

The Women's Jewelry Association Announces an Affiliation Agreement with the WJA Foundation

Gabrielle Grazi is named President-Elect of the Women's Jewelry Association and will partner with the newly elected Foundation governing board on its growth.



New York, NY. January 19, 2024. Furthering the mission to unite and empower women in the trade, the [Women's Jewelry Association](#) (WJA), a 501(c)(6), and the [WJA Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3), are collaborating through a new nonprofit affiliation agreement. Through the new partnership, the WJA National President will cooperate and oversee the direction of the Foundation, alongside the new Foundation governing board Vice President, Treasurer, and VP Communications.

The move, which has been in development since 2022 by the WJA executive committee, marks a milestone in developing a more cohesive organizational structure for the WJA. By creating a direct alliance, operational efficiency will increase, with greater opportunities to fundraise for member grants and scholarships. Select WJA Programs, such as The Jewelry Loupe Project, a six-month accelerator project for emerging designers, will become a part of the WJA Foundation, allowing more flexibility and growth options for corporate sponsorships to support initiatives, in addition to scholarships and grants.

In seamlessly bringing together sides of the organization, Gabrielle Grazi assumes the new role of WJA National President-Elect, after serving as the President of the WJA Foundation, where she contributed significantly to furthering the WJA's mission of offering educational and business opportunities for women, enabling

them to achieve their full career potential. Grazi, who is also VP, Head Retail Strategy and Partnerships of the Natural Diamond Council, says, “With the alignment of the Association and Foundation we will continue to both provide and maximize opportunities for networking, professional development and financial support for all WJA members who are beginning, advancing or enriching their careers and who are looking to make an impact in our industry.”

Gabrielle Grazi brings an impressive professional background to her new role, while currently the VP of Retail Strategy & Partnerships at the Natural Diamond Council, where she plays a crucial role in positioning the NDC as the definitive authority on natural diamonds across North America. Her responsibilities include steering retailer strategy, integrating global campaigns, and enhancing educational resources within the industry.

Prior to her tenure at the Natural Diamond Council, Grazi spent seven years at Signet Jewelers, where her transformative leadership significantly elevated operations, talent development, and strategic initiatives. Her dedication to maximizing opportunities, improving customer experiences, and driving brand recognition resulted in substantial revenue and profitability growth across the organization. A passionate advocate for equity, inclusion, and workplace culture, Gabrielle Grazi has demonstrated her commitment to fostering collaboration and diversity. Her tenure as Chair of the Signet Women’s Business Resource Group, along with her advisory role on Signet’s Diversity Leadership Team, underscores her dedication to creating inclusive work environments. Gabrielle's career also includes impactful roles at Liz Claiborne, Juicy Couture, and Limited Too, where she honed her skills in retail, leadership, and team development.

As Gabrielle Grazi steps into her role as President-Elect, she aims to further the WJA's mission by expanding educational initiatives, fostering networking

opportunities, and advocating for the professional growth of women in the jewelry and watch industries. "I look forward to continuing my journey with the WJA working with our incredible board, as well as being in service to our members. I appreciate Susan's expression of confidence in my ability to lead the future of the organization," states Gabrielle.

In addition, WJA is delighted to introduce the members of the 2024 Foundation board, each contributing their distinct expertise to fortifying the mission. Nikia Levesque, the Vice President of Marketing at Day's Jewelers, assumes the role of Foundation Vice President, bringing extensive experience in marketing and strategic development. Annie Doresca, the Chief Financial Officer at Jewelers of America, continues to play a vital role on the board as Treasurer, providing invaluable financial acumen. Tiffany Stevens, President, CEO, and General Counsel for Jewelers Vigilance Committee, remains dedicated in her VP Communications role, leveraging her comprehensive industry background to enhance outreach efforts. Together, this committed board stands united in advancing the foundation's dedication to empowering and promoting women in the jewelry industry.

Grazi's appointment, and that of the new Foundation board members, signifies a new chapter in the organization's ongoing commitment to supporting the careers of women within the jewelry and watch trade. "I have enjoyed working with Gabrielle during my tenure and look forward to the invaluable input she brings to pursue our mission. Her deep experience and strategic perspective to support the current and future members of WJA is important, as we align the foundation and association and create a holistic approach," says Susan Chandler, WJA President and Chief Merchandising Officer for Citizen Watch America.

The Women's Jewelry Association, founded in 1983, is dedicated to advancing women professionals in the jewelry and watch industries. It offers networking opportunities, educational resources, scholarships, and recognition programs that celebrate women's achievements in the field. The organization's recent [Ruby Gala](#) fundraiser, hosted at the iconic Pool in New York City last month, exemplified its commitment to fostering camaraderie and support. The gala not only celebrated achievements but also raised crucial funds to further WJA initiatives. Throughout the year WJA hosts a variety of signature programs, including: WJA Masterclasses, an annual Executive Leadership Forum, March is Me Month, Jewelry Night Out as part of Membership Month, In the Know, the Gem DIVA Design Competition, a Chapter Leadership Conference, and the Shining Star Awards.

Beyond events, WJA's core lies in its extensive networking and mentorship opportunities across its chapters. The recent launch of the Toronto chapter marks a significant stride in expanding its reach and impact, providing a platform for women in the jewelry industry to connect, share insights, and access invaluable mentorship.

For more information about the Women's Jewelry Association, visit <https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/>; to become an individual or corporate member, or inquire about sponsorship and partnership opportunities email info@womensjewelryassociation.com. For inquiries regarding this press release, contact [Pietra Communications](#) by calling 212-913-9761 or email info@pietrapr.com.

About the Women's Jewelry Association:

The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA) is a trailblazing organization dedicated to empowering and advancing women within the jewelry and watch industries. In 1983, WJA was founded on the belief that women could create lasting change by

connecting, mentoring, and recognizing one another's accomplishments. Today, WJA stands as a global network of professionals spanning diverse roles, from designers and manufacturers to retailers and media representatives. The organization's mission is to facilitate professional growth through networking, education, leadership development, and a wide range of member services. Through its numerous chapters across the U.S. and around the world, WJA offers a spectrum of benefits, including networking events, educational programs, mentoring initiatives, scholarships, and grants.

About the Women's Jewelry Association Foundation:

The WJA Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Women's Jewelry Association (WJA), dedicated to furthering the organization's mission of providing women in the jewelry and watch industries with educational and business opportunities to help them achieve their full career potential. The Foundation operates as a 501(c)(3) corporation, actively engaging individuals and corporations to contribute and make meaningful impact through the distribution of scholarships and grants.