

USPTO AND THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE LAUNCH WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE TO EMPOWER MORE WOMEN FOUNDERS ACROSS AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION

While women represent the fastest growing category of entrepreneurs worldwide, they remain severely under-represented as business owners compared to men and still struggle to acquire funding for their ventures. On November 30, 2022, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) launched a new Women's Entrepreneurship (WE) initiative to increase and empower women entrepreneurs in the United States. The launch coincided with Women's Entrepreneurship Day on November 19 and President Joe Biden's proclamation naming November 2022 as National Entrepreneurship Month.

WE is a community-focused, collaborative, and creative initiative to inspire women and tap their potential to meaningfully increase equity, job creation, and economic prosperity. It includes a new online resource (<https://www.uspto.gov/initiatives/we>) to assist aspiring women entrepreneurs with access to key resources on i) identifying and protecting their intellectual property, ii) securing options for funding, and iii) building their networks. The WE initiative builds upon the USPTO's longstanding, successful Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium held every March.

At a public event on November 30, 2022, USPTO Director Kathi Vidal joined several leading women entrepreneurs, funders, and strategists to launch the WE initiative. Speakers included:

- Alejandra Castillo, U.S. Assistant Secretary,

Economic Development Administration,
Department of Commerce

- Shelly Kapoor Collins, Founding Partner, Shatter Fund & Partner, Sway Ventures
- Lisa Dyson, Founder & CEO, Air Protein
- Kara Goldin, Founder, Hint
- Madeleine Key, Senior Strategist, Key Media
- Carrie Lee, Chief of Staff, Minority Business Development Agency, Department of Commerce
- Pattie Sellers, Co-CEO, SellersEaston Media & Co-Founder, Fortune's Most Powerful Women
- Qyana M. Stewart, CEO & Principal, Consultant of GlobalForce Tech Consulting, LLC & President, GlobalForce For Girls, Inc.
- Sarah Megan Thomas, Actress, Producer, Writer
- With pre-recorded remarks by Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo

The full program can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/WE-LaunchVideo>. The following are Director Vidal's welcoming remarks.

DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

"Thank you, Qyana. I just met Qyana a couple of weeks ago when the Deputy Director and I were speaking at Howard University, and I just loved her energy, her spirit, and her dedication to doing more for the country. Qyana is not serving in government yet. But she is working to help enlist others, including as a second-year Ph.D. student, she's working

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Share thoughts with Director Vidal about the WE Initiative by email at we@uspto.gov.

on tech transfer and commercialization for HBCUs [Historically Black Colleges and Universities]. I'd like to thank you for everything that you're doing.

I could not be more thrilled to be here today with all of you, with all the people in the room, the women, the colleagues, and with everybody online. I know we have over 1,000 people signed up. I couldn't be more thrilled with this launch, and I know the Secretary is equally as thrilled. We both came from backgrounds where we spent decades lifting other people, lifting women, lifting diversity, lifting entrepreneurs, and we are reaching out now to those that have worked with us and bringing them into WE [Women Entrepreneurs] so that we can watch more people and have a platform to do that. That's why I'm in government service because it's a platform and an opportunity to do more for more people.

So, so thrilled to be here today. About 10 to 15 years ago, I started my first women's conference. And I remember thinking that it might be a good idea, but maybe this was further back. It was before women's conferences were a thing although Fortune's Most Powerful Women may have preceded me. But it was before women's conferences were a thing, and I didn't realize the impact of it until after I left the room.

I grew up as an engineer. I have a bachelor's and master's in electrical engineering. I worked on the engineering floor, and I mostly worked not affiliated with women. When I got up and spoke, I was actually speaking on an early version of the AIA Bill, 10 years before the AIA: America Invents Act, for the patent nerds in the audience. And when I was speaking on it, I was lively, I was animated, and I wasn't really thinking until afterwards when women came up to me and said, "I've never seen you that way. I've seen you speak at so many conferences."

What I drew from that was that I was unintentionally emulating the people I saw as the leaders, and just to be me and be able to express myself was so liberating. And then Pattie Sellers welcomed me into the Fortune's Most Powerful Women summit pretty early on, maybe about that same timeframe. And you know, just that feeling of being with women, working with women who want to lift women, was so impactful and powerful.

To me, the idea of WE is that there are so many incredible people out there that want to lift women,

that want to lift entrepreneurs. Sometimes there's a price tag, sometimes for conferences, for networks, because they have to fund them themselves. But we're here as the government, so you're already paying for us. We're going to give you access to the same people that are involved in all these phenomenal events, the same people that network with others and teach you how to do what so many successful women have done and really helped with WE. It's about WE, it's not just about us, and the ones that you see. So, let us know how you want to contribute. Let us know what your questions are.

We're going to have our first WE Wednesday, after this one, when we start the regular cadence. It's likely going to be in Naples, Florida, and Judge O'Malley, who is in the audience today, Judge Kate O'Malley, will be presenting, and we'll find others too as well. And as we think about that, going forward, we're going to solicit your questions in advance. We're going to launch with what you want to know about funding, partnership, [and] mentors.

I will also say that the more we share the word, the more people are coming out of the woodwork. So please be part of that process. For example, I shared this idea with IPO, the Intellectual Property Owners [Association], and they said "Why don't we provide mentors for anybody who wants one, for anybody who doesn't understand how to protect your intellectual property, how soon they should do it. Can we support you in that?" I'm so thrilled to have so many colleagues, so many partners, so many women, so many people supporting what we're doing and so excited to launch today, and there is no more appropriate person to kick this off than Pattie Sellers.

I met Pattie Sellers, probably 10 or 15 years ago, at a Fortune's Most Powerful Women conference. [Pattie says, "20!" from the crowd] 20! She's dating me! And we were at the Fortune's Most Powerful Women's Summit. I remember the day because we were sitting on tables on the beach in Southern California. And it was the first evening and part of the program was these women from around the world would get on the stage. We were being mentored by women through Fortune's Most Powerful Women.

I just got so excited about the idea that I could mentor women from around the globe and help lift them and then help lift their countries through their

work. That was really the first time we connected. It was around that common goal of wanting to be there and help others.

Pattie's just had such an amazing career. I think she's been written up in other articles as having the biggest Rolodex in the world, which is true. She's the one that Warren Buffett sends "Happy Birthday" notes to. She's phenomenal. She knows everyone because she's such a great person, and she started Fortune's Most Powerful Women and is known as one of the founders of Fortune's Powerful Women, and she did so much with it.

She's now an entrepreneur. She started in SellersEastern Media. She gave up an illustrious and long career to make it on her own. And that's been phenomenal. She recently founded Journey, which I'm so privileged to be a part of, where we are lifting women entrepreneurs and women generally into leadership and really finding the women who are almost at that final step and giving them the tools, the resources, and the help to do it. So, I would like to bring Pattie Sellers onto the stage and let her introduce her panel. Thank you."