



2016 IWECE Awardee Bios

Azerbaijan / American Chamber of Commerce Azerbaijan

Tatyana Mikayilova, RED Communications, www.redcom.az

Tatyana founded RED Communications in 2009 which has become the leading strategic public relations and digital communications agency in Azerbaijan. The company recently signed an agreement with internationally renowned Ketchum Company, providing access to international expertise and education for clients and RED employees. Tatyana is Chairwoman of 100 Business Women of Azerbaijan which is a network of women business owners and top executive women in the country. She is also a frequent speaker at local and international events on women's development and strategic branding.

Bahrain / Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Bahrain Business Women's Society

Afnan Rashid Al Zayani, Al Zayani Commercial Services S. P. C., www.azcsbh.com

Afnan Rashid Al Zayani is owner and president of Al Zayani Commercial Services S.P.C., established in 1980. The company creates many digital and IT products and solutions for clients such as RICOH and KONE. AZCS consistently brings to customers unparalleled IT Business Solutions. In 2016, Afnan was elected as Treasurer of re-launched MENA Businesswomen's Network. She is presently a Board Member and Head of the Businesswomen's Committee of Bahrain Chamber of Commerce. Afnan has also published numerous cookbooks and has hosted her own television cooking show. She is also a partner in Martinizing Laundry and a board member of Al Ayam Publishing

Dr. Ebtisam Dallal, Al Kindi Hospital, www.alkindihospital.com

Dr Dallal practiced dentistry and obtained her Masters degree, working as a periodontal consultant for Bahrain's Ministry of Health. In 1993 she established her own Dental facility and in 2008 started Al Kindi Hospital. Within a period of 2 years it became one of the leading hospitals in Bahrain and remains so today. Dr. Ebtisam serves on many boards and in 2012 she was appointed by his Majesty King Hamad Al Khalifa, as a Board member of the National Health Regulatory Authority. In 2013 she was honored by UK's Foreign and Common Wealth G8 for her contributions in advancement of women's education and skill development.

Bangladesh / Chittagong Women's Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Seema Khatoon, Eastern Freight Ltd & Eastern Motors Ltd, <http://www.uml-bd.net>

Seema Khatoon is the Managing Director of Eastern Freight Ltd. She is a successful women entrepreneur in the shipping trade, freight forwarding, transportation and Importation of Bridgestone Tyre in Bangladesh. She is also the Proprietor of an overseas Investment Holding Company Aroma Palma Sdn. Bhd. in Malaysia. She is dedicated to social activities, having established an educational institute and she is involved in orphanage institutions to support rural and less privilege girls and women to motivate them to become independent and self-reliant. She is an active member and Director of Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Rokshana Akther Chowdhury, Essentials, www.essentials.com

Rokshana Akther Chowdhury is a renowned businesswoman in Chittagong Bangladesh. She is the Proprietor of Essential Group established in 2003. Essential Group provides high quality food conforming to health and hygienic standards with affordable pricing to reach their target consumers. The company's priority is to bring the best and most relevant products for people, wherever they are whatever their needs, throughout their lives. The corporate Motto of Essentials Group is "Healthy Food for Better Life". She is the Former Director & Member of Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CWCCI).

Shahnewaz Ayesha Akhtar Jahan, Pandora Assoc. Ltd & Renaissance Group, www.panbangla.com

Ayesha is one of the leading women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. She is the Managing Director of Pandora Associates Ltd & Director of Renaissance Group, which is involved in Garment Sector, Agro, Media, Education, Energy, Shipping Lines, etc and currently employs more than 30,000 people. The company has over \$ 360 Million in exports. Ayesha also runs "People's Rokeya Foundation, which works for underprivileged women and orphan girls of Bangladesh. Ayesha loves to travel and already has visited more than 30 countries.

Belgium / Brussels Enterprises of Commerce & Industry

Anne Marie Baeyert, Resigrass, www.resigrass.com

Contributing for over 30 years, starting from scratch up to high level management positions in a global company in Europe and Brazil, I finally followed my dream of leading my own company. I acquired an SME company with the plan to take it to the next level. In the meantime, I started a second company, took positions in the board of quoted and governmental companies and have the time of my life. All this happened since my 53rd anniversary, an age at which many are starting to think about their pension. I hope to be an inspiration to many, for this is really the ultimate dream come true.

Ingrid Ceusters, BEREAL, <http://bereal.be/>

Ingrid Ceusters began her career as a dental surgeon, but soon switched professions and started working in the real estate industry. In 1996, she became a member of the Management Board of Hugo Ceusters nv, the real estate agency of her late husband Hugo Ceusters. As a certified BIV real estate agent, she eventually took charge of the company as CEO in 2007 and led it to the top of the Belgian real estate industry. Ceusters brought about the merger with Shopping Center Management Services (SCMS) and turned Group Hugo Ceusters-SCMS into a real estate player boasting expertise in office, retail, logistics, and investment real estate.

Corinne Dumont, Sequoia, www.sequoiashop.com

Corinne has been an entrepreneur since 2007. After management studies and a 17-year long career in a US bank, she made a complete professional transition. Looking for a new challenge in line with her values, she took over two organic supermarket stores in Belgium. Corinne's vision was to inspire a larger number of people to take care of their well-being through healthy food and expand the concept. Today, the company has grown to 6 stores under the name Sequoia and employs 80 people. It is a family-driven company with respect for people and the planet at the heart of their core values.

Canada / Women Presidents Organization

Lori Kennedy, Louisbourg Seafoods, www.louisbourgseafoods.ca

Lori Kennedy has helped to build Louisbourg Seafoods from humble beginnings to one of Canada's leading seafood companies. Her unique understanding of the market has allowed her to cultivate ideas for raw product into cuisine offerings for niche markets all over the world. Passionate in her beliefs and committed to excellence, Lori sets her goals high and works to deliver solid results. She appreciates partnerships, and the concept of working together and relying on

each other's strengths. She dedicates much time and effort to international organizations and local charities, especially those involving entrepreneurship, women's issues and the seafood sector.

Colombia / Bogota Chamber of Commerce

Blanca Ceclilia Vargas, Laboratorios Ronvar SAS, www.ronvar.com

After starting two companies beginning when she was 17, Blanca founded her cosmetics company in 1992 and created her own brand. The company had challenges but she persevered and it became successful. In 2004, she also followed her passion and opened a coffee bar which also became very successful. After 4 years, she sold the company to focus on her cosmetics company branded Raquel Cosmetics and founded a new global standards production factory as well. Ronvar now employs 108 workers and their products are well known throughout Colombia.

India / Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce – Federation Ladies Organization New Delhi

Lalita Nijhawan, Nijhawan Group of Companies, www.nijhawangroup.com

Lalita built her company initially through founding Travel Boutique and in 2007, she created Travel Boutique Online, a database of 24,000 travel agents across India. began her career at an early age and was given an award in Arts by the vice-president of India. In 2010, the company diversified into travel technology, retail, E-commerce, hotel representations, salons, and catering services. She also created a CSR vertical, CKRDT Foundation. At present, the company has offices in 43 cities across 15 countries. In addition, they have catering services in 27 retail outlets in Adidas, Levi's, and United Colors of Benetton in India called Forks 'N Spoons.

Anu Chadha, 3A Clothing Company, www.3aclothing.com

Anu Chadha is the Founder and CEO at 3A Clothing Company, a fashion export house with state of the art manufacturing facilities in Udyog Vihar, located close to New Delhi's international airport. Anu brings more than 25 years of in-depth experience in the international fashion industry and trend forecasting, and has established a successful fashion export house selling to renowned international retail chains. The Company employs a large number of women who are sole breadwinners in their homes. 3A Clothing has recently been selected by Walmart to be their fashion apparel and accessories vendor from India and a part of their competitive 'Entrepreneurship Development Program' as a women owned business.

Chanchal Kaushik, Frames Twenty Four Communications Pvt Ltd, www.framestwentyfour.in

Chanchal began working in the corporate world and after 6 years, she started her own production firm, Frames 24 which was launched to provide equipment and studio hiring services as well as content creation for various ministries in the government, Lucas TVS and other television shows. What started as a small, one room studio facility slowly grew into a full-fledged private limited company by 2006. Chanchal divides her time judiciously between Frames 24 and the NGO, Nanhi Chaan, for which she is the CEO. Frames 24 is soon to venture into independent cinema and aspires to become Frames 24 Network.

Iran/CACCI

Haide Shirzady Gilani, CEO, Recycling and Composting Kermanshah Company (RCK.co), www.rck.co.ir

implementation of recycling and processing waste. 22,000 tons of waste is processed each year by using biological mechanical waste treatment methods and machinery manufacturer in Germany and Austria. We reduce landfill to less than 3%. The company is also processing and recycling 2000 tons of construction debris per day for first time in Iran and is the exclusive agent of waste processing and recycling companies, KOMPTECH and RUBBLEMASTER. We consult with and supervise services to many cities in Iran. In 2002, we began work with the municipality of Kermanshah with about 700 workers to gathering waste and cleaning streets. info@rck.co.ir

Jordan / Business and Professional Women Association - Amman (BPWA)

Meisa Batyneh Maani, maisam architects & engineers, www.maisam.com.jo

Meisa is Founder and Principal Architect at Maisam Architects & Engineers, a firm experienced in multiple facets of design including architecture, planning, urban design, place branding and a pioneer of Green Buildings in the region. Meisa has led multi-disciplinary teams on large-scale international and regional projects in USA, Pakistan, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and UAE. In 2006, she founded the Jordan Green Building Council and is presently president of Business and Professional Women in Jordan. Meisa's work has won multiple global awards and in 2015 she was recognized as the leading Arab Woman Engineer by the committee for Arab Women Engineers.

Nigeria / WeConnect International

Dr. Ibilola Amao. Lonadek, www.lonadek.com

Dr. Amao is the Principal Consultant of Lonadek, the preferred firm of Local Content Consultants, committed to developing capacity, capability and competence across the various sectors of the economy. Lonadek is a multi-award winning firm that has maintained its ISO 9001:2008 certification since 2010, with operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Dr. Amao is committed to developing tomorrow's leaders, strategic thinkers and planners. She formed "The Vision 2020: Youth Empowerment & Restoration Initiative" a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) driven program to empower the local workforce and businesses that provide services in high technology industries such as: Energy, power, oil, gas, infrastructure etc.

Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce

Nylla Parveen Junejo, Sundartas Collection & S.A. S Impex International,

Nylla owns two companies: Sundartas Collection and S.A.S Impex International. Sundartas Collection manufactures and exports hand embellished fabric, organic dyed hand block printed apparel and home accessories. We work with more than 5000 registered poor working women of remote areas who are skilled in various types of handy work. The Collection is a blend of modern and traditional clothing line. S.A.S Impex International deals in import and marketing of waste paper, iron and steel scraps, old and new machinery, pvc scraps, health and beauty products and FMCG. Nylla is also The Director of Pakistan Afghanistan joint Chamber of Commerce and industry (PAJCCI).

Shanza Anwar, Fazal Trade Impex, www.fazaltradeimpex.com

Shanza is CEO Fazal Trade Impex, a trading concern, started in 2005. The scope of business is import and export of light engineering products in the fields of electronics and metallurgy such as home appliances, power generators, ferro alloys and various metal scraps from Europe, China, Middle East and South Asia. Shanza is also director of her family's 50-year-old concern, Anwar Group, Anwar Industries Pvt. Ltd. and Steel Castings Pvt. Ltd. The company is a pioneer in manufacturing of electric fans and developing high quality grades of alloy steels for castings, forgings and fabrication of machine parts and components. They supply various industries including, Cement, Automotive, Railways, Mining and Defense.

Syeda Amna Nasir Jamal, SAN Enterprises, www.san-enterprises.net

Syeda Amna Nasir Jamal is the proprietor of SAN Enterprises, a trading company that specializes in general trading of bulk agricultural commodities (rice), other general commodities and textiles. She is also editor in chief of SAN Tribune and Global Sentinel and has written over 450 articles/New stories for National and International media outlets. She is the founder and head of the Tavvun Welfare Association and Institute for Policy Studies, Research and Human Development in Pakistan and actively addressing educational issues and supported capacity building of women. She runs programs of free education for underprivileged children at Dhabeji, Thatta and Lyari [gang war hit area].

Azra Jamshed, Awan Cold Storage Private Ltd. & AJ Industries,

Awan Cold Storage was established in 1965 and Azra began working as the Director in 1985. The company is involved in the preservation of fresh/Dry fruits and vegetables which are then exported to Afghanistan, Tajikistan and other central

Asian countries. The main commodities that are exported are kinnow's (oranges) and potatoes. We also import fruits from China and Afghanistan such as apples, pears, oranges, grapes and pomegranates. The company is strategically located for the only easily accessible trade way for the import and Export to Afghanistan through Pakistan. Azra also runs AJ Industries Private Limited which manufactures ice.

Peru / Lima Chamber of Commerce

Elka Popjordanova, Balkania, S. R. L.

Elka is an architect graduated in Germany with more than 30 years of experience as a manager of different companies such as Equipo Uno S.A. (Real Estate), Cosapi S.A. (Construction), Cosapi Data S.A. (Information Technology), Loyalty of Peru S.A.C. (a leading multipartner loyalty system) and for more than 5 years, she has owned her own consultancy firm, Balkania S.R.L. Her company is responsible for the oversight of two large shopping malls in Lima with more than 200,000 meters of gross leasable area. Elka is a Director at the Peruvian Chamber of Commerce and also is involved with many other organizations.

Philippines / Philippine Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Sherill R. Quintana, Oryspa Spa Solutions, www.oryspa.com

Sherill founded Oryspa Spa Solutions Inc., the number one maker of 100% natural rice bran based health and beauty products in the Philippines. Aside from being a multi-awarded entrepreneur, she serves as a passionate mentor and professional speaker on the topics of entrepreneurship, branding, franchising, and strength-based coaching. She is also a trained Gallup USA Strengths Coach. She is the author of the book entitled A Small Entrepreneur's Journey and has won many awards including Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Outstanding Young Entrepreneur South Luzon 2015; Most Promising Filipino Franchise Excellence Award 2015; Outstanding ASEAN Women Entrepreneur and Ha Noi 2016.

South Africa / Cape Chamber of Commerce

Debbie Merdjan, Camelot Group, www.camelotspa.co.za

Debbie Merdjan is the CEO and founder of the Camelot Group established in 1985. *Camelot International Health and Skin Care Education* has 9 branches located in South Africa and Zimbabwe and provides National and International Health and Skin Care Diploma and Certificate courses. *Camelot Spa* is located in 4 & 5 star Hotels and Corporate wellness facilities with 20 branches in South Africa, Botswana, Malawi and Nigeria. *Marine Spa Distributors* supplies professional skin, body and nutrition products to the industry. Our emphasis is on developing health and wellness schools in Africa, job creation, franchise expansion and exporting our brands globally.

Gail Downing, Acorn Group Holdings, www.acorngroup.co.za

True to its name, Acorn Group has grown to become the organization behind some of South Africa's most successful independently owned consumer brands, including Tabard insect repellents, Teepol detergents, Vapona insecticides and Carbro home care products. Founded in 1996 by Gail Downing as a small business named Acorn Products, the transition to a group of companies occurred as various operating units and brands were added to its portfolio. Tabard, Acorn's flagship brand, has remained one of Africa's most trusted insect repellents for over 50 years and were used by Team South Africa when they participated in the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Spain / Barcelona Chamber of Commerce

Anna Vicens Rohala, Vicens Vives, S. A., www.vicensvives.es

Anna is editor-in-chief of Vicens Vives publishing house, dedicated to the publication of all types of school textbooks and educational materials and publishing teaching materials. The company's goal was and is to publish books and materials

fully adapted to the changes in society and the demands of the educational community for both teachers and students. Our policy of methodology renewal and updating remains a constant feature in our books. In addition, the presentation and design of our products is of a very high level of technological, educational and aesthetic quality, which has led to the receipt of numerous national and international awards. This has led us to be among the leading publishing companies in Spain and to have a huge market presence in South America.

Isabel Alonso Alonso, Isabel Alonso, S. L., www.isabelalonso.com

In 1988 Alonso Valero S.L. was formed with one truck and a rented, small industrial warehouse for cold storage. Five years later, Isabel also formed Isabel Alonso, S.L., a transport company starting with 4 trucks. When her sons joined the business, the logistics company continued to grow and now has 200 trucks and 569 employees. Their strategy focused on covering a part of the market that was not entirely serviced and originally had routes were in Holland and Belgium. Now they are opening new markets in Germany and England.

Sweden/Chamber Trade Sweden

Britt-Marie Stegs, Hälsingestintan AB, www.halsingestintan.se/

When building Hälsingestintan AB, Britt-Marie changed the industry of meat production by introducing ethical meat production. The business concept is to provide quality meat from farms with good animal husbandry to households all over the country. The company invested in their own breeding of cattle, a cutting plant in Eskilstuna (2011) and most recently “mobile slaughter.” All animals are fitted with a chip stating farm of origin which follows throughout the production process and finally becomes a QR code on the package that consumers can read with their mobile phones, allowing them to know exactly what farm and which farmer their steak comes from. Britt-Marie is and has been active in agricultural committees and entrepreneurship networks, sharing her knowledge on the international arena.

Pingis Hadenius, Löwengrip Care&Color, www.lowengripcarecolor.com

The long-term vision is that one day every woman worldwide will be using Löwengrip Care & Color products, designed to help women-on-the-go maintain balance in life. The company started in 2012 with each woman owning 50% each of the company with no external investors. The company offers free podcasts and does pro bono TV shows on financial literacy to help viewers improve their relationship with money. LCC started “The beauty of entrepreneurship award” together with a women’s magazine offering mentorship and financial support to start their own business. In addition, the company has sent thousands of products to refugee camps in Europe through one of their clients. Every LCC-employee gives away an hour each month to someone in need. Pingis started the Women’s Presidents Organization chapter in Sweden in 2014.

Isabella Löwengrip, Löwengrip Care&Color, www.lowengripcarecolor.com

Isabella Löwengrip, commonly known as Blondinbella, is a Swedish entrepreneur and owner of Scandinavia’s biggest blog with over 1 million readers weekly. She started her first company at the age of 14, an investment company and currently she has 5 active companies. She published her first book in 2009 and has since published three more books. One of the books, titled *Economista*, was published together with her colleague and partner Pingis Hadenius. Isabella and Pingis share the leadership of three businesses, *Economista* (financial literacy), *Flattered* (shoes), *Löwengrip Care&Color* (cosmetics) and one of the most popular podcasts in Sweden with the same name as the book.

Taiwan / Taiwan Women’s Entrepreneurial Association

Hsiao-Ling (Carolyn) Chou, Yuanta Futures Co., LTD, www.yuanta.com

Carolyn is General Manager of Yuanta Futures Co., LTD, a leading futures company and first IPO futures commission merchant in Taiwan. She has over twenty years of senior level managerial experiences across banking, securities, asset management, and future industries. In 2008 her book, “*Making My Money Last a Lifetime*” was a best seller and all

proceeds from the book were donated to the Renewal Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that every child receives a proper education regardless of social or economic status. Alongside managing Yuanta Futures Co., Ltd, Carolyn is also currently the Board Chairman of the Taiwan Association of Women Entrepreneurs.

The Netherlands / United Succes

Heske Groenendaal, Metaglas B.V., www.metaglas.nl

After gaining a BA in Chemical Engineering and a Masters in Economics, Heske developed herself in industrial marketing. In 1999 she and her husband took over Metaglas from her father. Social involvement is important to her, which is why Metaglas is offering (young) disabled people, long-term unemployed, women returners and school leavers a platform to get the best out of themselves by giving them a job, education or traineeship. To support female entrepreneurship, Heske is on the advisory board of Sisterhood in Business. She has served as a city councillor in Tiel and is currently a commissioner at the Rabobank West Betuwe.

Turkey / Istanbul Chamber of Commerce

Mihraban Barlak, Ozi Licensed Textile Products/Zaruff Jewelry, www.ozitextile.com and www.zaruf.com

Mihraban is the founder of two companies; one based in Sydney, Australia specializing in jewelry design and the second one based in Istanbul, Turkey-Ozi Licensed Textile Products, which manufactures everyday textiles. In 2006, the company started selling their own designs and products at a small kiosk in Sydney and quickly expanded to 13 retail stores throughout Australia, stands in various department stores and a wholesale business. In 2010, Mihraban formed, Ozi Licensed Textile Products which designs and manufactures socks, underwear and basic clothing. The company sells to chain supermarkets in Turkey and Europe, powered by an all-female creative team of talented designers and manufacturers.

Rüknet Yeşilyurt, Self Plast Plastic, www.selfplast.com.tr

Ruknet started her career in the plastics sector at 1974. In 2011 SELFPLAST LIMITED was incorporated. This firm has annual revenue of nearly \$7.0 mill with 65 employees. The goal for the company is to maintain and increase production with more innovative and value-added solutions. The Turkish domestic market accounts for approximately 15% of domestic sector. This is why, we are looking forward to meet new, sustainable and solid import and export connections in the following in the coming year. SELFPLAST's target is to increase its production 30% within following 5 years.

Dilek Ataer Altıparmak, Tugra Kimyeui Mad. San. 7ic. Ltd. Sti, www.dilekatugrakimya.com.tr

Dilek earned a degree in Chemical Engineering from Yildiz Technical University and began working in a firm manufacturing enamel frit. She was one of the first women working in the metal industry in Turkey at that time. In 1997, she founded her own firm and began to sell metal chemicals as well as consulted for Gizem Frit, one of the leading firms of the country. In 2009, she has selected to the Chemistry Committee of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and in 2014, she began exporting to Middle-East, Balkans and Turkic Republics by obtaining Turkey distributorship of an Italian firm.

United States / Manhattan Chamber of Commerce

Anisa Balwani, RCI-Technologies, www.rci-technologies.com

Anisa is the owner of RCI Technologies, Inc. which provides Information Technology Professional Services and Software Development to major corporations and government entities nationwide. Anisa is also the Northeast Chapter President of the US Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce, (USPAACC) and she is responsible for connecting Asian American, small and women-owned businesses on the east coast to major corporations and government agencies. She also serves on the Governing Forum Board of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) the Steering Committee of the Women's President Educational Organization. Anisa is an advocate for small, minority and women owned businesses.

Tamara Nall, The Leading Niche, www.theleadingniche.com

Tamara Nall lives by the mantra, “to whom much is given, much is required”. She is the CEO of THE LEADING NICHE (TLN), an award winning and internationally recognized company known for using data and cutting-edge consulting to deliver 'actionable intelligence'. TLN supports customers in global markets, including the United States, Canada, Europe and Africa. The Firm provides big data, cybersecurity, intelligence, Health IT, regulatory/compliance and investigative/examination consulting. She has won many awards and featured in the media. Mrs. Nall holds an MBA from The Harvard Business School and a BS and BBA.

United States / US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Beatriz (Betty) Manetta, Argent Associates Inc & Ascocair LLC, www.argentassociates.com

Beatriz is CEO of Argent Associates Inc., a tech-centric systems integration firm and Asociar, a global firm delivering complete end-to-end supply chain optimization services and solutions. Ms. Manetta spent 20 years in Corporate America, primarily in the telecommunications industry, before launching Argent Associates Inc. in 1998. Ms. Manetta is a champion of ethnic minority, women and small businesses. She served on President George W. Bush’s President’s Export Council, where she advised on international trade matters and its impact on small, women and minority businesses. She has received numerous awards locally and nationally for her leadership and commitment to excellence.

Maria Thompson, Agile Sourcing Products, www.agilesp.com

Maria is founder, President and CEO of Agile Sourcing Partners. Agile is a US based global supply chain management company with revenues over \$220M and nearly 200 employees that focuses on providing procurement services, warehousing, staffing, freight and logistics for utility and infrastructure companies. Prior to founding Agile in 2006, Maria worked in various supply chain and purchasing roles nationally and globally where she leveraged her International MBA and project focus on supply chain. Maria is an active and supportive member of the diverse and small business supplier communities and entrepreneurship through her mentorship activities and technical development workshops for diverse and small businesses and for students.

Zimbabwe / Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce

Zodwa Mkandla, Traverze Travel (PVT), LTD, www.traverzetravel.co.zw

Zodwa Mkandla is the Founder and Managing Director of Traverze Travel which started operating in 2003 and is now one of the leading leisure and business travel management companies in Harare, Zimbabwe. Traverze’s reputation for service excellence has been proven through the many awards that the company has won over the years from airlines and the tourism industry. Traverze opened a branch in Lusaka Zambia in April May 2014. Zodwa Mkandla also owns an events management company – The Events Company. Traverze Travel is also the first travel agency in Zimbabwe to open its own business class lounge at Harare International Airport.

Hope Irene Makwara, Ariel Designs, www.arielgardens.co.zw

Ariel Designs started 12 years ago. It is a Property Development and Events Management company. The company purchases land, subdivides and constructs houses and cluster homes for resale and rental income purposes. In addition, the company purchases dilapidated homes and renovates them for resale. Ariel also created two Events Functions Venues: one specializing in weddings and the other is a Conferences Nature Reserve Recreational Park. The industry is male dominated and it has been a challenge to overcome culture barriers and beliefs but Hope has managed to break the shell and swim against the tides. Ariel also had a strong sense of philanthropy and Hope mentors young women who she meets through the chamber of commerce.

Roselyn Musarurwa-Charehwa, Surdax, www.surdax.co.zw

Roselyn Musarurwa-Charehwa is the founder and Managing Director of Surdax Investments, a company started by a woman who had no business training and no capital. Armed with only two brooms, two mops and a domestic carpet cleaning machine she began her business out of her home. She now employs over 400 men and women of which two thirds are women. The company is also embarking on a waste management program and donates manpower to clean up areas in the city of Harare. Surdax is also on the way to becoming ISO certified. Rose received the inaugural ZNCC WECA award in 2013.