

2010 Women Who Mean Business

Premium content from Washington Business Journal

Date: Friday, November 19, 2010, 6:00am EST

There's no particular formula that determines how someone makes it into our annual class of Women Who Mean Business. There are some hard and fast rules, to be certain: She must have achieved exceptional things during her career, with the quantitative and qualitative data to prove it. She must be an innovative, inspiring leader. She must be a woman with her eyes on the future, while firmly rooted in the lessons of the past.

But this year, as the judges reviewed each of the more than 125 nominations, one offered an observation that crystallized what often moves a candidate into the "yes" pile: Could others learn from this story?

This year's honorees all have lessons to share — in the ways they run their businesses, give back to the region and help lift up the next generation.

2010 Women Who Mean Business:

Mary Abbajay, principal and co-founder, Careerstone Group LLC

Laurie Battaglia, executive vice president and managing director, CQ Roll Call

Cynthia "Cindy" Castillo, president and CEO, CSSI Inc.

Linda Chatman Thomsen, partner, litigation department, Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP

Frances Crespo, owner, The Full Cup

Charlene Dukes, president, Prince George's Community College

Heather Burnett Gold, senior vice president of external affairs, XO Communications LLC

Ellen Kassoff Gray, co-owner, Equinox Restaurant

Ludy Green, president and founder, Second Chance Employment Services

Susan Haller, vice president of litigation, Sprint Nextel Corp.

Lisa Hook, CEO, Neustar Inc.

Holly Jones, senior vice president, corporate solutions, Jones Lang LaSalle Inc.

Lisa Kazor, president, CEO and acting chief operating officer, Savantage Solutions Inc.

Kathy Korman Frey, founder of Hot Mommas Project; founder and managing director of Vision Forward LLC

Debra Lacy, founder, president and CEO, Lacy Ltd.

Mary Naylor, CEO, VIP Desk Inc.

Denise Pope, mid-Atlantic market executive, Capital One Bank

Elizabeth Price, president, NoMa Business Improvement District

Sherry Rhodes, vice president, general counsel and chief ethics/compliance officer, Noblis Inc.

Michele A. Roberts, partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Argelia Rodriguez, president and CEO, D.C. College Access Program

Kimberly Russo, chief operating officer, The George Washington University Hospital

Danielle Saunders, president and founder, Accelligence LLC

Kitty Saylor, CEO, Rehau North America

Rebecca Schulte, senior vice president and general manager, Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic

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Debra Lacy



Photo by Joanne S. Lawton

Premium content from Washington Business Journal - by Mary Ellen Slayter

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Debra Lacy has successfully led the D.C. real estate investment and advisory company Lacy Ltd. for nearly 30 years. Her client list includes both U.S. and foreign investors.

Family: Lives in D.C. with her spouse and business partner, Benjamin

Education: Bachelor's degree, University of Florida
Master's degree, Memphis State University

First job: Working in my parents' shrimp business as a young child

Biggest challenge facing women in today's work environment: Getting to the top of one's profession while trying to meet work and family responsibilities.

What are you like to work for? Fair, understanding and reasonable, but expect best efforts, attention to detail, positive attitude, dedication, honesty and teamwork

Craziest career decision: Changed professions from audiology to commercial real estate and three years later (in 1981) started a woman-owned business in a male-dominated industry during a recession.

Advice to women starting out in business today: Learn as much as you can. Be creative, flexible, diligent, persistent. Maintain a positive attitude, find a mentor and get involved with your community

Link to Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5df-uyARIA&feature=player_embedded