leaders in our HerHub community. HerHub provides mapping and directory (assets profile) of people, places, businesses, organizations, events, and narratives of our women's communities. Visit: 419herhub.org.



**Thank you for your interest in partnering
with and supporting the Northwest Ohio
Women's Business Council!**

For questions please, contact us at wbc@womenoftoledo.org.

