The San Fernando Valley Business Journal was gratified to honor more than 40 women of achievement in the Valley area at our Women’s Council virtual event on Sept. 17.

From that impressive roster, we selected eight standout women to receive awards. Those honorees were announced at the online event, surprising and pleasing them. On the next few pages, you will read inspirational stories about those eight local women who have achieved remarkable success, sometimes managing turnarounds or overcoming personal setbacks.

We had a panel discussion at the event concerning the changing role of women in the workplace today. Panelists were Luanna Lindsey, the senior vice president and Business Segment Manager for Small Business for the Greater California – South region of Wells Fargo, and Miri Rossitto, the founder and chief executive of Cowe Communications, a business and brand development firm in Woodland Hills.

I am grateful to our presenting sponsors, Wells Fargo and Cowe Communications; our platinum sponsor, Mission Valley Bank, and our gold sponsor, Valdez and Polanski Wealth Management Group. Their support and involvement was very important.

Congratulations to all the nominees and the honorees!

Charles Crumpley
Editor and Publisher
San Fernando Valley Business Journal
Leaders make change a reality

When needs arise in the community, leaders meet them with determination and thoughtfulness. Your leadership not only inspires change, but moves others to get involved and make a difference.

Wells Fargo proudly celebrates the San Fernando Valley Business Journal Women’s Council Awards and all honorees.
CEO OF THE YEAR

MAUREEN O’GARA-ADFORD

gish SEIDEN

As managing partner at gish SEIDEN LLP, Maureen O’Gara-Adford oversees all operations of the firm and ensures that all short and long-term goals are met. She is a professional who has over 32 years of experience in both the public sector as well as the private sector of accounting. This experience working on both sides of the industry enables her to offer consulting services to a variety of businesses and to improve their operations, internal controls and overall profitability.

O’Gara-Adford’s specializations include manufacturing, construction, software development, distribution, automobile and motorcycle dealerships, restaurants and other specialized industries. Her approach to examining problems and determining the proper course of action is a definite strength to any organization. Her commitment and dedication are valuable assets to gish SEIDEN’s business practices and she always stays true to the firm’s core values.

She’s the ideal recipient of this year’s “CEO of the Year” award for a number of reasons – not least of which is the fact that she has developed a reputation for being a genuine commander in chief of her firm, repeatedly leading her team to victory. Colleagues and employees have shared that her approach to examining problems and determining the proper course of action is a definite strength to any organization. Her strong communication and listening skills combined with her sense of realistic optimism have made her an inspirational and well-respected leader and example for the rest of her firm. She truly embraces change in an ever-changing market and continues to take gish SEIDEN to new heights.

BUSINESS OWNER OF THE YEAR

ADRIANNA CRUZ

U-Frame-It Gallery

Since 1988, when Adrianna Cruz took over the family framing shop where she had worked as a teen, renaming it “U-Frame-It,” she grew the business into one of the most successful and customer friendly frame shops in the San Fernando Valley. Throughout the years, her hard work and dedication paved the way for her growing relationships with the entertainment industry. Cruz found a niche where she could apply her good business sense and her creative background.

Under Cruz’s stewardship, U-Frame-It Gallery has evolved from a do-it-yourself frame shop established in 1976 into the No. 1 Los Angeles premiere custom frame shop, offering one-stop services for all framing needs. Her concept of offering custom, one-hour framing at reasonable prices has made the business the success it is today. With two locations, U-Frame-It services the greater Los Angeles area and San Fernando Valley.

She is an active member of the Set Decorators Society of America International. She is also a member of the Greater San Fernando Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce of Encino, Tarzana/Woodland Hills and Studio City, Valley Industry and Commerce Association and the National Association of Professional and Executive Women. With over 40 years of framing experience, Cruz and her entire team at U-Frame-It Gallery take pride in their work and have built an expert team over many years. Cruz insists that the company’s products are made of the highest quality material and are hand-picked and designed with her customers’ needs and tastes in mind. Customer service is the number one priority and Cruz and her team do anything they can to ensure customer satisfaction with their products and services.

Despite her dedication as a business owner to U-Frame-It, Cruz also always makes time for the community. Causes near and dear to her include LA/American Association of Zoo Keepers, YMCA, Valley Village and various youth programs.
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EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

DEBRA DONOVAN
Valley Village

Debra Donovan has been the executive director of Valley Village for many years. She has proven to be a productive leader of a large community-based organization serving the disabled in the San Fernando Valley. She also serves as a mentor in the way she has developed a strong team of leaders and devoted employees with long tenure. Under her stewardship, Valley Village represents an important and sometimes forgotten population. Those who stay at Valley Village require continuous care, and they and their families depend on Donovan and her team at Valley Village to provide a safe, nurturing environment. The commitment of the Valley Village staff and its generous supporters is strong, keeping Valley Village the place where people with developmental challenges thrive. Under Donovan’s stewardship, Valley Village serves approximately 400 clients in its residential and day programs. With two thriving Adult Development Centers and an Adult Day Health Center, the organization has become a model program for services for adults with developmental challenges. Donovan also makes sure that Valley Village’s level of in-depth medical services makes it the only program in the San Fernando Valley where developmentally challenged adults with medical problems can attend day programs. Donovan and her team have managed their organization despite shortages in government support and have proven they are a sustainable organization for the community. She has also served as a mentor to many in the way she has developed a strong team of leaders and devoted employees with long-term tenure. Thanks in large part to her leadership and efforts, the families of those who stay at Valley Village or in its day care truly are fortunate to have a safe, creative place for their loved ones to go.

BUSINESS TEAM OF THE YEAR

JENNIFER McLAIN HIRAMOTO
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM
City of Glendale

Jennifer McLain Hiramoto joined the City of Glendale in 2015 and serves as deputy director of community – economic development. In this capacity, she leads a team that is responsible for overseeing the Economic Development division’s strategic planning efforts, with an emphasis on business services, attraction, community outreach, and asset management. Hiramoto and her Economic Development Team have led the city of Glendale by continuing to guide the diversification process of the companies, brands, and missions of the region, leading to a bringing together of new businesses, retail establishments and residents. Thanks in large part to Hiramoto and team, this clustering of health care, financial and creative based companies has brought a boom of high-paying jobs and individuals who now want to live in downtown Glendale. This lifestyle of living, working, and exploring all within a walkable area is conducive to the amenities sought by technology-based and other forward-looking companies. The interconnectivity and user-friendly atmosphere of downtown Glendale is the ideal location to attract and continue to cultivate a technology cluster. This cluster has rapidly delivered some of the world’s most innovative and successful companies, prompting Hiramoto and her team to investigate ways to attract further tech companies to Glendale. Hiramoto and team have also developed and are now leading the charge with Glendale’s Annual Glendale Tech Week, which is scheduled to return in full force in 2021, capitalizing on the team’s tireless efforts each year to ensure that Glendale brings together the talent, diversity, and quality of life that best suits the community of Glendale. On top of that, the team organizes a series of Tech on Tap – where techies and entrepreneurs discuss the latest technological innovations in a social and open environment. A tech ecosystem has been built by this team over the last several years, with the community’s full support due to the team’s commitment, hard work and dedication.
JANET MARINACCIO

JANET MARINACCIO
MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity

Janet Marinaccio, President and CEO of MEND - Meet Each Need with Dignity, joined the organization in July of 2017 and has provided strategic leadership to sustain key programs and innovative responses to changing community needs. In just two years, she has led MEND’s financial turnaround and established an operating reserve and board-designated investment fund.

When Marinaccio arrived at MEND, the organization was faced with accumulated deficits and debt, underfunded and underperforming programs, and the threat of an audit that found substantial doubt about the agency’s ability to be solvent in the ensuing 12 months. Working with her executive team, she made a strong, persuasive case to the board to sell MEND’s secondary building. With this, the agency could retire debt and establish reserves. The board agreed and voted to move forward. Subsequently, MEND met its goal to repay all debts and establish reserves. Next, faced with the reality of a Free Clinic model that was no longer financially sustainable, MEND closed its clinic on March 6. While this was the end of an era, it is also the start of a renewal period for MEND.

Under Marinaccio’s stewardship, MEND remains committed to its mission and to providing services that improve the wellbeing of individuals and families living in poverty. MEND’s Family Support Program helps families overcome endemic challenges, and its Pathways to Wellness Program provides individualized support to help clients who are suffering from chronic conditions and food insecurity take the steps to achieve wellness. Marinaccio is also continuing to build on MEND’s critical core services, particularly the Food Bank and Pantry, which distributes enough food to food-insecure and hungry families and individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness to enable them to consume close to three million meals per year. With Marinaccio at the helm, the future for MEND is indeed bright.

“Our mission is to further your mission with Dedication, Service, and Integrity while protecting your assets and giving back to our community.”

Tobias Kennedy
Executive VP of Montage & CEO of Simpolicy

Danone Simpson
CEO & President

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RISING STAR OF THE YEAR

ERIN BECK
Wana Family Network

Erin Beck is the chief executive of the Wana Family Network, which operates a service that lets families “swap” babysitting services with one another. The Wana Family Network allows families to meet, set up play dates, and trade childcare for “points” instead of dollars; the company’s services are similar to the neighborhood babysitting co-ops which had previously been popular with families in the pre-internet age. Prior to starting her company, Beck was a SpaceX Dragon mission director, designing and operating spacecraft bound for the International Space Station. Prior to that, she was an around-the-world backpacker, rescue scuba instructor, and award-winning theatre director. She believes that skills are cumulative and transferable across all disciplines.

With such a diverse resume, however, her favorite job of all is being a parent. When she and her husband first became parents, however, they felt isolated because they did not have family nearby and a regular babysitter was out of their budget. Recognizing that families all around her were struggling with the same issue, Beck created the Wana Family Network in 2017.

Beck built an all-equity team of promising junior individuals who became the lasting loyal, heart-forward team she currently employs. That was exactly one year ago in 2019. Fast-forward to 2020 and the Wana Family Network has acquired Komae Inc. (an Ohio-based competitor), Sitster (a UK sit-swapping service), and Helpkin (a Los Angeles-based app) and everyone is taking home a paycheck. With the success of Wana Family Network and the various programs it is engaged in, Beck has fast become a thought leader in spreading the value of celebrating family life as part of entrepreneurship and technology. And, as has been Beck’s goal all along, by including children in those activities, businesses can create cultures that support a work-life blend.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

MARIE Y. LEMELLE
Platinum Star Public Relations

More than 20 years ago, Marie Y. Lemelle’s entrepreneurial spirit led her to establish Platinum Star Public Relations and Management. Platinum Star, a certified MWBE, was established to assist underserved businesses and women business owners to achieve their goals through positive and consistent exposure. Her client list has covered the gamut from boxing to the film and music industries to health and wellness, as well as corporations and nonprofit organizations. As an entertainment publicist, Lemelle has increased the star ranking of several actors, producers, directors, writers, musicians at red carpet events and beyond.

Despite all of this success, it is what Lemelle does beyond the 9-to-5 that has led to her being recognized for this award. She has always been a committed activist and civic leader. From working to empower women and girls to advocating to end homelessness, she routinely finds the time out of her extremely busy schedule to make that difference.

She is a member of the New Frontier Democratic Club, National Association of Female Executives, the National Congress of Black Women, the National Association of Black Journalists, Women in Leadership Vital Voices, and the Los Angeles African-American Women Public Policy Institute. She is a former member of Women in Film and a current member of the SoCal PBS Community Council, an advisory board to help statewide public television network respond to the needs of diverse audiences. Her community outreach is further evidenced by years of civic service as a former commissioner for the city of Glendale’s Commission on the Status of Women.

For her unwavering commitment to empowering and mentoring women, young girls, and the community at large, she has set a true example of what it means to be a selfless volunteer.
With an entrepreneurial spirit, irresistible optimism and vibrant enthusiasm, Valencia Acura’s owner and dealer principal Cheri Fleming has successfully harnessed her love for volunteerism and doing good in the lives of others into a mission of philanthropy and leadership.

When Fleming embarked on the entrepreneurial challenge of purchasing Valencia Acura in 1997, the dealership ranked dead last nationally in sales and customer satisfaction. She and her husband turned the struggling dealership into one of Acura’s top dealerships nationally in sales, one of the highest-ranking in customer satisfaction, and one of the highest in the nation for sales penetration in a primary market area. She was awarded “Dealer of the Year” by the American International Automobile Dealers Association and Newsweek Magazine in 2006.

With a genuine desire to better the lives of women and girls both locally and internationally, Fleming discovered her passion for Soroptimist International over two decades ago in the Santa Clarita Valley. Her progression through the organization’s leadership ranks was swift, ascending to a world stage as President of the Soroptimist International of the Americas in 2013-2014 and Board Member of Soroptimist International from 2012 to 2015. In her role as president, Fleming led 28 regions with more than 34,000 members in approximately 1,360 clubs in 19 countries – expanding her influence to a global level. She traveled to New York to participate in the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations from 2009 to 2017.

Fleming provides leadership in her local community through service on numerous nonprofit boards. Since 1997, she has served as a director for the Child and Family Center and is the current board chair. In addition, she serves as chair-elect for the Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital after serving 15 years as a director on the community hospital’s foundation, including two terms as chairwoman. The American Cancer Society, Sheila R. Veloz Breast Imaging Center, Boys and Girls Club of Santa Clarita Valley, Arthritis Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity have also been beneficiaries of her leadership, drive, and vision.
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NOMINEES!

Denise Bean-White
Consortium Media

Erin Beck
Wana Family Network

Renew Bell
MDKT Bio Spa LLC.

Allison Blackman
gish SEIDEN LLP

Adrianna Cruz
U-Frame It Gallery

Debra Donovan
Valley Village

Nancy Duitch
Sardclab

Leslie Elkan
ElkanRealtor

Lisa Elkan
Lisa PR

Doo Feldman
Action Ad Specialties, Inc.

Cheri Fleming
Valencia Acure

Teresa Friedman
California Institute of Locksmithing

Karen Gabler
LightGabler

Andrea Gallagher
Senior Concerns

Robbie Gluckson
UCLA Health

Tracy Hernandez
BuFed

Reno Hiller
Hiller & Hiller, CPA P.C.

Jennifer McClane Hirozawa
and Economic Development team
City of Glendale

Nicole Antonia Johnson
Fernandeno Tataviam Band
of Mission Indians

Dafna Kaiserman
Bridges Academy

Christy Kasper
gish SEIDEN LLP

Sheindie Kreithenberg
Kreit Mechanical

Marie Y. Lammle
Platinum Star Public Relations

Deana Lindenholm
Executives Association of San Fernando Valley

Janet Marinaccio
MEND

Carol Marinello
TA Aerospace

Laura McHolm
NorthStar Moving Company

Jill Melody
Melody Direct Marketing

Jill Mellman
Born To Travel

Laurel Mintz
Elevate My Brand

Christy Mora
Native Merchant Services

Lisa Morgan
Wells Fargo Commercial Banking

Maureen O’Gara-Adford
gish SEIDEN LLP

Ani Torosyan
DishDivvy

Jave Tripp
JWR Services, Inc.

Elizabeth Underhill
Underhill Insurance Agency, Inc.

Sarah Warner
CorpStrat - Corporate Strategies Inc

Laura Young
The Rescue Train

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Making it a Superhero Year and Standing Victorious!

By DANONE SIMPSON

The definition of culture is "the art and manifestation of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively," or "to maintain tissue, cells or bacteria, in conditions suitable for growth." Both definitions seem to apply for 2020, which many have said they cannot wait until it is over! I guess I have learned to appreciate adversity over the years, knowing I will always come out stronger because of it. This is what this year is truly about for businesses that have seen success and those who are still struggling but have not quit. The desire is what counts. The perseverance it takes to keep getting back up and trying again.

Peter Drucker asked an interesting question that fits these times. "What are examples where disequilibrium can be used to accelerate the process of learning in your life and organization?"

Len Schlesinger said, "The traditional way of thinking our way into acting is rendered essentially useless, Action trumps everything." He believes that, "entrepreneurial activity, steeped in experiential learning, can transform the way leaders move forward in the face of unpredictability."

That explains this year for many of us. We have tested the limits of our strength as leaders and teams. When I think of my employees, I visualize their top button loosened, their ties pulled just enough, to see them with superhero symbols on their chests underneath their work suits, as they race through the offices with toddlers under their arms and laptops in hand or moms with babies in their laps as they typing a presentation. This year feels like a cartoon, yet it is our new reality — at least for a while.

Virtual shifts have shaped our future. While it may not change everything, it has added to our resources. Luckily, we were right where we needed to be with HRIS systems for benefit enrollments, webinars to replace our face-to-face presentations to employees, and the ability to be nimble and quick.

In the healthcare roundtable I read about how CIGNA has 70,000 employees working from home. No matter what the scale, we were ready. Our industry, insurance and healthcare turned on a dime. Hospitals and doctors have been challenged beyond measure, beefing up resources to help get us through this. One client was hired to open stores and then had to board up the same day after the killing of George Floyd. Another called (at first) to discuss canceling their insurance because cleaning kitchens for restaurants seemed fruitless. But then the spark of creation happened and they completely changed their name and operations to cleaning and sterilizing essential businesses, schools, assisted living facilities and more. Meanwhile, schools sequed to on-line teaching — as our favorite lesson on how to succeed in times so the doom of the end of the world will pass us by, taking everything for granted.

Scheilnger also said, "Leaders hungry to stay ahead of the curve are invited to unlock this entrepreneurial code for themselves and shore up their ministries or organizations for success, regardless of what the future may bring."

That fits perfectly for today. We’re ready — with energy and shapeshifting and boosters in hand to shed light onto our employees and inspire them to carry on, and have hope for the future.

This is culture. No matter what the complaints in the halls are, when tested by adversity and possible loss, when culture remains strong, the "bad guys" are destroyed. Gratefulness and focus on our mission are what take us into the future. We have been giving gratefulness challenges and providing resources for employees to give back to our clients by furthering their mission, which is our mission. They have given of their time and their own resources with enthusiasm and smiles on their faces. This is culture.

This year has changed businesses on the heels of great success when boom, the year pivoted to hardship and closed doors for many. Others scaled up and provided the necessary resources to help get us through this. One client was hired to open stores and then had to board up the same day after the killing of George Floyd. Another called (at first) to discuss canceling their insurance because cleaning kitchens for restaurants seemed fruitless. But then the spark of creation happened and they completely changed their name and operations to cleaning and sterilizing essential businesses, schools, assisted living facilities and more. Meanwhile, schools sequed to on-line teaching and clothing manufacturers added masks to their lines. The best companies have heroes that work within them. Our people are our soul. The stress lines reduced with spending more time with family.

We are leaders and we must share our beliefs with our employees to lead them through these times so the doom of the end of the world will be replaced with, not a sequel, but the first episode... and living it rather than watching it pass us by, taking everything for granted.

Let’s take this experience and make it ours — as our favorite lesson on how to succeed in adversity with superhero symbols on our chests, defeating this tough year with great success!

Danne Simpson, MBA, GRDS, is CEO of Montage Insurance Solutions. Learn more at montaginsurance.com.
Providing a Foundation for Bright Future in Medical Care

By JOHN PARKER

Many people have been saying that everything will change after the COVID-19 pandemic passes and one of those industries that will be deeply affected is health care. The way we practice medicine and keep ourselves healthy is already different and will continue to change.

About half of our work as a general contractor is in the health care industry. We build a lot of urgent care centers, outpatient surgery centers and doctors’ offices. These smaller facilities are better for patients in many cases than going to the hospital. They are easier to get to, easier to navigate. And there aren’t nearly as many seriously ill people in small facilities.

These centers have been vital to the growth in medical centers as they help patients avoid long drives in traffic to hospitals downtown or on the West Side. Instead, patients are treated in these centers in their own neighborhood.

We also recently completed a satisfying tenant improvement for the Free Clinic of Simi Valley, which offers medical, dental, and psychological improvement for the Free Clinic of Simi Valley, Medical care and staying healthy and safe will be even more important in a post-pandemic population where, hopefully, we are all more aware of how a disease can spread and make many people ill.

Rather than be the death of medical clinics and hospitals, this could actually lead to a boom in medical care. Consider how many things can change:

- Imagine a world where a patient can skip the visit to the primary care provider. Where the patient can enter a lot of data, take some diagnostic tests online and be sent right to a specialist for care. Devices like digital stethoscopes, portable ECG monitors and digital otoscopes can be used at home and the results shared remotely with doctors. The doctor, with a lot of data that used to be gathered only after the patient made an office visit and had laboratory work done, would instead be given a cache of objective data and could refer the patient right to a specialist.
- When the coronavirus first appeared, there was so much misinformation and advice offered. Imagine a post-pandemic society where health protocols were quickly given to the public along with information about where to go to get masks, sanitizers, medicines and other tools necessary. This would create the need now to build more and smaller health facilities so that hospitals and current facilities are not overwhelmed as we saw this time.
- These same facilities could provide people with devices to help them track their vital statistics and their travel and whom they come in contact with. Imagine the difference in this pandemic if all those who spread the disease could have provided a comprehensive list of whom they contacted.
- There will be medical facilities in places where they did not exist before. In a post-COVID-19 world, there will be small medical centers in transportation hubs, schools, grocery stores and (if there are any) shopping malls.
- Speaking of airports, travel will become even a little more cumbersome than it is now. If you thought going through airport security was a hassle, wait until you are asked to provide an immunity passport, and overseas travel may require you to complete a document listing all the places where you contacted others. But these could become part of our medical protocols to stop the spread of deadly illnesses. There is no question that airports are going to feature a lot more space for medical facilities in our future.

Finally, let’s stop and give a long and loud cheer for our healthcare workers, and then talk about their future.

Our nurses, doctors and all health care workers deserve our gratitude for their dedication and long hours. So many of them faced this battle while distancing themselves from spouses, children and other loved ones. They practiced medicine on our behalf and then could not even be comforted when off-duty.

We are going to have to take better care of our health care workers. Hospitals are going to need more warehouse facilities where they can keep an adequate supply of personal protection equipment and ventilators. They are going to need mental health facilities to treat the traumatic stress that these workers endured.

This was all so new for everyone from equipment and massive demands all at once. From test kits and labs for performing this. There are many lessons we can get from this so we are all better prepared for the next one.

At Parker Brown we believe that medical facilities will continue to be a major component of our business. We are ready to partner with our health care leaders to face the future.
Women Small-Business Owners Faced More Obstacles Than Males

With one out of every five small businesses failing before the end of their first year, opening and running your own business is an enormous challenge. According to a recent Groupon survey, it’s even tougher for female entrepreneurs with more than half of respondents, 56 percent, saying that they had to overcome greater obstacles than their male counterparts and nearly 50 percent of respondents saying that they were held to a higher standard when trying to open their own business.

The poll, commissioned by Groupon last year, surveyed more than 850 women small-business owners to find out what sort of challenges they face, the best states for women to open their own business, why these entrepreneurs decided to become their own boss, how they achieved success and the most important issues they want to see addressed in the 2020 presidential election.

“As one of the largest marketplaces of small businesses anywhere in the world, we’re thrilled to honor female entrepreneurs and recognize the contributions and value they bring to our local communities,” said Sarah Butterfield, chief product officer and women at Groupon executive sponsor.

“Many of the women that we interviewed had overcome unique challenges in order to get their business off the ground and offered a number of key insights for other women thinking about starting their own business.”

OVERCOMING UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES

Seventy-one percent of women small business owners reported that they faced unexpected challenges when they opened their business. Some of these challenges included: balancing a business and a family, struggling to be taken seriously, defying social norms, owning their own accomplishments and gaining access to capital. Thirty-four percent of women small business owners said they had to finance the opening of their own business through personal savings or by borrowing from a retirement account.

RANKING THE BEST STATES TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Taking into account a number of different factors such as barriers to entry, economic conditions and available small business resources, Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Tennessee ranked as the best states for women to start their own business. Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington, South Carolina and Ohio rounded out the top 10. The top five ways identified by survey respondents in which state officials can help small businesses are: lowering or simplifying taxes, offering more small business resources, improving access to healthcare and insurance benefits, making housing more affordable and creating greater access to capital.

BECOMING YOUR OWN BOSS

According to the survey results, being your own boss, having a flexible schedule, pursuing your passions, gaining more control over your future and receiving equitable pay were the top five biggest reasons women went into business for themselves.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Of surveyed respondents, it took an average of nearly three years to make their small business a success. Entrepreneurs said that putting in the hard work, taking pride in the quality of their product or service, building a personal network, serving an underserved market or space and having innovative business ideas were the biggest keys to their success. Thirty-six percent of survey participants said they work more than 40 hours per week, and 78 percent stay up at night worrying about the success of their business.

MAKING THEIR VOICES HEARD IN THE 2020 ELECTION

Women small business owners were split on the Trump administration’s impact on small business — 32 percent of those surveyed said that the administration has had a positive impact on their business and 31 percent said that it has had a negative impact. When it comes to the Democratic presidential candidates, more than half of the women small business owners who plan to vote during the primaries didn’t think any of the candidates will positively impact small businesses. Of the respondents who expressed a preference at the time, Sen. Elizabeth Warren was identified as the leading candidate who could have a positive impact on small businesses. The Massachusetts senator was followed by former Vice President and current Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Sen. Kamala Harris.

The top election issues identified by women small business owners who plan to vote during the primaries didn’t think any of the candidates will positively impact small businesses. Of the respondents who expressed a preference at the time, Sen. Elizabeth Warren was identified as the leading candidate who could have a positive impact on small businesses. The Massachusetts senator was followed by former Vice President and current Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Sen. Kamala Harris.

According to the survey, nearly 50 percent of respondents said they feel it’s likely that the U.S. economy will go through a recession in the next 12 months. According to the American Express 2019 annual State of Women-owned Businesses Report, there are nearly 13 million women-owned businesses in the United States—supporting over 9 million jobs and generating $1.9 trillion in revenue.

To learn more about the Groupon’s merchant solutions and how to work with Groupon, visit groupon.com/merchant.