WJA
WOMEN'S JEWELRY ASSOCIATION

Women's Jewelry Association Launches Jewelry & Watches Mentorship Cohort with Mentoro

March 26, 2026 (New York, NY)—The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA), in partnership with Mentoro, officially launched its Jewelry & Watches mentorship cohort in New York, bringing together industry leaders and emerging talent for an evening centered on connection, guidance, and the future of the jewelry and watch industry.

Hosted at the New York headquarters of Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., the event marked the beginning of a long-term collaboration between WJA and Mentoro—designed to expand access to mentorship and support the next generation of leaders across the industry.

The evening convened mentors and mentees spanning design, buying, merchandising, finance, marketing, e-commerce, and supply chain, alongside industry leaders committed to investing in future talent. Together, they represent a more connected, cross-functional approach to leadership development.

Opening remarks from Sandra Abi-Rashed, Founder of Mentoro, and Gabrielle Grazi, Executive Chair of WJA, set the tone for a mentorship model rooted in access, connection, and meaningful human impact.

"Mentorship creates the moments that change trajectories," said Abi-Rashed. "At Mentoro, our focus is on the human experience—ensuring every participant feels seen, supported, and connected throughout the journey."

Grazi added, "The response from the community has been clear: this is mentorship that works. Not performative, but personal. Not transactional, but transformative. And in an industry navigating change, that distinction matters. We are not just building a program—we are building a pipeline of future leaders."

At its core, the initiative reflects a simple but powerful belief: one meaningful conversation can change the trajectory of a career. That spirit was evident throughout the evening, as mentors and mentees engaged in conversations designed to foster genuine connection and long-term relationships.

Remarks from Tanner Burns, Executive VP Northeast, Gallagher, and Luis Spencer Freitas, Senior Director Digital Route to Consumer and Marketing, Moët Hennessy, reinforced the broader context, highlighting the legacy of women in leadership through the story of Veuve Clicquot, a pioneering businesswoman who redefined an industry. The choice of Veuve Clicquot as the evening's champagne served as a deliberate symbol of resilience, innovation, and the enduring impact of women shaping industries.

A featured panel discussion, moderated by Cate Luzio, Founder and CEO of Luminary, brought together notable leadership: David McMillan, Creative Director, Penman For Hire; Esther Fortunoff-Greene, President of EFG Design; Jill Katz, Chief People Officer & Founder at Assemble; and Abby Wallach, CEO of The House of Scentivent Technologies. The conversation explored leadership, career navigation, and the role of mentorship in shaping long-term success, offering both practical insight and personal perspective.

A defining moment of the evening came with the mentor-mentee reveal. Pairings were shared live with participants, transforming anticipation into immediate connection as conversations began in real time.

The program now transitions into a structured cohort experience, including workshops led by cross-industry leaders such as Michelle Carter of Mastercard, Gaelle Devins of Breitling, and Learning & Development expert Tisha Clark. The experience is anchored by a commitment to one-on-one engagement, including three dedicated mentor-mentee sessions designed to foster meaningful, personalized connections.

"This is how industries evolve—not only through innovation, but through people," said Grazi. "By creating access and building meaningful relationships, we are investing in the future of our industry."

This launch marks the beginning of a long-term collaboration between WJA and Mentoro, grounded in a shared commitment to advancing women through structured mentorship, cross-industry partnership, and meaningful connection.

WJA remains committed to advancing women in the jewelry and watch industry by inviting the outside in—bringing together diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise to shape what comes next.

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LINK TO VIEW MENTORS: https://mentoro.co/jewelrywatchesny26/

LINK WJA: https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/

About Women's Jewelry Association (WJA)

The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA) is a leading global 501c(6)organization committed to supporting and advancing women working across all areas of the jewelry and watch industries. Through networking, mentorship, and education, WJA empowers members to lead with confidence, advance their careers, and build meaningful connections. WJA is a dynamic and welcoming professional community, championing women's success and helping shape a more inclusive, forward-thinking industry.

About Mentoro

Mentoro is a 501c(3) organization whose mentorship program focuses on meaningful, human-centered connections that support leadership growth and career transformation.

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