

ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020

WILDLY
SUCCESSFUL



FWETM

FORUM FOR WOMEN
ENTREPRENEURS
www.fwe.ca

ABOUT US

The Forum for Women Entrepreneurs (FWE) is a Canadian charity that energizes, educates, mentors and connects women entrepreneurs to be wildly successful, promoting strengthened economies and thriving communities.

PURPOSE

Building the economy, one woman-owned business at a time.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Judy Brooks, FWE Chair + Entrepreneur
- Christina Anthony, FWE Founder + Chair Emeritus, Odlum Brown Limited
- Cheryl Carter, Carter Consulting
- Charles Chang, Lyra Growth Partners
- Katie Dunsworth-Reiach, Talk Shop Media
- Jill Earchy, Women's Enterprise Centre BC
- James Hatton, Farris, Vaughan, Wills & Murphy LLP
- Val Litwin, Leader & Community Volunteer
- Mike McKee, JAK'S Beer, Wine & Spirits
- Ravy Mehroke, Bombay Brow Bar & Bombay Beauty Co.
- Nicole Smith, Flytographer
- Amelia Thorn, Ancient Nutrition
- Brandi Wingrove, KPMG Enterprise

FWE is a Registered Canadian Charity: 861056646RR0001

HIGHLIGHTS

FWE partnered with the Women's Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub at Ryerson University and produce the digital platform: WEKH/FWE Sharing Platform, to connect women entrepreneurs from across Canada with one another and with female experts willing to support them. This bilingual platform lets people post asks for help and offers of support, building community one connection at a time.

In our first two seasons we have over 13,000 downloads and ranked Top 50 All Time Apple Canada Podcasts in the category of entrepreneurship

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO AND BOARD CHAIR

What a year it has been. As we wrapped up our fiscal year in June 2020, we could not have predicted that we would be in the midst of a global pandemic and facing what many would come to call a shecession and a call for deep racial justice. There is a lot we are proud to highlight this year as an organization, and, we would be remiss to not acknowledge how challenging of a time we know this has been for many business owners across the country. The need for dedicated and uniquely tailored to women support has been tremendously underscored and we stand firm in our commitment to ensure that we continue to leave no woman behind in the recovery and growth years ahead.

Fall 2019 saw us growing our educational programs across the country – from expanding our reach in receiving a record number of 207 Pitch for the Purse applications, to over 350 women receiving dedicated mentorship including an expansion of the program to Quebec, to an incredible 3 days together at E-Series in Toronto with 31 growth-oriented entrepreneurs. We also launched our new Podcast, The Go-To: For Entrepreneurs in the Know, where we interviewed Canadian entrepreneurs and brought forward tangible business lessons and their growth stories. The podcast quickly reached over 11,000 downloads and was named ranked Top 50 All Time Apple Canada Podcast chart in the category of entrepreneurship.

The 18th annual Odium Brown FWE Gala was one for the books for many reasons, not the least of which being that it was one the last large in-person events many in Vancouver attended. With nearly 800 guests, the room was filled with energy of support for our finalists: Taran and Bunny Ghatrora of Blume from British

Columbia, Kate Swanson of ENSEMBL from Ontario, and the winner, Lynn Dargis of Farmbucks from Alberta. Thanks to tremendous work of our Gala Committee and generosity of our community, we raised a record \$900,000 and put simply, these funds have enabled FWE to keep its lights on and doors wide open for what would soon become the most critical time of need for business owners.

As soon as the pandemic hit, FWE turned its attention to provide immediate and tangible support for the acute needs women entrepreneurs across the country were facing. We delivered free webinars, powered by our community partners and women in our network, where we shared knowledge on accessing resources to and addressing topics such as employment law, and over 770 women utilized these sessions.

May 2020 would have seen us gathering in-person in Vancouver for E-Series West, which as of end of March, was oversubscribed. We made the decision to postpone the program to Fall 2020 as we heard women express that they weren't ready for that kind of education. Instead, we quickly created and delivered a brand new, and free, offering: The Resilience Program, with the vision of supporting women in building their resilience through tangible expertise, workbooks, and facilitated community. Over 900 women engaged with the Program. Simultaneously, we partnered with the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub to launch a digital platform, facilitating connections for women across the country to support one another in asking for support and sharing their generosity.

This year also held a personal for FWE loss, with two of our past Board Directors, Robert Eckley and Kevin Zakus, passing away. We are grateful for their leadership and generous support of FWE over the years and feel deeply for their families and close ones.

We wrapped up the year feeling incredibly generous and tremendously committed to continuing our work. To the team, who has shown up every day with an attitude of “how can we help”, to our Board, Gala Committee, speakers, mentors, champions, volunteers, donors and sponsors, our deepest gratitude for your engagement, passion, and activation.

The year ahead will undoubtedly call for great impact and leadership and we are very proud and grateful for the opportunity to serve Canadian women entrepreneurs during this time and to leave no woman behind.

Thank you for being on this journey with us.

Judy Brooks, Chair

Paulina Cameron, CEO



OUR 2019-2020 IMPACT



1,500

WOMEN SUPPORTED FROM 2019-2020



146

UNIQUE COMMUNITIES



8

PROVINCES



7

EVENTS HOSTED



5,600

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS



41,000

WOMEN REACHED

“Truly incredible program from start to finish. It was extremely well organized and because of that facilitated close bonds in such a short period of time.”

E-SERIES EAST ATTENDEE



YEAR IN REVIEW

E-SERIES

May 2020 would have seen us gathering in-person in Vancouver for E-Series West. We were ready to welcome over 60 women entrepreneurs who had applied from 5 provinces to join us for three days of education, community and growth. As so much was unknown still about the COVID pandemic and health advisories restricted gatherings,

FWE made the decision to postpone the program until Fall 2020, rather than move it online. It was clear that the pandemic was greatly impacting women and FWE understood that the delivery of timely and acute resources and information was the right way to support women entrepreneurs during this time.

33 WOMEN FROM A VARIETY OF AGES, STAGES AND BACKGROUNDS, REPRESENTING **13 UNIQUE COMMUNITIES** ACROSS **4 PROVINCES**.

all in a growth mindset, dedicating 3 days to work ON their business (as opposed to the daily "IN" their business)



60
E-SERIES WEST APPLICATIONS

33
E-SERIES EAST PARTICIPANTS



“I feel so motivated and more clear on my vision. Not only in my business but my overall self.”

E-SERIES EAST ATTENDEE



“Networking, feedback from mentors/experts/other participants, feeling the motivation to work on my business and realizing that I’ve been in autopilot mode (it was a real eye opener!).”

MEHNAZ MALIK
NATARI DESIGNS
(E-SERIES WEST 2019)



EVE LAIRD

of Eve’s Crackers was our 2019 E-Series East, Force to Be Reckoned With Award Recipient

“My mentor has assisted in making our business a business with a strategic vision, values and actions to direct our future.”

FWE MENTEE

MENTOR PROGRAM

FWE’s mentor program continued to thrive this past year. Our growing Toronto presence contributed to a significant increase in the total number of mentor pairings supported across Canada. Our mentors are experienced business leaders (women and men) from various iconic brands and companies, including lululemon, Coca-Cola, Aritzia, Nurse Next Door, Native Shoes, MEC, Mabel’s Labels, Herschel Supply Company, London Drugs, and many more.

429 WOMEN SUPPORTED

75 UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

7 PROVINCES



“Believing in yourself can be the hardest thing as an entrepreneur. If I can help new entrepreneurs believe in themselves and flourish, I feel I’ve helped as a mentor.”

LYNN WILLIAMS | THE LIFESTYLE PROTECTOR, FWE MENTOR

5-DAY RESILIENCE PROGRAM

Supplementing “The Go-To: Special Edition” mini-series, FWE offered an opportunity for entrepreneurs to deepen their learning experience and connect with peers from across the country through a free, virtual, 5-Day Resilience Program. Alongside the 5 podcast episodes, participants received a comprehensive workbook based on the episode, opportunity to participate in daily virtual connects with other entrepreneurs, and access to a

live, webinar event with breakout rooms hosted by the podcast speakers. The program was very well received with 82% of survey respondents saying the program will make them more resilient in the future.

920 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

200+ ATTENDED DAILY CONNECTS



“It helped me to remember that resilience to each person is going to be different for every individual. Just hearing each speaker’s input and advice helped me to realize as an entrepreneur that you really need to be solid within yourself. No one is going to push your business forth for you. You’ve got to really connect to your inner desires, truth and values and believe in yourself unconditionally. It definitely helped me to release some of my own fear around entrepreneurship.”

5-DAY RESILIENCE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

207 WOMEN SUPPORTED

58 UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

8 PROVINCES



“I loved and enjoyed the entire experience. It was most definitely the highlight of my business thus far. I have every confidence in myself and my business to succeed. You gave me the first platform to share my company. I am ever so grateful for that. The support I received was the most meaningful for me.”

JESSICA OBLAK
COPPER MEDICAL, 2018 PITCH FOR THE PURSE FINALIST



14 PITCH COACHES

2 EXPERT JUDGES

3 JUDGE MENTORS + 1 SPECIAL JUDGE MENTOR

PITCH FOR THE PURSE

In its fourth year, the Pitch for the Purse program received a hugely positive response both in applications to the Program and interest in supporting our women entrepreneurs. We received over 207 applications from across Canada, which were narrowed down to a top 40 for consideration by our experienced review panel. 14 Semi-Finalists were chosen to move forward: four in Toronto and eight in Vancouver. Our Judge



Mentors Abigail Slater, Brian Paes-Braga, Manny Padda, and our special guest Richard Jaffray faced the hard task of selecting three final ventures to move forward to the finale. FWE was proud to support Kate Swanson of Ensembl, Taran and Bunny Ghatrora of Blume and Lynn Dargis of Farmbucks at the Pitch for the Purse Finale at the Odium Brown FWE Gala on February 20, 2020. The Finalists shared their visions in front of our 750+ person audience and our two Expert Judges Tracey McVicar and Charles Chang, and then the audience live voted to pick the 2020 Pitch for the Purse winner: Lynn Dargis of Farmbucks.

THE GO-TO: FOR ENTREPRENEURS IN THE KNOW

In October of 2019, FWE launched “The Go-To: For Entrepreneurs in the Know” a podcast produced in collaboration with The Scotiabank Women Initiative™ featuring 27 speakers. This podcast offers listeners the opportunity to dive into the minds of some of Canada’s most successful entrepreneurs and walk away with tangible insights and helpful resources. Produced in both English and French episodes, listeners heard tangible takeaways and

entrepreneurial secrets from business owners designed to help elevate their business.

The Go-To: Special Edition Mini-Series

In light of COVID-19, The Go-To: Special Edition mini-series featured 5 episodes covering topics necessary for building and strengthening resilience, weaving in stories of resilience in action. Released on June 8-12, 2020, these episodes resulted in 2490 downloads over the week!



11,000 DOWNLOADS
13 EPISODES

PODCAST SEASON 1 HIGHLIGHTS

Taran Ghatrora and Traci Costa shared their insights in fundraising in the very first episode of The Go-To! Charles Chang, FWE Board Member, discussed what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Natalie Volland, Founder of GI Quo Vadis + Quebecois native, offered her knowledge about leading a social enterprise.



18TH ANNUAL ODLUM BROWN FWE GALA

On February 20, 2020 we hosted our 18th annual Gala at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. FWE's 18th annual Gala was an event like no other. Our largest and most successful to date, we welcomed over 760 guests and raised a record-breaking \$900,000 for our game-changing programming. Lynn Dargis, CEO of Alberta-based Farmbucks, won the \$25,000 cash prize, and a live auction and audience-wide

fundraiser led by NY-based Harry Santa-Olalla had the room excited and motivated to give. FWE is so grateful to all those who gave that night, as it has allowed FWE to keep our doors open during the COVID-19 pandemic which hit Canada shortly thereafter.

760+
ATTENDEES

\$900,000
RAISED



“Testimonial: “Hats off to you and your team for an amazing night! We all enjoyed it thoroughly and left all inspired. I don’t go to many galas but imagine FWE Pitch for the Purse is THE gala of the year. And such a worthy cause! Also, great to see how the funds raised by FWE have such a concrete impact.”

GALA 2020 ATTENDEE



Gala Committee

Thank you to the Gala Committee for their tremendous energy and contributions to making the Event of the Year such a success.

Christina Anthony (Co-Chair)
Lara Dauphinee (Co-Chair)
Kristy Brinkley
Dave Bustos
Amy Carruthers

Cheryl Carter
Tara Clark
Jenny DeJong
Soha Lavin
Gabrielle Malette

Jennifer McCarron
Susannah Pierce
Andrew Reid
Samantha Reynolds
Poonam Varshney

FINANCIALS

Financial Statements audited by BDO Canada LLP.

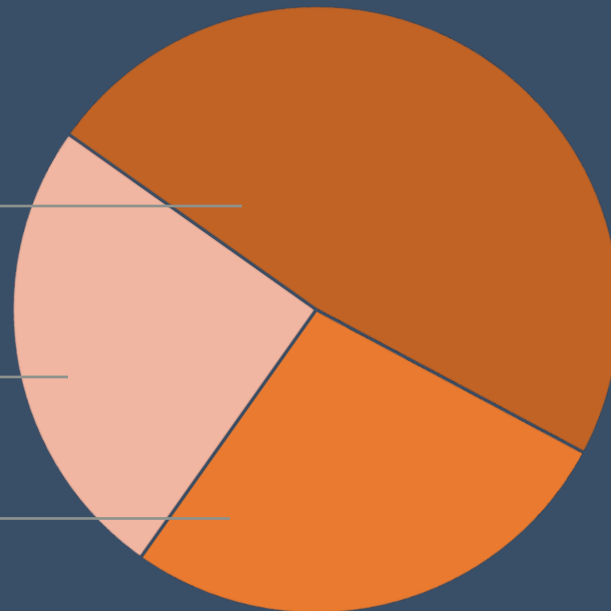
\$1.57M

TOTAL REVENUE

48%
SPONSORSHIP

25%
PROGRAM + EVENT REVENUE

27%
DONATIONS + OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS



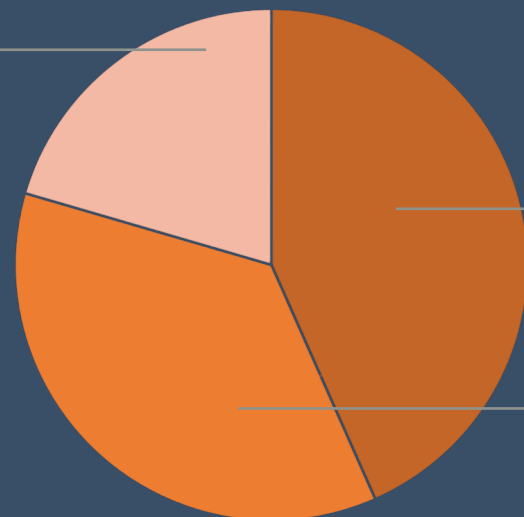
20%
OPERATIONS

\$1.29M

INVESTMENT IN IMPACT

44%
PROGRAM + OUTREACH

36%
FUNDRAISING + GROWTH



The copy of the financial statements can be obtained on the FWE website or by emailing info@fwe.ca

OUR SPONSORS + PARTNERS

SPONSORS

- Aritzia
- Beedie
- Bennett Jones LLP
- BMW - Vancouver Area BMW Retailers
- Cassels LLP
- CIBC Wood Gundy Allan Bush
- EY
- Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP
- First Light Foundation
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- lululemon
- Odlum Brown Limited
- Peter and Joanne Brown Foundation
- PwC
- RBC Foundation
- Ryerson University (WEKH)
- Scotiabank
- Shopify
- Small Business Roundtable
- TD
- Teck Resources
- TELUS
- Thunderbird Entertainment
- UBC Sauder School of Business

- Uber
- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Wheaton Precious Metals

EVENT PARTNERS

- Apex Event Rentals
- ARC Document Solutions
- Drake One Fifty
- Eclat Décor
- Fairmont Hotel Vancouver
- Givergy
- Greenscape Design & Décor
- Hilton
- nud fud
- Proshow Audio Visual
- Raiz
- Richard's Models
- RM Artists
- Stand & Deliver Performance Coaching
- Starlight Casino
- Tantalus Vineyards
- The Bullet
- Yaletown Photography

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- BC Chamber of Commerce
- Female Funders
- Futurpreneur Canada
- League of Innovators
- SFU Venture Connect
- Small Business BC
- Spring
- Startup Toronto
- Startup Canada
- WEConnect International
- Women's Enterprise Centre
- Web Alliance of Women Business Networks in BC
- Women's Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub
- Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada

DONORS + SUPPORTERS

FWE is deeply grateful for the generosity of our Donors, whose contributions helped us strengthen the economy and empower women entrepreneurs across Canada to become #wildlysuccessful.

\$30K +

Christina and Matthew Anthony

\$10K +

Quiet Cove Foundation	Tracey McVicar
Ms. Karen Flavelle and Mr. Colin McTavish	PNG Enterprise Foundation
Cactus Restaurants Inc.	Andrew Latchford
The Butterfield Corporation	Randy Smallwood

\$5K +

Vivian Zalkow	Gadhia Family Fund
Ann Glazier-Rothwell	Dr. Caitlin Dunne Inc

\$3K +

Samantha Ellis
Chloe Gow-Jarret

\$1K +

150 other generous donors



TEAM

Paulina Cameron	Melodie Gingras	Lisa Niemetscheck
Kate Duggan	Monica Murray	Gaby Rice
		Erika Thomas





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