



FINANCIAL WOMEN  
IN TEXAS

*helping women succeed*

Leadership  
Development  
& Networking

Find a Group Near You: [fwitexas.org](http://fwitexas.org)



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

### Where is the Finish Line?!

When I chose my theme in 2019, I had no idea I would be a two term President, leading during a time of global crisis, or that I would be co-chairing conference for two years in a row. I want to share some tactics that have helped me keep my sight on the finish line even when it felt far away.

#### 1. **Keep moving, even if you have to walk.**

The mantra here is "One foot in front of the other; just keep moving," because every step forward leads you to the finish line. It is okay to slow down or walk, as long as you maintain forward progress. Just keep moving forward.

#### 2. **Focus on what you can control.**

Take advantage of what you can control and let go of the variables you cannot. I cannot control the social distancing guidelines or how quickly the vaccinations will get out. But I can control offering virtual networking nights and reaching out to lapsed members, so that is what I have chosen to focus on.

#### 3. **Pace yourself.**

At the start of a race, it is natural for runners to get carried away with adrenaline and the feeling of fresh legs. Runners call this "fly and die!" But pacing is key to remaining resilient and not burning out. Be sure to take breaks, slow down when you need to and take the time for yourself to play with your kids, get outside, meditate, journal, or do whatever helps you manage anxiety or sadness.

#### 4. **Adjust your race plan.**

Despite COVID, your goals (i.e., maintain business, maintain wellness, maintain strong relationships) have not changed

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*Crossing The Finish Line*

**FWIT CONFERENCE 2021**

**Houston Marriott Marquis**

**September 9-10, 2021**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - CONTINUED

for the most part, but how you get there has. So adjust your habits to meet those goals. For example, if client retention is down, focus on helping others and seek to build relationships that will come back to benefit you in the long run. FWIT is a great place for that. Recognize that adjusting your race plan is not the end of the world.

### 5. **Use mantras.**

For COVID-19 my mantra is "Go with the flow." Sometimes work starts a little late, or the package was not delivered next day, I lose a client I was counting on... Whatever it is, I remind myself to go with the flow and be accepting of what is happening during what is most definitely NOT a normal time.

### 6. **Look for silver linings.**

One marathon runner said a silver lining during a race is bonding with fellow runners by offering motivational shout-outs or high-fives. It gives her an endorphin rush. At home, during COVID, silver linings are walk breaks with friends or family, cooking homemade meals and the ability to be consistent with using exercise as an outlet. Think about what makes you smile throughout the day and express gratitude for it.

### 7. **Establish a reward.**

For some runners, it is all about the finisher medal or running for loved ones they have lost. For some, it is about the satisfaction of achievement. Establish rewards for yourself and your family during this time. Whether it is treating yourself to more television, or wine every night, or a comfy new pair of pants, it's encouraging to earn a prize at each mile marker of this pandemic.

Hang in there and keep moving forward, one step at a time.

Lori Victory





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## WHO WE ARE: HAPPY 100 BIRTHDAY TO FWIT!

2020 was quite a year for the history books, and 2021 is going to be a historical year as well. COVID and political comments aside, 2020 was the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Constitutional amendment (August 18, 1920) giving women the right to vote and saw the election of the first female VP in United States history. 2021 will also mark the 100th anniversary of the first meeting (February 25, 1921) of National Association of Bank Women. (NABW)

In 1953 Genieve N. Gildersleeve wrote the book "Women In Banking – A History of the National Association of Bank Women". Ray M. Gidney, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland (1944 – 1953) and U.S. Comptroller of the Currency (1953 – 1961), wrote an introduction to the book that still holds much relevance to today's women in finance:

"The twentieth century {has} brought many and important changes in American banking, noteworthy being the entrance of women in large numbers into the banking field. The National Association of Bank Women, whose members all hold executive positions in banks, was organized in 1921, and has grown steadily in numbers and influence. Honor should be accorded to the leaders who, through their ability, industry, courage and perseverance, and their efforts to bring out the best capabilities of their group, have made a place for their organization which could be attained only through intelligent and persistent effort. Banking owes much to them and will welcome this record of their activities.

The progress of women in banking will depend upon their natural abilities and upon the qualities developed by education, training, and experience which are essential for a full measure of success in our field. Opportunities for training and advancement, already significant, should be come even more readily available.

While giving recognition and praise to the past and present activities of NABW and their outstanding leaders, we should support their efforts and encourage our women co-workers to attain the full measure of their capabilities as participants in the banking system of the future."

Today FWIT membership is open to all women involved at all levels in all aspects of finance, but Mr. Gidney's message still rings true. None of us would be where we are today were it not for the hard fought battles of those who came before us. We have added a link to Ms. Gildersleeve's book in the About section of [FWITexas.org](http://FWITexas.org) as well as a history of Financial Women International (FWI), the second phase of our legacy Association and an updated version of the History of FWIT.

As we celebrate our Association's original birthday, we invite you to learn more about our history. Equally as important, take the time to celebrate, support and congratulate each other for the milestones we have achieved and the assurance of many more to come!

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY BUT WE'RE  
JUST GETTING STARTED



VIRGINIA D. H. FURMAN, *President*



NATHALIE LAIMBEER, *Vice President*



MINA M. BRUÈRE, *Secretary*



JEAN ARNOT REID, *Treasurer*



### A New Benefit and Huge Success!

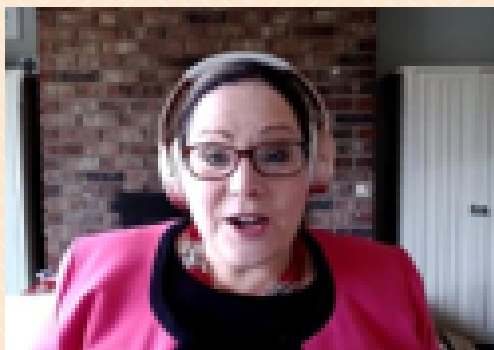
The Association debuted a new benefit to our membership this year. On January 28th, members, prospective members, and guests were invited to attend a FREE FWIT Conference 2021 Sneak Peak with a LinkedIn presentation by Jennifer Darling and a HOPIN Virtual Networking event facilitated by Elizabeth McCormick. Forty-four people registered for the event including 34 members, one of which was brand new! We also had one former member and nine nonmembers register for the event.

Jennifer ([Jennifer Darling, MM | LinkedIn](#)) delivered her presentation from the Mini-Conference which was interrupted in September by technical difficulties. Jennifer spoke for 20 minutes about the importance of social media for networking and other business tasks such as recruitment, sales, and job searches. She provided tips on how to make the most of our online presence – especially in today’s environment of limited in-person opportunities. Comments included “I didn’t even realize that specific feature was available on LinkedIn!”.

After Jennifer’s presentation, our friend/speaker/speaker-provider partner, Elizabeth ([Elizabeth McCormick, CSP®, CVP \(Certified Virtual Presenter\) | LinkedIn](#)), introduced us to a new virtual networking platform called HOPIN.

The app randomly connects you to one of the other attendees and you have an opportunity to network for 3 minutes before being “hopped over” to your next pairing. It was a lot of fun to visit with “old” friends and make some new ones. This is a relatively new platform and we learned several technical tips that will make it easier to get around the connectivity issues some of the participants experienced. After all, that is part of the beauty of FWIT - learning new skills in a non-threatening environment!

When asked if they would be interested in a similar event in the future, participants responded with a resounding “YES” and “Would 100% be interested in doing it again”. Keep your eyes and ears open for the next opportunity. We hope you can join us!



# AUSTIN GROUP NEWS

The Austin Group held a virtual meeting in February featuring Mary Ottman, a Professional Speaker and Certified Leadership Coach. Mary spoke about her recent book: *Be Heard: 7 Steps to Take Your Communication from Deaf Ears to Raving Followers.* With an MBA and a Master's in Leadership and Management, along with a lot of elbow grease, Mary rose through the ranks of a male-dominated Army Research and Development organization and forged a successful 27+ year career going from a software engineer to successful executive leading multi-generational teams. Mary is on a mission to empower current and aspiring leaders who are ready to BE HEARD, so they can have more impact and create the abundant life they deserve.



# HOUSTON GROUP NEWS

Houston hosted a Galentine's event featuring a wine and chocolate pairing that they "borrowed" from East Texas. The ladies enjoyed three pairings which were conducted at individual tables due to COVID. *"Successful chocolate & wine pairing produce enhanced sensations and tastes across the palate, revealing hidden flavors in both for the very first time."* This is a fun and easy event to copy and host, but be sure to have Oyster crackers to cleanse the palate between pairings.

The group will also be hosting a Spring luncheon on March 14th.



# LLANO ESTACADO MIXER:

Llano will host a mixer at McPherson Cellars in Lubbock on March 4th for members and new prospects. The event is being sponsored by the Texas Tech School of Banking.

On March 30, Jeff Mercer, PhD will be the guest speaker at the Lubbock Country Club. Dr Mercer holds the Centennial Bank Chair in Finance and is the Director of the TTU School of Banking, and Director of the E.W. & David Williams Institute for Community Banking and Finance.



THU, MAR 4 AT 5:15 PM CST

**Financial Women in Texas Mixer**

1615 Texas Ave, Lubbock, Texas 79401



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
**School of Banking™**

# San Antonio Group News:

**SCHOLARSHIP:** Last year, the San Antonio Group successfully raised funds for our first scholarship, which we eagerly anticipated rewarding to a deserving individual. The well-known challenges of 2020 curtailed those plans, but we regrouped and resumed the efforts later in the year. We announced the scholarship and accepted applications from our membership and forwarded those received to D'Lynn Lane, the FWIT Association Scholarship Chair. They were then reviewed by a team of finance professionals and a recipient selected.

We are thrilled to announce that the recipient is Wendy Albers, a newer member of the San Antonio Group. During a successful 35+ year career in banking, Wendy has worked hard and climbed the corporate ladder from her beginnings as a bookkeeping clerk in a small-town bank in her hometown of Demopolis, Alabama through increasing levels of responsibility, culminating in her current position as SVP/Operational Change & Communications Manager at Broadway Bank.

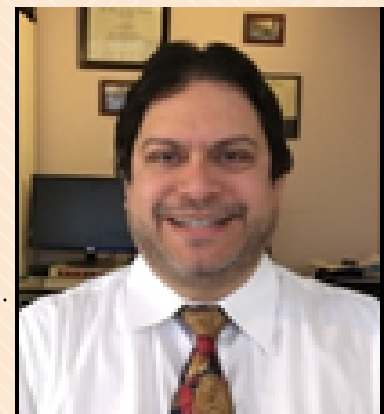
After a couple of decades away, she resumed her collegiate studies and is currently pursuing a degree in Leadership via the University of Alabama LifeTrack Distance Learning Program. Her goal is to "take what I've learned on the job as well as through formal education to help teams achieve their objectives through sound leadership principles."

Wendy joined FWIT in May of 2020, and immediately sought opportunities to contribute to our success. As we planned for our 2020-2021 year, Wendy volunteered to serve on our Social Media committee and has taken the lead for that endeavor. Congratulations, Wendy, on your selection as our 2020 Scholarship Award Winner. We wish you great success!



In December the group held a virtual holiday social. Fourteen attendees enjoyed the time together, sharing about their favorite holiday beverages, favorite holiday memories and traditions, and looking back on 2020 and forward to 2021. It was great to learn more about each other and share so much! In addition to the San Antonio members, two nonmember guests and a guest each from the Houston and the Hill Country Groups joined the fun.

January's program featured Michael Espinoza of SABusiness Calendar.com on networking. He and his son founded the online business event calendar and have expanded to 19 locations. His networking tips included best use of LinkedIn and how to select events to attend and maximize the benefit of attending. We again welcomed one nonmember guest, as well as one guest member from the Dallas Group and one from the Houston Group for a total of fourteen attendees.



In February the group welcomed Lori Victory, FWIT Association President and President of 3PR, Inc. Lori presented a two part program – Focus on FWIT and Commonly Cited Compliance Issues. The FWIT portion included an Association overview as well as encouraging members to participate in the board meeting calls and to consider nominations for the board. In addition to highlighting common compliance issues in lending and deposits, Lori provided each attendee with her slide deck with lots of valuable information. We had 15 attendees including 11 from San Antonio Group, one guest, and one member each from the Dallas, Hill Country and Houston Groups.

**CONGRATULATIONS!** Sandy Sullivan retired in January after over 30 years with Frost Bank working in fraud deterrent endeavors. Gretchen Herrera has been promoted to Assistant Vice President and Senior Credit Analyst with Karnes County National Bank. Future meetings are planned to be virtual:

- March 11 – Patricia Mejia of the San Antonio Foundation will increase our community organization awareness
- April 8 – Stephanie Smith of the Federal Reserve will present a legislative update
- May 13 – Traci Uribe of USAA will talk about emotional intelligence.

**As a Historic Reminder of our Recent "SNOVID" Event of 2021, here's our Conference Pool in Houston Covered in Snow!**

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 1ST!**





*Yes, we are running a different race on an unfamiliar track and having to think about how to jump lots of hurdles, but together, we still have the power to Cross The Finish Line!*

## Save the date! FWIT 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference!

► September 9 - 10, 2021



- Marriott Marquis Houston
  - Link for special rate:  
<https://book.passkey.com/e/50142497>
- Registration & Exhibit Hall  
open @ 5PM Wed Sept 8
- + Optional Wed dinner off-site