



WOMEN'S JEWELRY ASSOCIATION

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**3 AUGUST 2021**

### **WJA Invites Industry Leaders Dedicated to Responsible Business to Attend its Awards for Excellence Gala this Fall**

*The fundraiser will support WJA's innovative and forward-looking programming focused on diversity, equity and inclusion, responsible sourcing and sustainability, and leadership development.*

On October 20, 2021, WJA will transform the Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers in New York City into an inspiring space highlighting its event theme *Building Resilience with Responsible Business*. The VIP fundraiser will gather together 250 guests in person and hundreds more virtually for an evening of networking and to celebrate its two Visionary Award winners: Karen Goracke, CEO of Borsheims, and Fern Mallis, creator of New York Fashion Week and former Executive Director of the Council of Fashion Designers of America.

WJA's biggest fundraiser of the year comes as a long-awaited and exciting opportunity for jewelry and watch professionals to connect with each other after many months apart. Attendees will enjoy an extended cocktail hour, theater-style program, and an after-party offering ample time to mingle with industry leaders and colleagues.

During the event, WJA will share the importance of operating a responsible business and will showcase how its industry partners have embraced this business model. The fundraiser will help to support WJA's programs, including the recent launch of WJA Foundation's *Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund*, its *Conversations on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* program, and WJA's *Masterclass* leadership development series.

The program will be shared virtually across our membership and the greater industry to increase accessibility. The virtual presentation will also include a special keynote from



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Tensie Whelan, the former President of Rainforest Alliance and the current Director of New York University's Center for Sustainable Business. Individual tickets for the in-person and virtual event can be purchased starting at the end of August.

About WJA's Visionary Award Winners:

Karen Goracke has had a lengthy and distinguished career at Borsheims Fine Jewelry and Gifts, one of the country's largest independent jewelry stores. Before being named President and CEO by Warren Buffett, Karen served in a variety of roles focused on inventory management and sales. She possesses an intricate depth of knowledge not only of Borsheims but of the worldwide jewelry industry.

Hailed as the award-winning creator of NEW YORK FASHION WEEK, Fern Mallis has been called an industry titan, Fashion doyenne, and the godmother of Fashion. After two decades at the Council of Fashion Designers of America and IMG Fashion, Fern is currently President of her fashion and design consultancy and serves on the board of the FIT Foundation.

WJA invites companies and organizations that foster responsible business practices to sponsor its gala and programming. More information about the event can be found here: <https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/awardsforexcellence>

Donations to WJA Foundation can be made directly here: <https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/foundation>

About the Women's Jewelry Association:

WJA's mission is to help women in the jewelry and watch industries advance and develop professionally through networking, education, and leadership development. For more information, visit [www.womensjewelryassociation.com](http://www.womensjewelryassociation.com).



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