



10

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
**WOMEN WHO
EMPOWER**
A DECADE OF IMPACT





LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

— November 2024

Building, Connecting, and Inspiring a Global Community of Changemakers



Dear Friends,

For 10 years, Northeastern University's Women Who Empower network—students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends—has been coming together to foster opportunities and environments in which all people thrive. In every corner of the world, we are building, connecting, and inspiring a global community of changemakers. And we are having an impact.

How do we know? We see it in the stories and experiences shared at events across our global network of 13 campuses and cities around the world, from Boston to London, Dubai to Singapore, and so many places in between. We see it in the success of our student-led WISE group, which has encouraged thousands of individuals to embrace the power and potential of their ideas and helped launch more than 100 ventures and nearly 150 mentorship pairings in the group's first five years. And we see it in the ripple effects of our Women Who Empower Innovator Awards, which have distributed more than \$1.32 million to 102 trailblazers who are leading change and reimagining solutions across industries and continents since 2021.

I hope you will not only see but feel the power of this community as you peruse the pages of this keepsake publication. If a picture paints a thousand words, then you will experience some truly joyful art in our depiction of a decade of inclusive impact. We are also excited to share some insights and reflections—both weighty and wow!—from inspiring members of our community. I trust that, as you read on, you will understand how fervently

I believe that when we come together and harness our collective energy and strength, there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

Today, we are at an inflection point, and our trajectory is up to us. This magazine—and this wonderfully supportive, positive, and purposeful community—is for anyone who believes that shared commitment can change lives. It certainly has changed mine. For those who are already part of our mission, thank you from the bottom of my heart. And, if you're new, we welcome you warmly. I hope you enjoy this celebration of our last decade, and I look forward to shaping the next 10 years of impact with you.

Sincerely,



Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray

Senior Vice President for University Advancement
Northeastern University



Women Who Empower is **Northeastern.**

Reflecting the university's values and mission.

A global, entrepreneurial network.

Grounded in experience.

Committed to impact.

A community of lifelong learners and problem solvers.

We are open, inclusive, ever evolving.

Pointed to the future, powered by people.

Contents

06 **TEN YEARS**

EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

Reflecting on 10 years of Women Who Empower: the celebrations, moments, and milestones that have shaped our community.

26 **ARTS AND CULTURE**

IGNITING CREATIVITY

Creative thinkers share their sources of inspiration, their reset routines, and the experiences that influence them as artists.

36 **BOOKS**

WRITING A BETTER FUTURE

These authors are helping to shape the future through their work and their words.

38 **FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

THE TASTE MAKERS

These 10 individuals are shaking up the food and beverage industry—one delicious idea at a time.

42 **TECHNOLOGY AND AI**

POWERING TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

The tech-forward people harnessing the potential of AI to do good.

50 **LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP**

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

Entrepreneur and Innovator Awards judge Julietta Dexter, PNT'20, on authentic leadership, decision-making, and building a legacy.

52 **WELLNESS AND BEAUTY**

BEAUTIFUL DISRUPTION

Wellness and beauty trendsetters who are putting ease and the good of our planet first.

56 **LOOKING AHEAD**

10 YEARS FROM NOW

Women Who Empower leaders and changemakers share their hopes for the next generation.

64 **FUELING THE FUTURE**

INVESTING IN IMPACT

Women Who Empower supporters tell us why they invest in Northeastern: the people.





Empowered Communities

**TEN YEARS.
REMARKABLE
IMPACT. INFINITE
POSSIBILITIES.**

At the heart of the Women Who Empower initiative is its people. In 10 years, our community has expanded far beyond what could once fit in a single room in Boston. Through countless formative moments and shared experiences, this collective has not only grown but thrived, drawing new members and inspiring them to make a meaningful impact on communities where they study, live, and work.

2014 ▶

Women Who Empower (formerly Women Who Inspire) events create an early vehicle for conversations and connections around leadership and innovation, featuring discussions with industry leaders in finance, public office, and technology, including Lauren States, PNT'13, former vice president of strategy and transformation at IBM.



▶ 2016

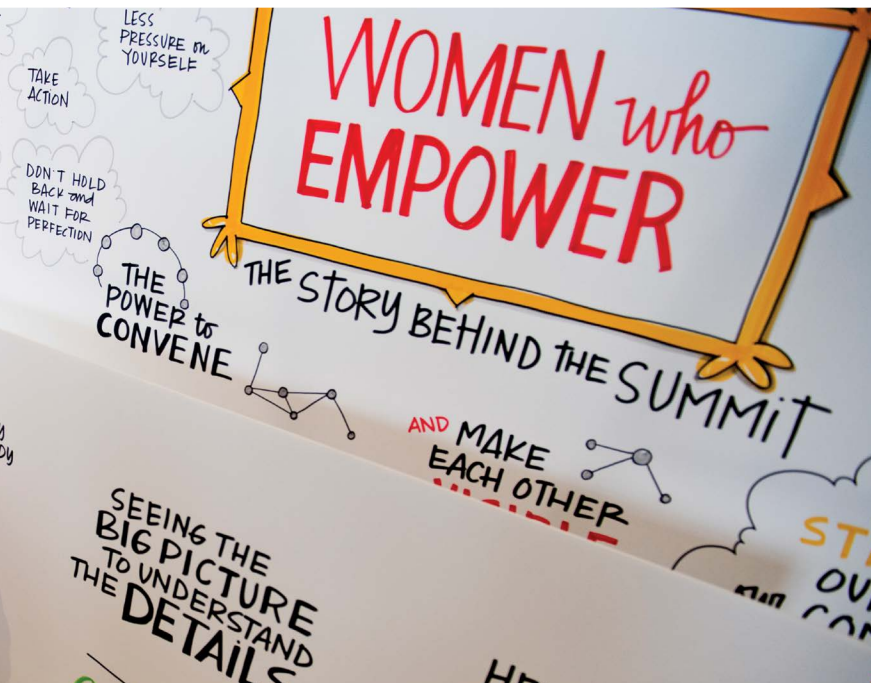
The inaugural Women Who Empower Summit featured speaker Kristen Kish, winner of Bravo's *Top Chef* season 10 and co-host of The Travel Channel's *36 Hours*. She encouraged attendees to embrace compassion as a leadership value. "Everyone has a story; everyone has some fight that they're fighting," she said.





▲ 2017

Maureen Chiquet (left), former global CEO of Chanel, with Linda Pizzuti Henry, then managing director of *The Boston Globe* and now CEO and co-owner of Boston Globe Media. Chiquet shared lessons from her impressive career, asking the audience to reflect on what truly matters to them. Once you've done that, she said, focus on your strengths and find where you can have a unique impact.



▲ 2017

The second Women Who Empower Summit brought together a diverse group of artists and storytellers who shared a common thread—their paths to success were anything but straight. Here, a community drawing reflects insights from the daylong program.

OUR WORLDWIDE COMMUNITY

5,000+

people engaged across our network

100+

events spanning all Northeastern campuses

20+

cities across the world

NORTHEASTERN • 1898

▼ **2018**

On International Women's Day, the Women Who Empower: Our World event series expanded globally with panel discussions held in Boston, London, and San Francisco. Pictured left to right, Ashley Paré, CAGS'09, Juliette Mayers, DMSB'88, and Jessica Yamas, MS/MBA'12, shared insights in Boston about leadership and being flexible in designing a career trajectory.

2018 ►

"Why wouldn't there be journalism in a magazine for women?" asked former editor-in-chief of *Elle* magazine, Robbie Myers, at the 2018 Women Who Empower Summit.

She helped develop the magazine's more journalistic approach to fashion and politics. Other notable speakers throughout the day included Olympic gymnast Nastia Liukin and M.Gemi co-founder and CEO Cheryl Kaplan.





▼ 2019

The Paris-Boston Women's Forum—a project initiated by the Consulate General of France, in Boston, and held at Northeastern's East Village—brought together leaders from both cities to work through the systemic challenges women face in higher education and in their careers.



2018 ▶

The student-led Women's Interdisciplinary Society of Entrepreneurship (WISE) hosted its first summit to foster community among women and individuals who are underrepresented in entrepreneurship. An audience from all Northeastern colleges and schools convened to hear from leading female founders and industry experts and participate in a career fair. The annual WISE Summit strives to highlight unconventional paths to entrepreneurship and make them accessible.



▲ 2020

A Women Who Empower: Our World panel discussion in Mumbai featured Rhodes Scholar and Young Global Leader Kritika Singh, E'20, and entrepreneurs Devita Saraf, Priya Prakash, and Minal Vazirani in conversation with moderator and Young Global Leader Andrea Garcia, SSH'19. Each entrepreneur described how she forged her own path while she was still young—and often the only woman in the room.

▶ 2020

It's only a matter of time before we see a woman in the White House, Nancy Pelosi—then speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and one of the most powerful women in American politics—told *On Point* host and WBUR reporter Meghna Chakrabarti during a riveting interview at the annual Women Who Empower Summit. “It will happen,” she said.



◀ 2020

“Philanthropy isn’t about money. It’s about love of people.” Swanee Hunt, philanthropist and former U.S. ambassador to Austria, spoke at an Experiential Philanthropy Series with Women Who Empower Leader and Young Global Leader Alva Gardner-Perez, DMSB’06, about how next-generation leaders can make smart investments in their communities. In response to social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, 85 Women Who Empower ambassadors representing a range of class years, countries, and industries kept the wider community connected through virtual programming like the Experiential Philanthropy series.

THE INNOVATOR AWARDS

Launched in 2021 with the support of the Cartier Women's Initiative, the Women Who Empower Innovator Awards recognize bold, creative changemakers in Northeastern's vast entrepreneurial ecosystem—and provide them with capital, resources, and networks to elevate their ideas, products, businesses, and brands. What truly sets the Innovator Awards apart is that the program recognizes and celebrates the innovators themselves—not just their idea or venture.





▲ 2021

The inaugural Innovator Awards celebrated 19 trailblazing recipients with \$100,000 in grants, marking a pivotal moment for women's entrepreneurship at Northeastern. Pictured here are members of the 2021 and 2022 Innovator Awards cohorts.



The program has awarded more than **\$1.3 million** to **102 innovators**, empowering them to grow and advance their entrepreneurial ventures.

THE INNOVATOR AWARDS

Meaghan St Marc

AMD'10 | founder, Rev'd; Innovator

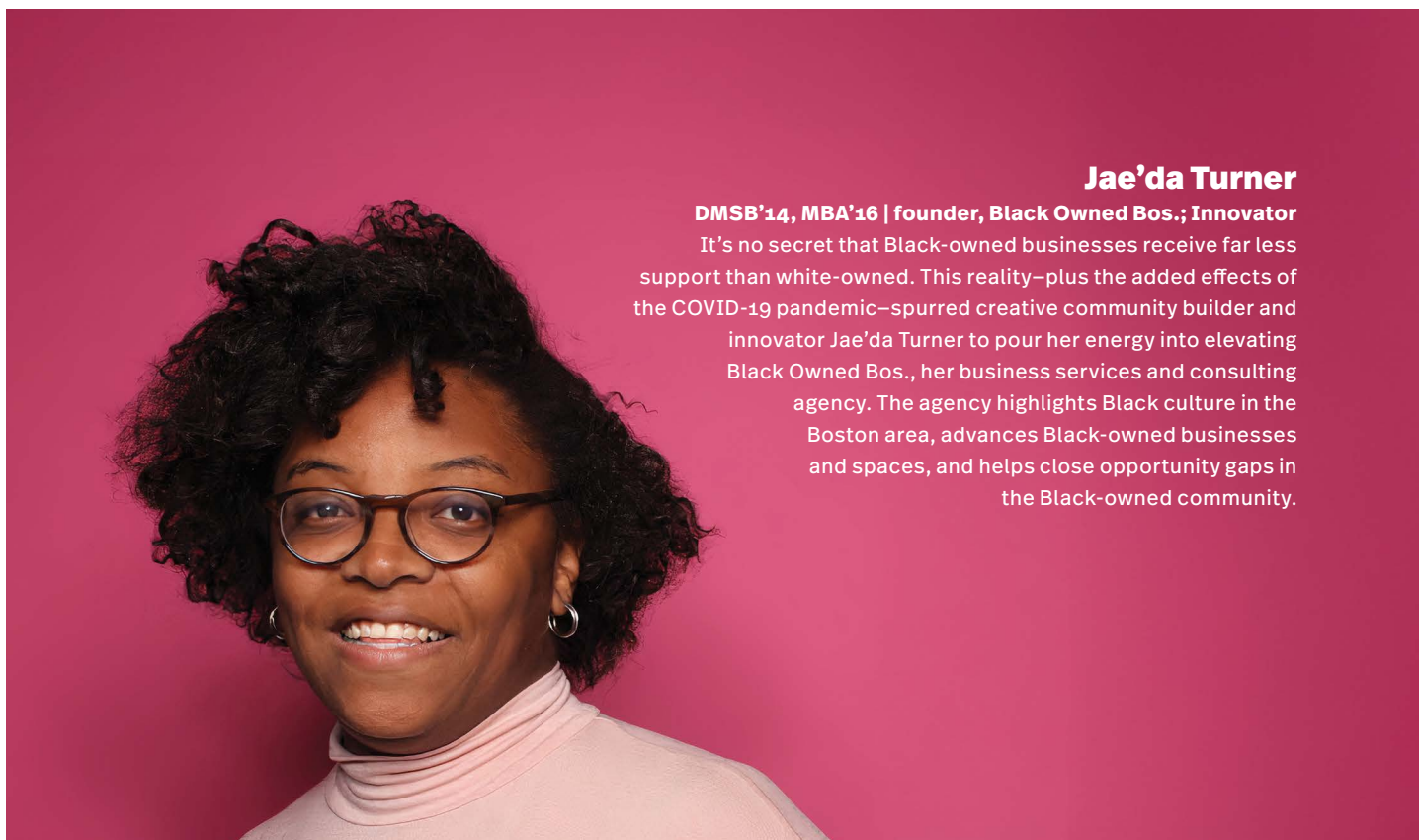
Even though Meaghan St Marc, co-founder of Boston cycling studio business, Rev'd, has committed her life to fitness, she'll be the first to admit that she was never the top athlete. "I was never the best player on the team, but I was captain all the time," St Marc says. "I have spirit, and I have passion for what's going on, and I know how to identify talent and set it up in a way where we're all going to benefit." St Marc's ability as a natural leader, someone who drives others to push themselves physically and mentally, led her to turn Rev'd from a pipe dream into reality in 2014. Today, the inclusive studio business has women-owned franchises, 50 trainers, and more than 10,000 active customers.



Jae'da Turner

DMSB'14, MBA'16 | founder, Black Owned Bos.; Innovator

It's no secret that Black-owned businesses receive far less support than white-owned. This reality—plus the added effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—spurred creative community builder and innovator Jae'da Turner to pour her energy into elevating Black Owned Bos., her business services and consulting agency. The agency highlights Black culture in the Boston area, advances Black-owned businesses and spaces, and helps close opportunity gaps in the Black-owned community.



Kadesh Simms Conroy

DMSB'01, MBA'08 | founder, Wishing Well; Innovator

The idea for Wishing Well came to Kadesh Simms Conroy in her sleep. "My dream showed me this visual of pooled resources for communities," says the double Husky. She then took that dream and made it a reality: Her peer-to-peer digital wallet app promotes financial inclusion by enabling communities to pool financial resources to increase economic opportunities and resilience. "It's a tool for those that won't have access to large sums of capital to use the community to access that capital together," she explains.



Molly Beck

DMSB'09, MS'22 | founder, Messy.fm; Innovator

Molly Beck has always had a passion for building, innovating, and driving change in the entertainment industry. A former blogger, Beck recognized the emergence of the podcasting revolution and seized the opportunity to make her mark. Through her company, Messy.fm, she provides podcasting software solutions tailored to businesses seeking to bridge their internal communications with the growing blend of entertainment and information.



“You have to believe in yourself. If you’re passionate about it, you can make it work.”

—Jennifer Fisher



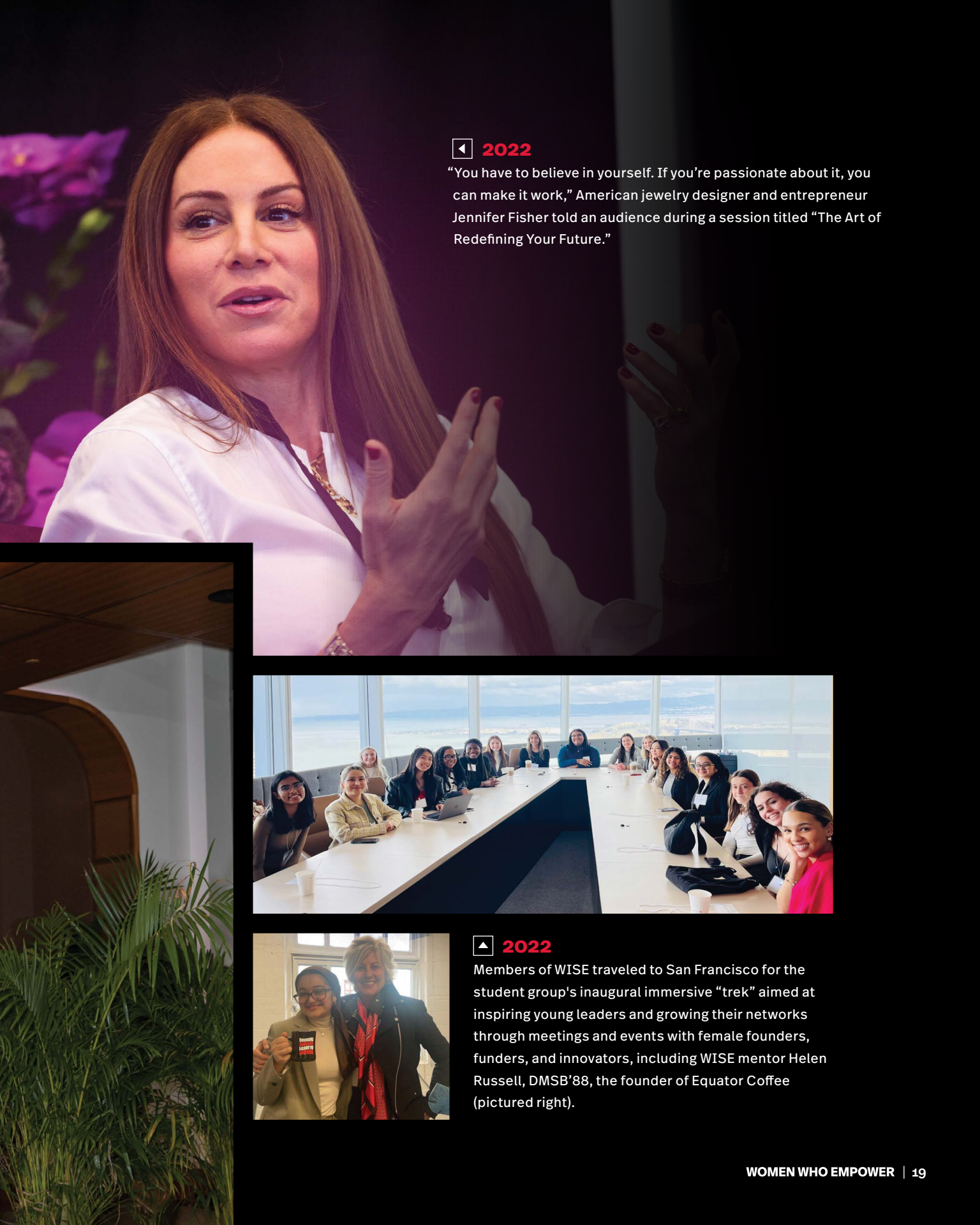
▲ 2022

“When you help someone else succeed, then you’re a leader,” said Asma Khan (pictured left), the chef and owner of the London-based Indian restaurant, Darjeeling Express. “Real achievement comes when you’ve changed someone’s life for the better.” Khan has dedicated her career to uplifting women in the male-dominated restaurant industry and beyond. Her restaurant, which was featured in the Netflix show *Chef’s Table*, is run by a female-only staff—the only Indian restaurant of its kind in the world.

2022 ►

At an evening reception for the Innovator Awards, the community was reminded of the program’s distinct focus: investing in the innovators themselves, rather than just their business ideas or ventures. “During our selection process, a woman’s current venture or project is important to the extent that it’s reflective of her innovative mindset. We are investing in the woman—the person behind the idea,” said Betsy Ludwig, executive director of women’s entrepreneurship at Northeastern.





◀ **2022**

"You have to believe in yourself. If you're passionate about it, you can make it work," American jewelry designer and entrepreneur Jennifer Fisher told an audience during a session titled "The Art of Redefining Your Future."



▲ **2022**

Members of WISE traveled to San Francisco for the student group's inaugural immersive "trek" aimed at inspiring young leaders and growing their networks through meetings and events with female founders, funders, and innovators, including WISE mentor Helen Russell, DMSB'88, the founder of Equator Coffee (pictured right).

2023 ▶

Binja Basimike, BHS'12, MPH'14, a Young Global Leader and Women Who Empower Innovator from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was the master of ceremonies of the 2023 Global Leadership Summit in Accra, Ghana. "I want my service at Northeastern to be part of my legacy. I'm humbled by the work accomplished thus far, but I would love to see how we can continue supporting the Northeastern vision while abroad."



2023 ▶

At the Women Who Empower: Our World event in Dubai, Jessica Michault, deputy editor of *Harper's Bazaar* Arabia and *Harper's Bazaar* Saudi, and Muna Al Gurg, vice chairperson and retail director at Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group (one of the United Arab Emirates' largest family businesses), shared how they are paving the way for other women. When Al Gurg reflects on what kind of legacy she wants to leave, she is "very, very passionate about women's rights."





▲ 2023

Innovator Awards recipients pose at the 2023 Women Who Empower Summit at Northeastern's newly opened EXP building in Boston.



◀ 2023

The 2023 Women Who Empower Summit featured a panel discussion with impact investment experts, including CEO of the Boston Impact Initiative Betty Francisco, MBA'97, L'98, and a conversation with That Cheese Plate founder Marissa Mullen, AMD'15.



◀ 2024

The first Women Who Empower event in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was an unforgettable evening of connection and learning made possible by our partners at the Al Nahda Society. From left: Kariman Abuljadayel, AMD'17, M.Arch'18, Saudi Arabia's first female Olympic sprinter; Rayyanah Barnawi, an astronaut and Saudi Arabia's first woman in space; Senior Vice President for University Advancement Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray; and Nabilah Abuljadayel, AMD'16, a Saudi Arabian filmmaker.



◀ 2024

Northeastern University Young Global Leader Daisy Kendrick, SSH'16 (right), interviews Jacqueline Poh, managing director of the Singapore Economic Development Board, on International Women's Day. The conversation took place as part of Northeastern's Global Leadership Summit in Singapore.



▶ 2024

Women Who Empower: Our World hosted U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Jane Hartley (center) for an International Women's Day event in London. In a fireside chat, the ambassador spoke about her own diplomatic career, the future of global diplomacy, lessons in women's leadership, as well as the role of technology. "We have to make sure that we never forget how important democracy and freedom are, and that freedom is worth fighting for," she said. "When I look at the world, sure I see challenges, but I also see dynamism and the opportunity to do so many things."

5 YEARS OF WISE

Founded in 2018 by students Eliana Berger, DMSB'21, and Mia Nguyen, DMSB'21, this undergraduate student organization is dedicated to helping women and underrepresented genders across all Northeastern colleges develop an innovative mindset through interactive workshops, a thought incubator, mentorship pairings, and a venture catalyst.

Close to 800 students participate annually in eight program offerings and campus events in Boston, Oakland, and London. WISE has created more than 40 leadership positions per semester, empowering young women to thrive early in their careers, when demonstrated leadership experience is pivotal in obtaining co-ops or a first job.





WISE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

100+

ventures launched

150+

mentorship pairings

200+

events and programs

100+

speakers

Embarked on experiential education spring break treks to network with established entrepreneurs, industry leaders, venture capital firms, and other funders.

Built relationships with the Université Paris-Saclay and the University of Tokyo. Both institutions were inspired to launch similar programs and partner with WISE for international exchange opportunities.

Created a summer high school program that enrolled 50+ Boston-area students since 2022 to show female and non-binary students how they can create ventures and projects from their interests and hobbies.

◀ 2024

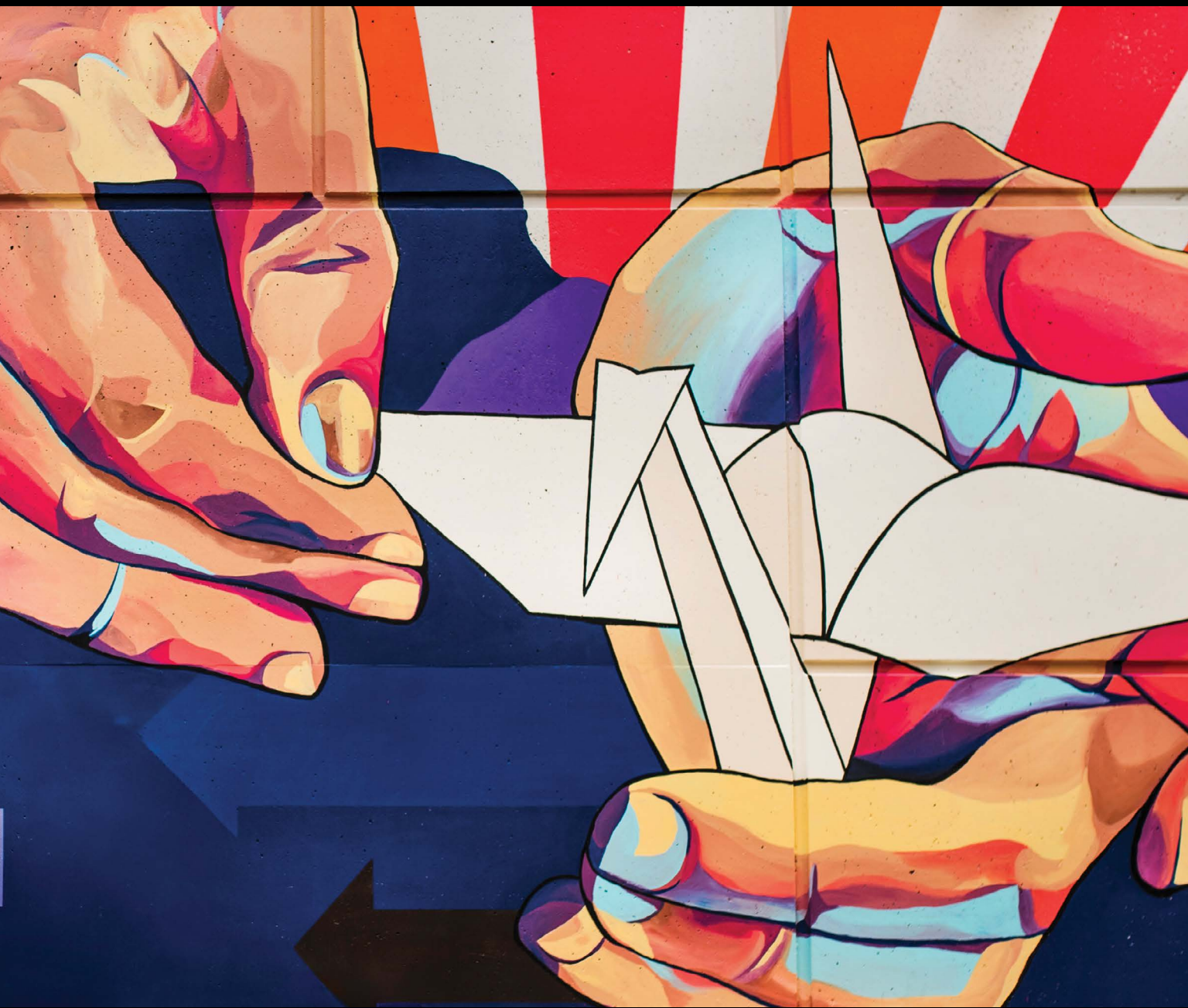
WISE celebrated its five-year anniversary with a Summit kickoff event held at Northeastern's newly opened EXP building in Boston.

Arts and Culture

IGNITING CREATIVITY

In our increasingly frenetic world, artists and creators need space to nourish their energy and passion. Here, members of our creative community weigh in on where they go to seek inspiration, the habits and routines that help them reset, and the creative experiences that shaped them as artists.

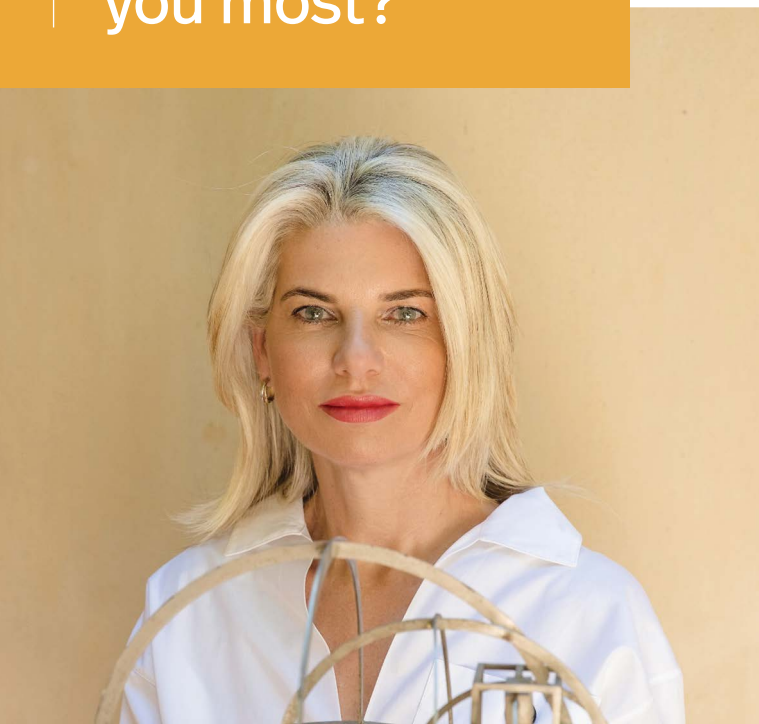




A closeup of the mural *999 Cranes* (2018) by Boston-based artist Silvia López Chavez, a commission by Northeastern University for its Boston campus.

ARTS AND CULTURE

What inspires you most?

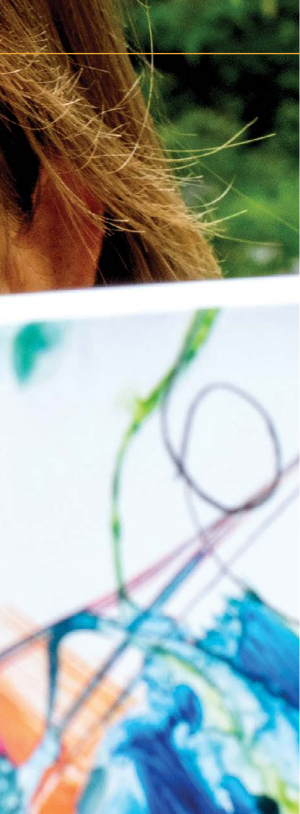


“Art reminds us of our relationships, our identity, who we are, what we represent, and where we want to be. It highlights our connections and serves as a tool for communication. We need art because it reminds us of beauty and helps us see things more clearly. I believe that art is like a voice. And as a voice, it is often more powerful than words. It can also tell us who we are. It underscores that we are human above all. My ‘aha’ moments often come through art.”

—Irene Panagopoulos

Mills College’85, PNT’15 | Northeastern University Trustee





“Running a magazine about contemporary art and culture, I’m lucky in that I get to work with artists and writers every single day. I’m constantly collaborating with individuals who push boundaries and tackle complex issues with craft and thoughtfulness. Art can help us see the world through a different lens—something we should all make a regular practice of doing!”

—Jameson Johnson

AMD’19 | founder, Boston Art Review;
Innovator



“My creative inspiration comes from fellow women entrepreneurs and through self-reflection. Being fully honest with myself and journaling about my raw emotions allows me to channel hardships and vulnerabilities into strengths and to produce creative expressions. Surrounding myself with women entrepreneurs and like-minded creatives inspires me to become a better version of myself and to keep doing what I am passionate about.”

—Cheuk Yan (Kat) Tse

AMD’24 | founder, Terms and Conditions magazine;
Innovator



Silvia López Chavez

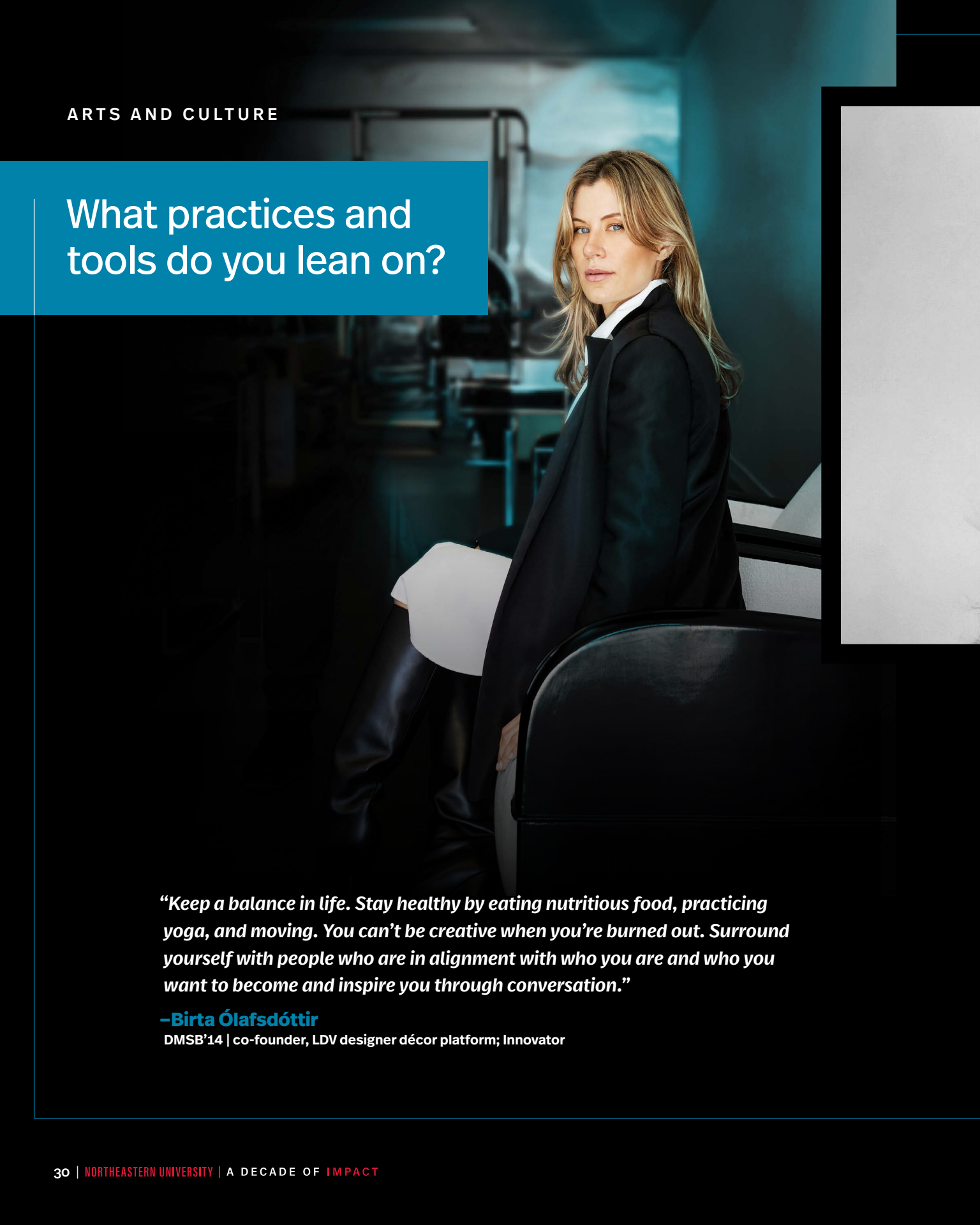
Boston-based visual artist; Women Who Empower speaker

A Boston-based visual artist, López Chavez believes in the power of the creative process as an agent for positive change. Born in the Dominican Republic, she draws inspiration from her Latin American roots, as well as from the role art plays in people’s need to connect with one another.

López Chavez’s work is featured across the Boston area, including murals along the Charles River Esplanade, at the Punto Urban Art Museum, the Boston Children’s Museum, and a mural on the façade of Ruggles Station at Northeastern. Through her public art, she strives to bring a sense of positivity, connection, and agency to the places her murals live and to spark joy for people in unexpected places.

“ I harness joy as a form of resistance and celebration in unconventional settings,” she says. “Through my murals, I strive to connect and uplift the communities where the art lives, conveying a hopeful message and emphasizing the importance of celebrating small victories, particularly in the midst of hardships.”

What practices and tools do you lean on?



“Keep a balance in life. Stay healthy by eating nutritious food, practicing yoga, and moving. You can’t be creative when you’re burned out. Surround yourself with people who are in alignment with who you are and who you want to become and inspire you through conversation.”

–Birta Ólafsdóttir

DMSB’14 | co-founder, LDV designer décor platform; Innovator



“For me, I’m driven by my passion for a story: Do I believe in it? What keeps me going is the conviction that it is worth telling. Giving up is not an option if you treat your art as a labor of love and one that you believe will have an impact.”

–Nina Fialkow

Emmy Award-winning producer, *The Great Hack*; Women Who Empower speaker

“I rely heavily on brainstorming, journaling, and free drawing to keep my creativity flowing. Pinboards and vision boards help me visually organize my ideas. I often dress up in outfits I’ve sewn or altered, which allows me to feel hands-on and connected to the process of creation.”

–Darrel Schreiner

MCS’22 | co-founder and co-CEO, Cake Denim sustainable fashion brand; Innovator



How do you overcome creative blocks and reset?



“I reconnect with nature to reset my mind and creativity. Spending time outdoors, sitting beneath a tree, or taking a quiet hike where I can experience total silence helps clear the mental clutter of daily life. When a long trail isn’t possible, a simple daily walk helps me slow down, refocus, and approach my work with renewed energy.”

–Dominique Schreiner

MCS’22 | co-founder and co-CEO,
Cake Denim sustainable fashion brand; Innovator



“When I encounter creative blocks, I take a step back to reset. Whether through travel, reading, or immersing myself in art, I believe in gaining fresh perspectives. I also make time for mindful practices, like journaling or long walks, to declutter my thoughts. Surrounding myself with my creative community is also key, as sharing ideas often sparks new inspiration. Staying curious and open-minded keeps my creativity flowing.”

–Temidola Ikomi

DMSB’17 | founder, Irawo Studio womenswear business; Innovator



Maya Samawi

Partner, Ayyam Gallery; Women Who Empower leader

As a partner at Ayyam Gallery, a family-founded and female-led arts organization dedicated to empowering both established and emerging MENA (Middle East and North Africa) artists, Maya Samawi is driven by a passion for breaking down barriers and sharing artists’ stories.

“It is a pleasure to support art incubators and give back at the beginning of the creative cycle through education,” she says. “To be the platform that showcases existing voices along with the upcoming agents of the art world is heartwarming and representative of the arts more broadly, which bridge the avant-garde and classical every day.”

Ayyam Gallery’s impact is evident in its widely respected multilingual publishing division and custodianship program that manages the estates of pioneering artists. These efforts have been instrumental in documenting often-overlooked aspects of global art history.

Describe a piece of art or creative project that has moved and shaped you?

“I was lucky to attend a few of [American fashion designer] Virgil Abloh’s shows for Off-White and Louis Vuitton. He simply said, ‘You can do it, too.’ Having a front row seat to his process and watching the work that goes into building a fashion show was unimaginable. He fundamentally changed my perception of how you build a brand. I move differently because of him, and I’ll be eternally grateful for that.”

–Johanna Davenport Calic

S’12 | founder, La Porte luxury resort wear brand; Innovator



“During the pandemic, I designed the brand for Destiny African Market [in Randolph, Massachusetts]. This project not only involved digital design but also the store’s interior design for brand consistency. That experience deeply moved me and it allowed me to blend creativity and practical application, shaping me into a more versatile and impactful designer.”

–Adebukola Ajao

CPS’21 | founder, For All Things Digital marketing resource platform; Innovator

“One of the most profound experiences was during one of my first visits to Tuscany, where I watched a master shoemaker work with incredible precision and passion. Seeing his dedication to perfecting every detail reminded me that craftsmanship is both an art and a legacy. This experience shaped my approach to M.Gemi, where we are committed to combining traditional craftsmanship with innovative design.”

—Cheryl Kaplan

CEO, M.Gemi; Women Who Empower
Innovator Awards founding judge

“ My involvement with Women Who Empower has been a constant reminder that when we invest in the craft of building up people—whether it’s artisans, team members, or fellow leaders—we create something lasting and powerful. That experience continues to influence how I empower others through my work.”

Books

WRITING A BETTER FUTURE

Books open doors to new perspectives and offer a glimpse into the unique world of the author. The works featured here highlight the voices of a range of Women Who Empower speakers and supporters—from scientists and chefs to entrepreneurs, artists, and historians—who are helping to shape the future through their work and their words.

PURPOSE: How to Live and Lead with Impact

Miracle Olatunji, DMSB '22

How do you begin to define, live, and lead a purpose-driven life? A mix of inspirational insights and actionable advice, entrepreneur Miracle Olatunji's book is an indispensable guide for anyone seeking to make an impact on their communities, organizations, and the world. Olatunji takes readers on a journey through her miraculous life story, while sharing the lessons she learned about meaning, purpose, and tapping into one's unlimited potential.

THORNS, LUST, AND GLORY: The Betrayal of Anne Boleyn

Estelle Paranque

An expert on queenship, royalty, and diplomatic studies during the 16th and 17th centuries, Estelle Paranque's research has expanded to a broader theme of women and power in the early modern period. In *Thorns, Lust, and Glory*, she shares an intriguing new perspective on Queen Anne Boleyn, tracing the origins of her grim fate and revealing the lessons that would set her on the path to becoming one of England's most infamous queens. She

also wrote *Blood, Fire & Gold: The Story of Elizabeth I & Catherine de Medici*.

FINDING FREEDOM: A Cook's Story, Remaking a Life from Scratch

Erin French

Chef Erin French's critically acclaimed *Lost Kitchen* restaurant turned a tiny Maine town into a world-class dining destination. In her bestselling memoir, French recounts the losses and challenges she overcame on the way to finding her calling as a professional chef while sharing how she rebounded from early setbacks to rebuild her personal and culinary life. *Finding Freedom* is a life-affirming story of hope, survival, and community, and harnessing food to bring goodness to the world.

FLAWLESS: Lessons in Looks and Culture from the K-Beauty Capital

Elise Hu

While serving as NPR's first bureau chief in Seoul, South Korea, journalist and podcaster Elise Hu had an up-close look into the global rise of K-beauty culture. By taking a magnifying glass to the country's

seemingly intense appearance expectations, her book explores how technological advancements have increased the pressure to optimize our appearance in the pursuit of an idealized, artificial standard of beauty.

WOKE LEADERSHIP: Profits, Prophets & Purpose

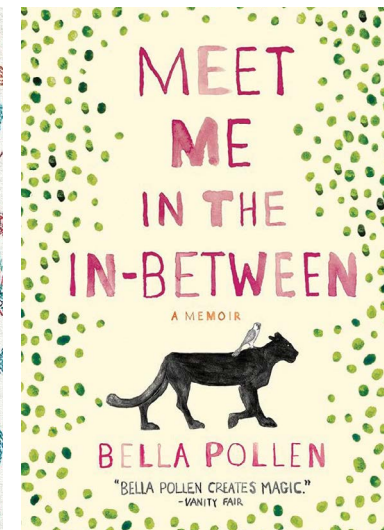
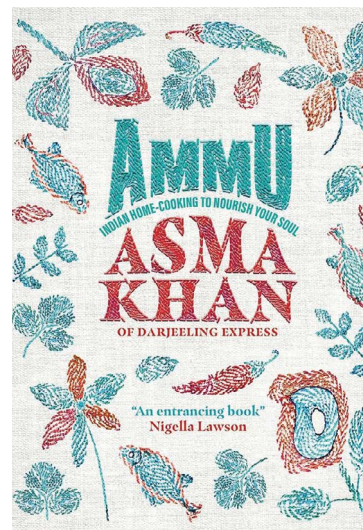
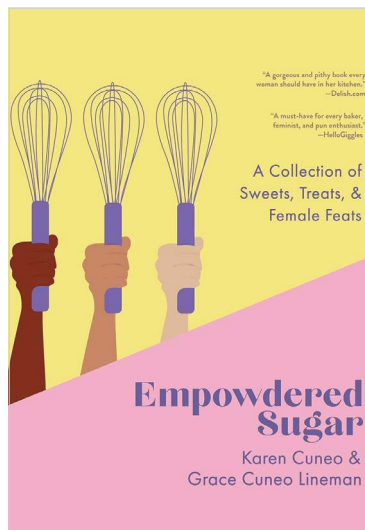
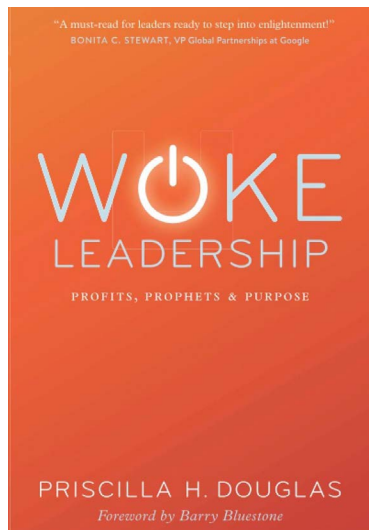
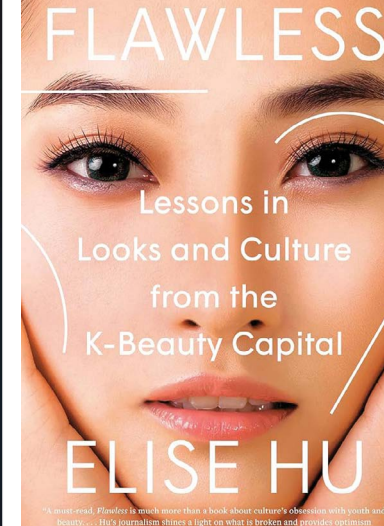
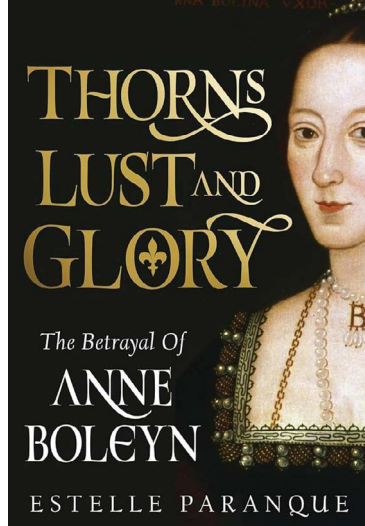
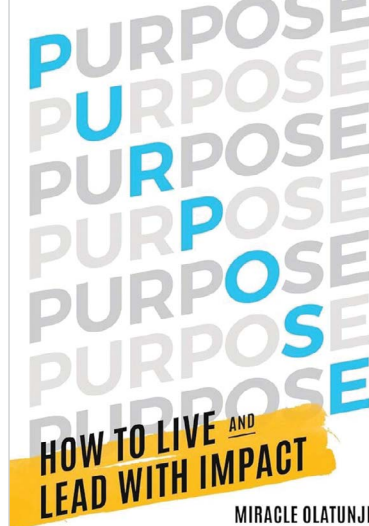
Priscilla H. Douglas, CPS'70, MEd'74

Drawing from more than 30 years of experience as a C-suite coach and consultant, Northeastern Corporator Emerita Priscilla Douglas offers a guide to the most inspiring and effective forms of leadership in her book. Douglas depicts the experiences that create leaders who are purposeful, compassionate stewards of equity and sentinels of change, and profiles contemporary "woke" leaders she has admired and witnessed in action.

EMPOWDERED SUGAR

Karen Cuneo and Grace Cuneo Lineman, DMSB'13

Grounded in the spirit of female empowerment, *Empowered Sugar* pays tribute to strong, influential women of different cultures, religions, and races, by weaving their names with familiar dessert and baked good recipes.



Authors and sisters Karen Cuneo and Grace Cuneo Lineman pair more than 80 recipes with information about notable women, from Jane Goodall Monkey Bread and Eleanor Rooseveltvet Cake, to Missy Elliot Shoopa Dupa Fly Pie. Through these creations, they honor stories of women's sweet success to spark inspiration both in and outside of the kitchen.

AMMU: Indian Home Cooking to Nourish Your Soul

Asma Khan

Asma Khan, owner of Darjeeling Express, created this collection of recipes from her Indian family kitchen

as a celebration of the inextricable link between food and love. As an award-winning restaurateur, bestselling cookbook author, and fierce advocate for women in professional kitchens, Khan honors her ammu—mother—with this collection of recipes from her childhood, while speaking to the power of food to connect and unite us beyond differing appearances, accents, races, and backgrounds.

MEET ME IN THE IN-BETWEEN Bella Pollen, PNT'21

As a journalist, fashion designer, and the bestselling author of novels *Hunting Unicorns* and *Summer of the Bear*, Bella Pollen penned this deeply

honest memoir in which she grapples with relationships, motherhood, and career ups and downs. "Equality aside, what we fight for, what we march for, is the right to fulfill those many different sides of ourselves at a time of our choosing," she shared at a 2018 Women Who Empower event in London. Pollen went on to define what empowerment meant to her as "Being brave enough to create our own story and finding the confidence to cast ourselves as the hero of our own narrative." ♦

Food and Beverage

THE TASTE MAKERS

With an appetite for innovation, these members of our community are pioneering bold flavors and shaking up the food and beverage industry—one delicious idea at a time.

1 Ammy Lowney

SSH'05 | Juicy Greens

For Ammy Lowney, healthy food is more than just fuel—it's an opportunity to support and educate communities, promote sustainable living, and foster equity in the hospitality industry. With locations across Boston, her café Juicy Greens offers a plant-based menu featuring cold-pressed juices, smoothies, bowls, and baked goods. The café also actively supports local youth organizations through wellness programs and provides job opportunities for young people.

made of garbanzo beans, so that people with allergies—who often feel forgotten by the food industry—can find the foods they love and trust what they're eating.

3 Kristen Kish

Top Chef Host and Judge

Kristen Kish is well versed in the unpredictable, serendipitous nature of both cooking and life. The Boston-based chef and winner of Bravo's 10th season of *Top Chef* is now on the other side of the judge's table as a host of the popular reality cooking show. Kish's connection to Northeastern began in 2015, when she showcased her talents during a live cooking demonstration in the university's Xhibition Kitchen. She went on to become a featured speaker at the 2016 Women Who Empower Summit, where she urged attendees to pursue their passions, even in the face of uncertainty.

2 Amy Andes

S'17 | Banzo Brands

Food scientist Amy Andes founded Banzo Brands with a goal of spreading awareness about food allergies, intolerances, and sensitivities. The company produces inclusive versions of classic staple spreads, like a no-nut butter

4 Marissa Mullen

AMD'15 | That Cheese Plate

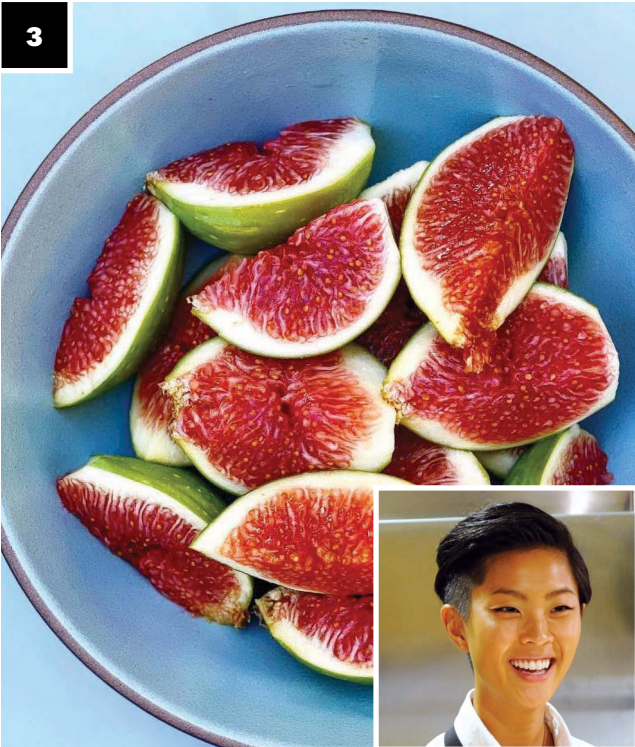
Marissa Mullen sparked the cheese board trend with her wildly popular social media account, That Cheese Plate. Who could resist her super simple Cheese By Numbers method—a step-by-step approach to creative cheese plate styling? As a bestselling

author, entrepreneur, and visual storyteller, Mullen has transformed the act of assembling a sharable snack into a form of self-care, inspiring hundreds of thousands of followers to create meaningful connections through intentional gatherings.





2



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4

FOOD AND BEVERAGE



5 Deborah Keane

BHS'86 | California Caviar Company

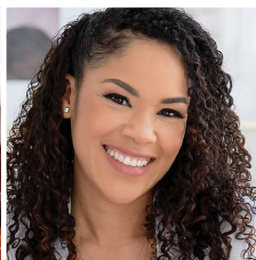
Deborah Keane launched the California Caviar Company in 2007 as the first sustainable caviar company in the U.S. Her commitment to environmentally responsible operations and no-kill farmed caviar enhances both the quality and the accessibility of the product—a big deal in an industry threatened by illegal poaching of wild sturgeon and other unethical sourcing practices.



6 Rachel Domb

S'24 | Rooted Living

When Rachel Domb was a high school athlete, she struggled to find alternatives to the refined-ingredient, sugar-filled snack options sold in stores. So she began making her own. During her freshman year, Domb launched Rooted Living, a sustainable, plant-based line of granolas. The company uses compostable packaging and snacks free of refined ingredients, allowing consumers to snack and support their values.



7 Jessica Pogranyi

DMSB'15 | Cara a Cara

Jessica Pogranyi and her husband met the Morales Garcia family by chance during a stop at their roadside café in Mexico. After sampling the family's homemade mezcal, the couple was so wowed that they decided to partner as co-founders of the small-batch mezcal brand Cara a Cara. The company is committed to environmentally and socially responsible practices, using distilled rainwater in its production process and raising awareness about renewable solutions to Mexico's widespread water shortage.

8 Massiel Eversley

BSN'06 | Nisus Life

As a mother, nurse leader, and health advocate, Massiel Eversley is committed to making nutrition simple and attainable for women at every stage of pregnancy. Her product, Nisus Life Postpartum & Lactation, is a vegan all-in-one postpartum and lactation protein powder that fills a gap in the maternal health product category. Through Nisus, Eversley not only encourages awareness about the need to stay healthy postpartum, but also breaks down barriers between nutrition and medicine.



9 Kate Weiler

MS'13 | Drink Simple

Entrepreneur Kate Weiler was first introduced to ultra-hydrating, electrolyte-filled maple water during an Ironman triathlon. After receiving her master's degree in nutrition from Northeastern, she went on to harness the overlooked thirst-quenching power of trees with her beverage company, Drink Simple. The refreshing and nutritious drink comes in both flat and sparkling varieties and is packed with naturally occurring plant-powered electrolytes and prebiotics, with no added sugars.

10 Hannah Kim

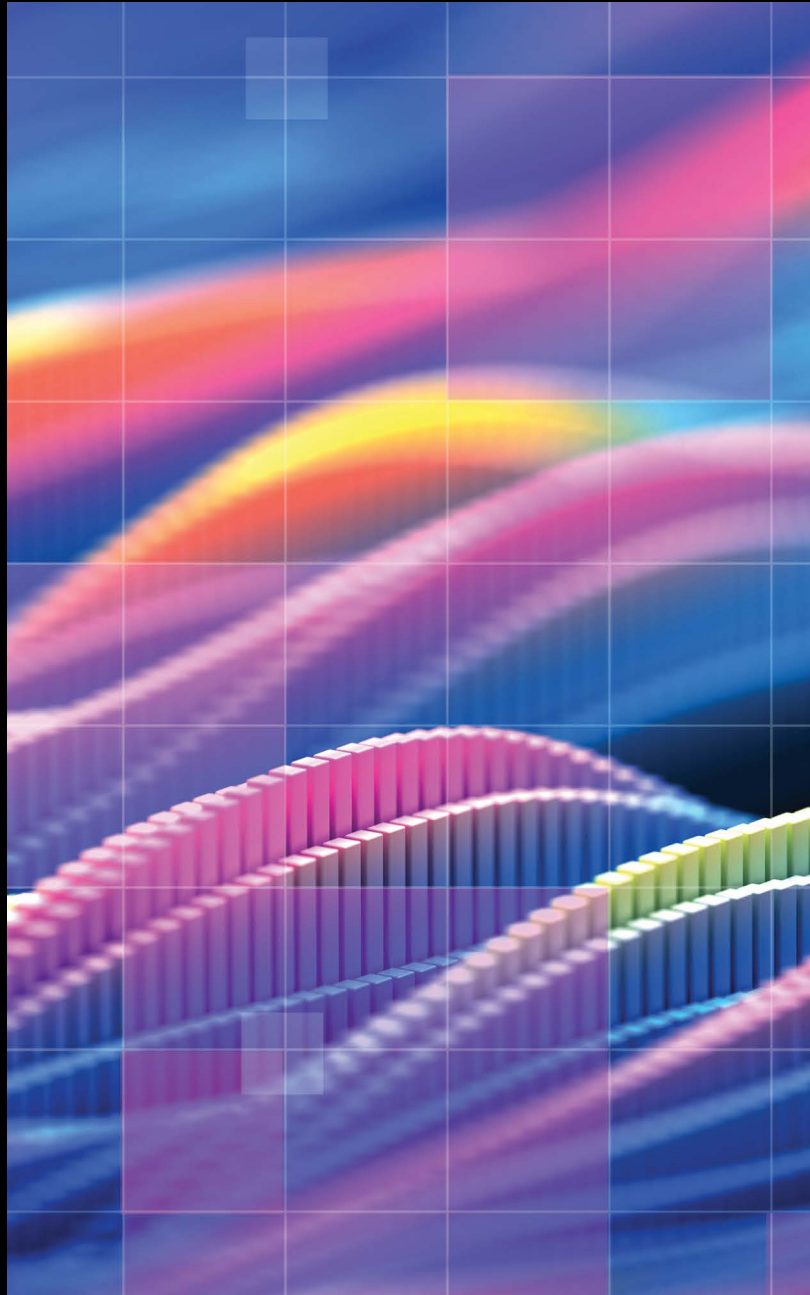
BHS'28 | Bok Bok

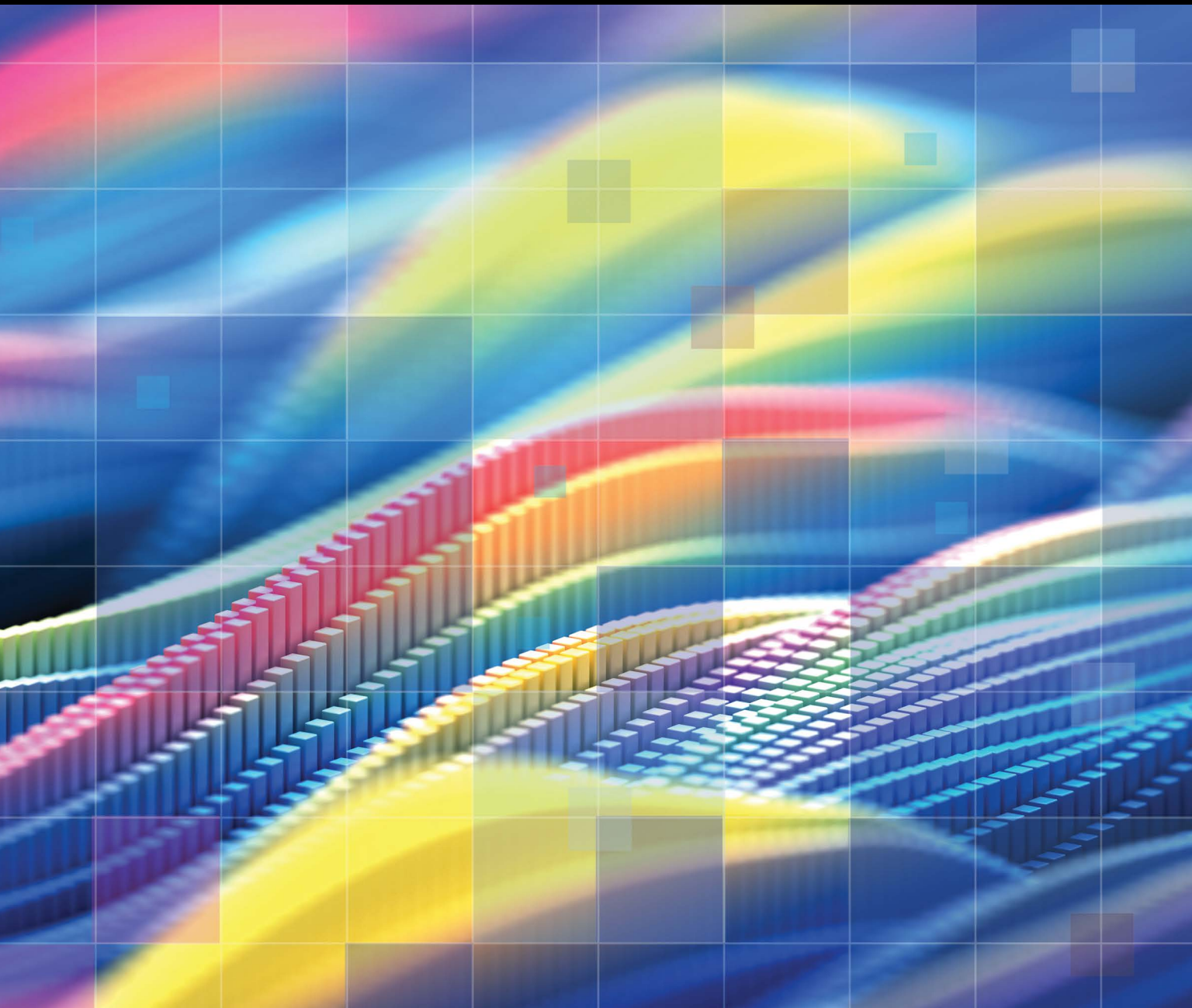
Vinegar can do a lot more than complement a salad—people have been using it for thousands of years for its health properties. It's precisely those benefits that Hannah Kim seeks out in the vinegar she sells through her company, Bok Bok. The naturally fermented K-balsamic vinegar comes in four forms, from the typical bottled liquid to dehydrated powder and block versions. All deliver health advantages like a boost of polyphenols and vitamin C that support the body's homeostasis. ♦

Technology and AI

POWERING TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

Artificial intelligence is changing the way we learn, work, create, and solve problems. Meet the people who are not only driving this powerful and rapidly evolving technology forward but also ensuring it serves the greater good.





TECHNOLOGY AND AI



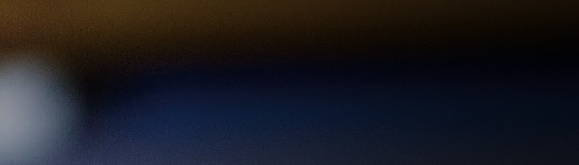
Alexis Musaelyan-Blackmon

S'25, Khoury'25 | founder, Dephend and Exploro; Innovator

Recruiting enough participants for a research study is a critical step. So Alexis Musaelyan-Blackmon is developing Exploro—an online platform that will help academic researchers find not just enough, but also the right, participants for their studies. Exploro follows her first venture, Dephend, an AI cybersecurity company and software program that detects and defends against cyberattacks in real time.

“

I saw a social issue it could solve, and I wanted to emphasize in my venture how to uplift other women in tech and cybersecurity.”



Calypso Newman

NCH'21 | founder, Rock Badger; Innovator

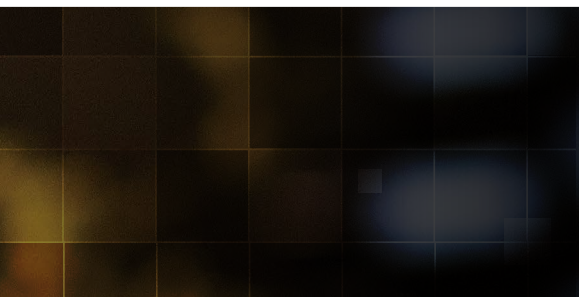
Calypso Newman is on a mission: to unite technology and creativity to empower global, social, and commercial change. Working under the belief that “innovation starts with art,” she founded Rock Badger in 2022. Her consultancy helps clients harness the immersive power of digital technology and art to tell their stories, visualize their impact, and take on issues like climate change.



Mariana Charakopoulou Travlou

S'19 | founder, Nous Health; Innovator

As the founder of Nous Health, Mariana Charakopoulou Travlou (pictured left with Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray) is building a digital platform that enables patients to connect with mental health professionals. It's not what she originally planned—it's even better. “If I can help even just one percent of people realize that our mental health is actually the most important part of ourselves, then I'm happy,” Charakopoulou Travlou says. “As someone who studied it, I knew that mental health is very important. If your mental health is not well, and if you're not taking care of yourself mentally, then your body will also not take care of you.”





Rupal Patel

Professor of communication sciences and disorders; founder, VocaliD; Women Who Empower speaker

Rupal Patel thinks having a unique voice is a basic right. Her venture, VocaliD, creates personalized text-to-speech voices to help people with speech disabilities maintain identity and social connection. To complement her company and help attain more individual voices, she also launched The Human Voicebank Initiative to crowdsource the creation of personalized synthetic voices.



Lisa Feldman Barrett

University Distinguished Professor of psychology; Women Who Empower speaker

Co-leader of Northeastern's Interdisciplinary Affective Science Laboratory, Lisa Feldman Barrett studies emotions—what they are and how they work. Under her guidance, the lab uses computer modeling of brain and body mechanisms to develop a framework that connects human emotion, affect, motivations, cognition, and action. In recognition of her tech-forward, innovative approach, Barrett was recently honored with the Association for Psychological Science William James Fellow Award.





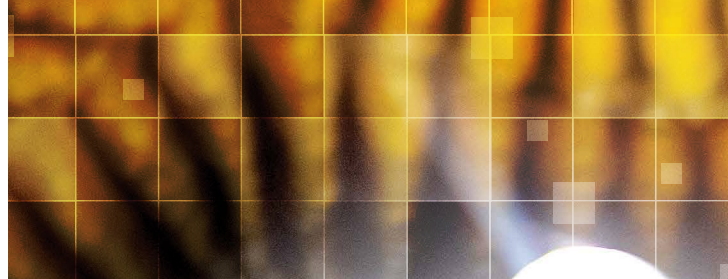
Tina Eliassi-Rad

Joseph E. Aoun Professor; Women Who Empower speaker

Northeastern's inaugural Joseph E. Aoun Professor wants people to think deeply and carefully about the use of algorithms. Tina Eliassi-Rad's research uncovers the unseen but overwhelming influence that they have on people's lives to mitigate risks. As the recent recipient of the Lagrange CRT Foundation Prize, the highest international recognition for scientists in the field of complex systems and data, Eliassi-Rad is leading the way.

“

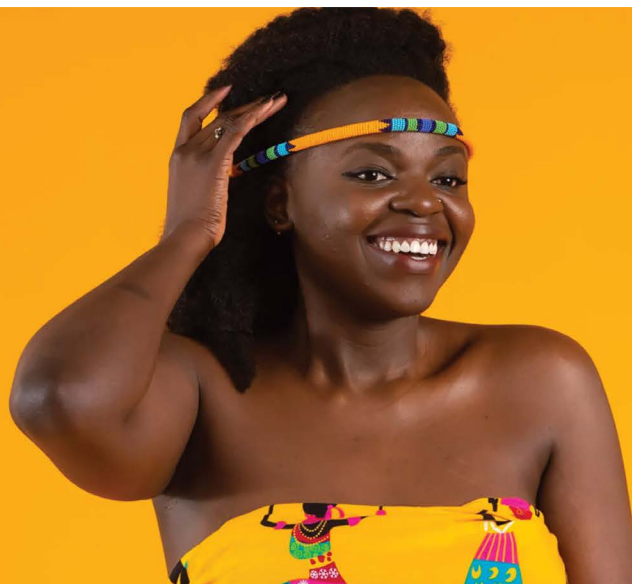
The public needs to know how AI works because the population that's more informed can decide what kind of society they want to live in.”



Becky Mashàido

Khoury'22 | founder, KiAsili Naturals; Innovator

"I'm driven by the impact I want to make," says Becky Mashàido. And that impact centers on creating an inclusive beauty industry for people of color—a group historically overlooked by the industry. Her venture, KiAsili Naturals, uses her own technology tool, which combines computer vision and deep learning algorithms to make selecting hair and skin care products utterly personalized.



Rachel Cossar

Roux Institute | founder, Virtual Sapiens; Innovator

Fascinated by how people communicate nonverbally in professional environments, former ballet dancer Rachel Cossar launched a new service to translate body language for the virtual workplace. Virtual Sapiens helps people achieve a stronger online presence through body language. Her approach includes personal coaching as well as AI solutions that empower teams to uplevel their poise and assuredness.





Samantha Johnson

S'20, MS'21 | founder, TATUM Robotics; Innovator

After taking a sign language class while studying at Northeastern, Samantha Johnson developed a robotic arm to produce tactile sign language to enable more independence for people who are both deaf and blind. Fluent in American Sign Language, the robot spells out communications to deaf-blind people who might not have a human translator available, helping them read emails, text messages, social media, and books.

Lessons in Leadership

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION



Be true to yourself. Don't say one thing, but really mean or do another. Tell your truth."



Julietta Dexter, PNT'20, brings a wealth of experience to her roles as a founding Innovator Awards judge and a board member of Northeastern University London. As the founder and former CEO of The Communications Store—one of the world's top strategic brand-building and communications firms—and co-founder of ScienceMagic, Dexter has helped shape some of the most iconic brands in fashion, beauty, and lifestyle including Versace, Canada Goose, Charlotte Tilbury, and Max Mara. Today, she is chair of Smart Works, a charity with a mission to get more women back into the workforce.

In this interview, which was edited for length and clarity, Dexter shares her insights on authentic leadership, the power of purpose-driven decision-making, and her vision for empowering the next generation of women leaders.

Tell us about a leader who inspired you early in your career, or one who inspires you today.

When I was growing up, I did not really have women business leaders to look up to. But when I started work, I was extremely lucky to find women who wanted to help me grow. Lizzie Kershaw [publishing director of National Magazines/Hearst] just wanted to see a young person succeed. And Jo Fairley [founder of Green & Black's chocolate] and Kathy Phillips [health and beauty editor at *Vogue*] have been real mentors, encouragers, and examples to me.

You studied in the U.K., Italy, and Switzerland. How has your global perspective influenced your leadership style?

My background of not coming from only one country has helped me enjoy all sorts of people I meet. This is a complex and massive subject, but I hope I am becoming more aware of my unconscious bias. I try to work hard at that. We have a long way to go, but I hope that I am open enough to understand today's realities and do what I can for a better future for all.

Have you ever had to make an unpopular decision as a leader? What was your takeaway?

Leadership involves making tough decisions. My learning is that when you think you have to make a tough decision, most often the sooner you do it, the better. I have made the mistake in the past of holding on for too long, which has often made things worse, both for the person and for the organization. If you think you need to face something, face it and don't procrastinate.

What is one way a new leader can authentically build trust within their team or company?

Be true to yourself. Don't say one thing, but really mean or do another. Tell your truth. Show your vulnerability. Don't try to pretend to have all the answers. Communicate more regularly than you think you need to. And repeat the same messages time and time again to ensure that everyone knows what the North Star is and how you are all getting there together.

What steps can leaders take to ensure that their organization—large or small—powers real impact in their communities?

First, don't apologize for being business-focused. Second, make sure you are looking after your direct community and team members. Third, find the thing that really matters. Think very carefully about creating impact in the long-term. No five-minute wonders, but more a long, sustainable, maybe modest-to-start-with, investment in the future of all those around you. ♦

FOSTERING LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

Women Who Empower crafts opportunities and environments for lifelong learning through educational programming, experiences, and networks.

300+

mentorship pairings with participants from 16 countries

100

student and alumnae WWE leaders from more than 10 countries, specializing in industries from engineering to entrepreneurship to entertainment

10+

master classes in innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurship

Wellness and Beauty

BEAUTIFUL DISRUPTION

From transforming the future of skincare with molecules inspired by sea creatures to developing nontoxic makeup that promotes hormonal health, these 10 trailblazers bring a multidisciplinary approach to evolving the standards of wellness and beauty—one that emphasizes ease and the planet.

1 Michelle Calderon

MBA'21 | Addition Beauty founder

Michelle Calderon combined her chemistry background and business degree from Northeastern to launch Addition Beauty in 2021 as the first makeup line that supports fertility and pregnancy. Her sustainability-focused, cruelty-free lipsticks have zero synthetic colorants or endocrine-disrupting chemicals, both linked to reduced fertility rates and negative birth outcomes. Now anyone—especially those who are pregnant, trying to become pregnant, or postpartum—can confidently wear safe, yet stunning, makeup.

complexity. The minimalist skincare brand takes a less-is-more approach by focusing on quality ingredients and effective formulas to treat all skin types. Inspired by Melwani's travels around the globe, products include a rose cream cleanser, milky toner, and a moisturizer made with bananas and turmeric—all stocked by major retailers, including Sephora UK.

2 Chahhat Lakhwani Melwani

DMSB'18 | Cleyo Beauty founder

Overwhelmed by the growing number of steps involved in many skincare routines, Chahhat Lakhwani Melwani launched Cleyo Beauty as a way to cut through the

3 Alli Webb

Drybar co-founder; Women Who Empower speaker

From self-described “underachiever” to co-founder of the blowout salon empire Drybar, Alli Webb knows that the path to career success is not always neat and tidy. Her memoir, *The Messy Truth: How I Sold My Business for Millions but Almost Lost Myself*, reveals the personal struggles that existed behind Webb's extraordinary professional rise.

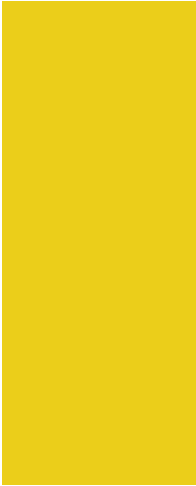
4 Wendy Farnen Price

BHS'94, MS'00, DPT'14 | Healthcare founder

Years of working as a physical therapist in an outpatient care setting taught triple Husky Wendy Farnen Price the important role that lifestyle and behavioral changes play in healing and recovery. A belief in treating the whole

person led Price to found Healthcare, a health and wellbeing practice that supports clients through individualized coaching, physical therapy, and lifestyle medicine services. These offerings are complemented by support groups that foster connections and encourage a community of care.





WELLNESS AND BEAUTY



“

Skincare is a unique space where you can create social change through science.”

—AJ Addae

5 Thai-Anh Hoang

DMSB'06 | EmBeba founder

Thai-Anh Hoang was visiting family when her toddler developed a stubborn diaper rash. After trying over-the-counter creams with no results, Hoang used a homemade, all-natural balm that worked like a charm and inspired EmBeba, her line of family-focused skincare. The company develops natural and effective solutions for a range of skin sensitivities, and everything from the ingredients and branding to the reusable packaging is designed with children and families in mind.



6 AJ Addae

S'20 | SULA Labs founder

"Skincare is a unique space where you can create social change through science," says AJ Addae. This chemist, researcher, and entrepreneur launched SULA Labs, a B2B company that creates and tests skincare products for Black-owned beauty brands and melanin-rich consumers. And she's seeing success in the marketplace; products formulated at SULA Labs can be found at beauty-product giants like Sephora, Ulta, and Target.

7 Ashley Cummings

DMSB'08, AP'09 | Natural Ash founder

As a nurse, Ashley Cummings noticed her oncology patients often had dry skin during treatment. From this observation, Natural Ash was born—a line of body butters handmade with ingredients that won't irritate sensitive skin. With a bachelor's and master's in accounting and finance from Northeastern, Cummings blends her financial acumen and healthcare expertise to craft affordable, environmentally conscious products with no synthetic ingredients or chemicals.



8 Camille Martin PhD'19, Leila Deravi

associate professor of chemistry at Northeastern, Seaspire co-founders

When Camille Martin, who earned a doctorate in chemistry from Northeastern, and Associate Professor Leila Deravi co-founded Seaspire, their goal was to create a skincare product that is good for your skin and the environment. The team spent years researching the natural pigments in marine life, leading to the development of a synthesized version of a molecule found in squid and octopus. The ingredient boosts levels of sunscreen protection and is less harmful to the environment than traditional sunscreen. Now, Seaspire's goal is to make the ingredient more available to manufacturers, so it can be incorporated into a wider range of skincare items.

9 Yewande Masi

SSH'09 | Ornami founder

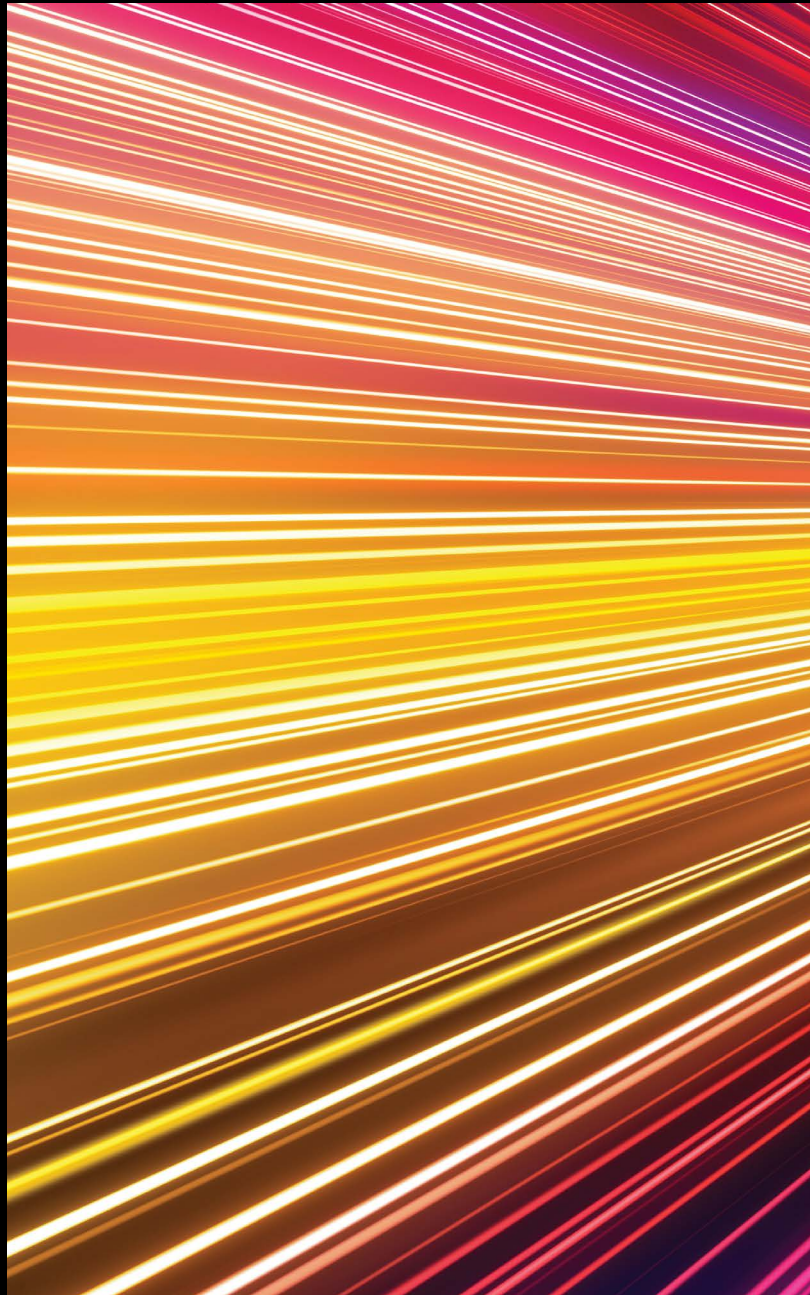
Yewande Masi founded her skincare company Ornami with a focus on making women feel confident through sustainable and toxin-free living. Made with clean ingredients and low-impact packaging, Ornami's body butters, deodorants, and sugar scrubs are designed to do more with less. In 2020, Beyoncé selected Masi's company for a \$10,000 grant as part of her BeyGOOD initiative, focused on helping small Black-owned businesses during the pandemic. ♦



Looking Ahead

10 YEARS FROM NOW

Our world is being shaped by rapid economic and technological advancements and an increasing urgency to solve complex problems. Here, members of our community imagine a better future for the next generation, share advice, and offer a hopeful look into the world 10 years from now.





10 YEARS FROM NOW

“My hope for future generations is that they may be brave enough to dream, and passionate enough to put in the time and dedication that it takes to bring those dreams to life. We’re all going to have bad days, but it’s on those days that our true character shines through. You may want to throw in the towel, but as my mom once told me while I was in pursuit of my own dreams, ‘Never quit on a bad day.’”

—Nastia Liukin

American gymnast, Olympic
gold medalist, entrepreneur;
Women Who Empower speaker





“As we push forward with innovation, true advancement is only possible when we uplift the most vulnerable populations. The idea of ‘self-care’ will fade in importance as compassion and mutual care become ingrained in our social fabric, creating a society where caring for one another is a natural part of everyday life.”

–Christie Chung

Executive director of the Mills Institute at Northeastern University; Women Who Empower speaker

“Humans were built for connection. We all possess a range of skills and talents that are complementary to each other. Finding real connection with others makes things so much more fun and leads to more success in business and in life. It makes us realize how our unique skills are valuable and necessary. And it can actually make it easier to find our own path. We all benefit by taking the time to make those real connections, ask more questions, and truly listen to the answers.”

–Tara Sherman

Entrepreneur and nonprofit board member;
Women’s Entrepreneurship Initiative investor



10 YEARS FROM NOW

“In the next decade, I envision a world where women feel empowered to innovate fearlessly with equitable access to funding, networks, and resources, and where women entrepreneurs can imagine their success and view failure as a stepping stone toward their dreams.”

–Betsy Ludwig

Executive director of Women’s Entrepreneurship



“My deepest hope for the future lies in opening pathways to education for all students. By providing the gift of education, we empower young minds to dream beyond limitations, transform their communities, and shape a brighter, more equitable and peaceful world.”

–Maha Shair

Northeastern University Trustee;
Women Who Empower Community host





“I am blown away by the Women Who Empower community members and the quality of their outstanding ideas. They are committed to solving complex global problems, and I am consistently impressed not only by their vision, but by their actions. My sincere hope for the future is that these remarkable leaders are heard and championed, so their ideas reach an even wider audience.”

–Winslow Sargeant

E'86 | CEO, Purple Team Technologies; immediate past chair, The International Council for Small Business; senior advisor, Genaesis, LLC; Northeastern University Trustee; Women Who Empower Innovator Awards judge



“To address complex and difficult problems, one must be thoughtful, rigorous, imaginative, courageous, and tenacious. Don't look at the challenges; look at the opportunities.”

–Nonnie Burnes

L'78, H'07 | late Northeastern University Trustee Emerita, Women Who Empower speaker

10 YEARS FROM NOW

“In the coming decades, we will see more women as world leaders. They will be in cabinet rooms and negotiation rooms and the Oval Office. There is unique power in female leadership: our ability to master opposing forces. We’re tough yet nurturing. Creative yet analytical. Pragmatic yet joyful. We can build teams, but we can also put on our game face when it’s needed.”

–Sheila Marcelo

CEO and co-founder of Ohai.ai; co-founder and former CEO of Care.com; Women Who Empower speaker



“Have courage. Courage to fail and to know you’ll learn from the failure, and not be measured by how you fail but by how you pick yourself up and move forward and re-engage with the world.”

–Vanessa Kerry

Physician, public health expert and advocate; founder, Seed Global Health; Women Who Empower speaker




“I think it’s important to transmit to younger generations of women that being multifaceted in life is so important. What you start your career in is rarely a forever choice. As we evolve and the world around us changes at a rapid pace, we have an opportunity to take new paths and while that can be daunting, being bold and reinventing ourselves makes life ever more interesting.”

–Daisy Kendrick

SSH’16 | Young Global Leader, Women Who Empower speaker (near right, with Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray)



A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a black graduation cap and a red and green academic robe, is speaking at a podium. She is gesturing with her hands. The background is dark and out of focus.

“As I reflect on my own life trajectory, my advice to the next generation of leaders is to plan on your plans changing. It’s good to think ahead, but don’t let an idea of what should happen shut down your openness to explore what could. Whatever future you have planned for yourself, be confident and have the courage to walk toward new opportunities and take on things you have never done or even considered. You have what it takes to take on the unknown.”

—Deborah Dunsire

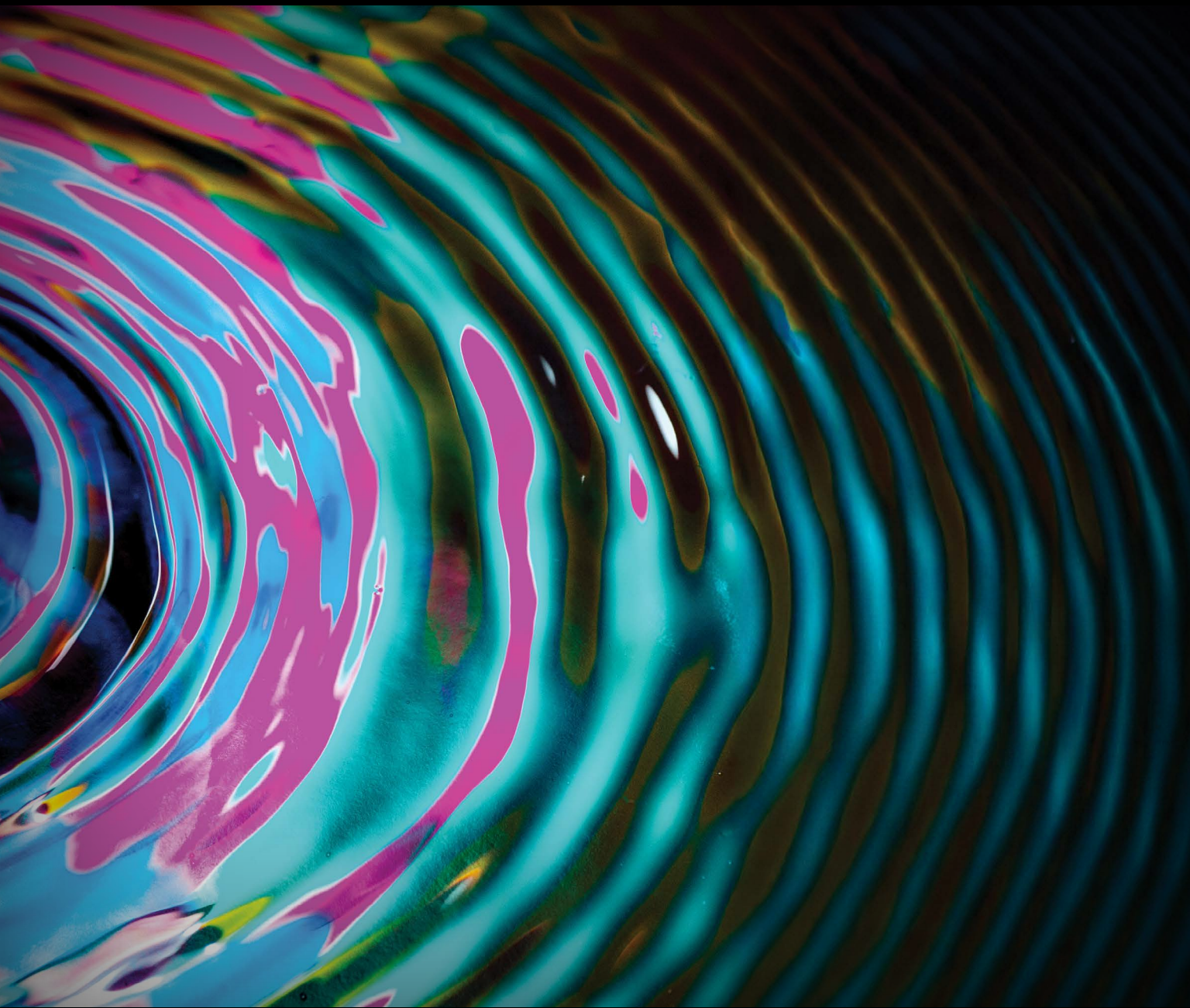
Former CEO, Lundbeck; Northeastern University
Trustee; Women Who Empower speaker

Fueling the Future

INVESTING IN IMPACT

Northeastern University is mission-driven, and our mission is to impact individuals and communities locally, nationally, and globally. That is our intergenerational social compact. All members of the Women Who Empower community exemplify this spirit. Highlighted here are a few exceptional investors in Women Who Empower and its people. Through their leadership, philanthropy, mentorship, and counsel, these supporters and advocates are empowering the next generation.







Henry Nasella (center-left) joined President Joseph E. Aoun and Women Who Empower community members for a celebration of entrepreneurship on Northeastern Founders Day, October 3, 2023.

ARCHITECT OF CHANGE

The late Northeastern Board of Trustees Chair Emeritus Henry Nasella, UC'77, H'o8, was a lifelong advocate for women—and he led by example by becoming an early and essential supporter of the Women Who Empower initiative. As the program's lead donor, Nasella, together with his wife, Michele, and their family, made it possible for Women Who Empower to build a global, women-led ecosystem with a robust slate of events,

mentorship, and entrepreneurial initiatives.

"Henry was absolutely the driving force, the foundation, the counsel, and the wisdom behind Women Who Empower," says Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray. "Henry saw himself as responsible for being a mentor and supporter to so many people. It mattered to him to create an organization where everyone could have an opportunity. He could see the imbalances and he wanted to address them."



Jill Bornstein

PNT'22 | founder and executive coach, Upnext Leadership Coaching; Women Who Empower Innovator Awards founding judge

INSPIRING LEADERS

An experienced Fortune 50 finance executive, business founder, elected community leader, and president of several nonprofit boards, Jill Bornstein, PNT'22, has guided hundreds of leaders, creating individualized roadmaps to methodically help each reach their goals. Bornstein, who is also a Northeastern parent, has proudly served as a judge and advisor for the Women Who Empower Innovator Awards since its inception, and she supports the program through her family's philanthropy.

Says Bornstein, "Empowered women, when supported by a strong community and network, are more likely to become confident, caring, successful leaders. This initiative not only amplifies the incredible ideas of these entrepreneurs, but also instills the confidence needed to bring their visions to life, shaping and propelling meaningful change in our world."

COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

3,300+

gifts made to Women Who Empower funds, raising nearly \$3 million in philanthropic support for our community

16

Women Who Empower Innovator Awards judges and advisors

300+

mentorship pairings with participants from 16 countries

FUELING THE FUTURE



Ronaldo Mouchawar

E'88, ME'90 | vice president, Amazon Middle East and North Africa; Women Who Empower Innovator Awards judge



Jeannine Sargent

E'87 | Northeastern University Trustee; senior advisor, Generation Investment Management; Women Who Empower speaker

MENTORING SUCCESS

Ronaldo Mouchawar, E'88, ME'90, lives and breathes entrepreneurship. He founded Souq.com, the largest e-commerce platform in the Middle East, which was later acquired by Amazon. There, he now serves as Vice President of Amazon MENA. Mouchawar dedicates time each week to rising entrepreneurs, learning their stories and ideas and encouraging their journeys.

As a Women Who Empower Innovator Awards judge, he finds his service personally rewarding. "I am blown away by the energy and the stories of our innovators," he says. "The sheer volume of how these ventures grow and exponentially give impact to communities all over the world is incredible."

ENABLING OPPORTUNITIES

"As leaders, we need to communicate the 'why' of our goals and help our teams understand the contexts surrounding our work," says Northeastern University Trustee Jeannine Sargent, E'87. She experienced firsthand the transformational impact of contextual learning. Her Northeastern education was made possible by scholarship support, and she is committed to providing that opportunity for future students.

"The unique world of co-op and experiential learning prepares you to discover, reach, and surpass your goals. Now, as a proud member of this powerful network, I want to continue to support our future leaders by breaking down barriers and advancing their opportunities."



Lea Anne Dunton

PNT'15 | mentor and investor, WISE;
Women Who Empower Innovator Awards
reading committee member

EXPANDING HORIZONS

A former CPA and consultant, Lea Anne Dunton, PNT'15, understands the critical need for supporting young women in business and entrepreneurship. An early champion of the Women's Interdisciplinary Society of Entrepreneurship (WISE), she commits her time, talent, and support to help WISE members develop their leadership skills and innovative mindsets.

Recognizing the value of connecting established female entrepreneurs with aspiring founders, Dunton has invested in experiential WISE treks to San Francisco and Paris. Through her multifaceted engagement with our community, she has created transformative opportunities for the next generation of trailblazers as they strive to spark change, create solutions, and turn their vision into impact.

POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

Generous donors and collaborations with corporations, foundations, and higher education partners have informed, inspired, and fueled initiatives that support this community.

25+

*organizational partners,
including the Cartier
Women's Initiative, the
Université Paris-Saclay,
Schneider Electric,
Underscore VC, and
Bank of America*

FUELING THE FUTURE



“Attending Northeastern University was pivotal in preparing me for a career in science and business. Today, I want to help ensure that students have the same chance to develop the skills and strategies that will help them navigate the future. I support Women Who Empower because it is focused on achieving that goal and on inspiring Northeastern women to reach for the things they might have thought impossible.”

–Carole Shapazian

S'66, MS'72, PNT'08 | Vice Chair Emerita, Northeastern University Board of Trustees

“WISE is so special because it is the very organization that made clear to me what my purpose is, and where my present and future impact lies in an ever-evolving society. Coming from an engineering background, WISE empowered me to embrace my strength of leading and innovating in a people-oriented way, as well as making the idea of being a CEO one day a reality.”

–Sari Finn

E'24 | Former WISE co-director



“From the very beginning, Women Who Empower has given me the confidence and connections that I need to move forward. As this community keeps growing and evolving, we all bring something great to the table, and we continue to learn from each other’s unique perspectives.”

–Nicole Guadagno

E’25 | founder, Remetra; Innovator; currently in remission from an inflammatory autoimmune disorder, on why she was grateful for the support to create Remetra, a wearable medical device that measures inflammatory markers through sweat and transmits the data to a mobile platform for tracking and analysis



“As a women’s entrepreneurship supporter at Northeastern, I have been inspired by this exceptional community of entrepreneurs and their amazing ideas to improve the world. The Women Who Empower Innovator Awards validate their creativity, encourage them to press on, and provide a vital boost to their efforts. It is an honor and privilege to be a part of something so important to both me and to society as a whole.”

–Cathy Papoulias-Sakellaris

Active board member, former business executive, and philanthropist; Women Who Empower Innovator Awards founding judge

FUELING THE FUTURE

Northeastern President Joseph E. Aoun joined WISE members and representatives from the Université Paris-Saclay and the Consulate of France in Boston for a celebratory reception ahead of the WISE 2023 Summit.



The strength of Women Who Empower lies in its people—a diverse and vibrant community of students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends—connected by a shared commitment to uplift society and one another through learning and connection. Among the many achievements of this initiative over the past decade, I am especially proud

of what our students have built with WISE, the Women's Interdisciplinary Society of Entrepreneurship. WISE exemplifies the power of what can be achieved when students have opportunities to innovate and lead. Its impact in cultivating connections, strengthening support, and empowering entrepreneurs is transformative. In a short time, it has

become a model for community and engagement, not only for Northeastern but across universities and networks and around the world. I look forward to the continued energy and impact this network will have in the next decade and beyond.

Joseph E. Aoun
President, Northeastern

Learn more and support our mission: womenwhoempower.advancement.northeastern.edu

