

# TURNING Point



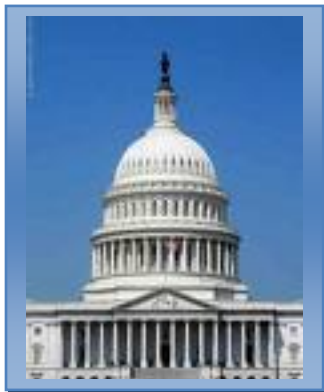
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WOMEN CONSTRUCTION OWNERS & EXECUTIVES, USA

January 2009

## Inside This Issue

- 1 **Message from the President**
- 2 **Executive Director's Report**
- 2 **Upcoming Events**
- 2 **Quote of the Month**
- 3 **President-Elect Obama Issues Policy Statement Supporting Women-Owned Businesses**
- 4 **"Give Me Five" Update**
- 5 **ABC Achieves Historic Membership Milestone**
- 5 **Major Changes in FMLA Impact Businesses with More Than 50 Employees (continued from page 5)**
- 7 **WCOE Annual Meeting Registration Form**
- 8 **WCOE Annual Meeting Tentative Schedule**



WCOE

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## Message from the President

By Deborah E.G. Wilder

With only a few months left in my term, I feel an urgency for you to get the most out of your WCOE membership. This issue of the Turning point is particularly packed full of good information about growing your business, new laws and regulations, etc. In this economy, we all need to think and work smarter...not harder. Please avail yourself of the FREE seminars from the Give me 5% program through WIPP and American Express. WCOE is a national partner of WIPP and so all of our members can sign up for a number of free seminars. If you have never done federal work, but are thinking about entering that field, there are introductory classes for you. If you are also registered with the CCR but are not getting as much work as you would like, there are intermediate and advanced classes for you as well. Please check out the article and these opportunities.

Those miserable small business regulations we have been fighting for the better part of the last 4 years have been extended again by the SBA. (This was done at the request of Senators Snowe and Kerry). This means that any final decisions about the SBA program for WBEs will rest with the new administration.

Later this month, we will be witnessing a historic event when Barack Obama is sworn in as president. He has stated his commitment to women business issues. Our annual meeting in Washington D.C. this March will give us an opportunity to have meeting with members of the new administration and learn about their new programs and policies. Please be sure to mark your calendars now and make your reservations to attend our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting. It will be an information packed meeting. [Registration information is in this issue! See page 7-8!](#)

Finally, WCOE has taken a stand to support the Women Contractors Association in Houston, Texas. Recent litigation has caused the City to consider abolishing the WBE goals program for women in the construction industry, while maintaining the WBE goals in all other industries as well as maintaining all WBE goals. Did they think we would quietly go home? WCOE has stepped up to the plate by writing the Mayor of Houston and sending press releases to local papers decrying the discriminatory and unfair treatment of women businesses by the City of Houston. We are hopeful that by drawing statewide and national attention to this issue, we will encourage City officials to value the contribution that women businesses owners make to their community and see that the lawsuit is resolved in a way that is fair to the women business owners.

## Executive Director's Report

By Ginny Douglas

January is a great month to catch up and prepare for WCOE's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. Make your reservations at the Willard and set aside the time to network and meet new leaders in the new Administration and in the Congress. Please look for more details in this issue of the Turning Point.

Our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Video is being prepared. WE NEED YOUR PHOTOS from previous WCOE meetings. Please scan and email them to me ASAP at [info@wcoeusa.org](mailto:info@wcoeusa.org) quickly! It would help if you can identify the people and the event. This will make our Anniversary Video all the more spectacular!

A few of you need to renew your WCOE Membership. Let me know if your Renewal Application got buried and you need a new copy. As always, I am eager to hear from you about any ideas or suggestions you may have! [info@wcoeusa.org](mailto:info@wcoeusa.org) or 800-788-3548.



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## Upcoming Events

**International Home Builders' Show**  
Whirlpool (Corporate Alliance Partner)  
Las Vegas, NV  
January 20-23, 2009

**World of Concrete**  
Las Vegas, NV  
February 3-6, 2009

**WCOE Annual Meeting**  
The Willard Hotel  
Washington, D.C.  
March 22-24, 2009

**WCOE Mid-Year Meeting**  
Las Vegas, NV  
September 13-14, 2009

**Regional WCOE Conference  
and Coalition Annual Banquet**  
Kansas City, MO  
October 4-5, 2009

(If you know of events, that you would like to see added to this section of the Turning Point, please email the information to Ginny Douglas, Executive Director at: [info@wcoeusa.org](mailto:info@wcoeusa.org))

## Quote of the Month

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

~Eleanor Roosevelt

## President-Elect Obama Issues Policy Statement supporting Women Owned Businesses

By Deborah E.G. Wilder

President - Elect Obama has recently unveiled his commitment to women owned businesses and his proposal on economic issues. These include:

**Investing in Women-Owned Small Businesses:** Women are majority owners of more than 28 percent of U.S. businesses, but head less than 4 percent of venture capital-backed firms. Women business owners are more likely than white male business owners to have their loan applications denied. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will encourage investing in women-owned businesses, providing more support to women business owners, and reducing discrimination in lending.

**Encouraging Retirement Saving: Create Automatic Workplace Pensions:** The Obama-Biden retirement security plan will automatically enroll workers in a workplace pension plan. Under this plan, employers who do not currently offer a retirement plan will be required to enroll their employees in a direct-deposit IRA account that is compatible with existing direct-deposit payroll systems. Employees may opt out if they choose. Experts estimate that this program will increase the savings participation rate for low and middle-income workers from its current 15 percent level to around 80 percent.

For more information and updates on other policy issues go to: [www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov)

WCOE, WIPP, and many other women business groups will be meeting and encouraging the new President to address important economic issues relating to federal procurement, net worth issues and contract bundling.

### National Regional Directors



#### **Nancy Goshow**

Northeast  
Goshow Architects LLP  
Managing Partner  
New York, NY

#### **Rosana Privitera-Biondo**

Central  
Mark One Electric Company, Inc.  
President  
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#### **Gina Raffin**

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President  
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Alhambra, California

#### **Rosemary R. Barbour**

Southeast  
Alcatec LLC  
Flowood, MISS

#### **Caryn Boisen**

National Regional Director  
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### Executive Committee

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#### **Theresa Kern**

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CEI Group  
VP & General Council  
Howell, MI  
P: 517-548-0039

## “Give Me Five” Update

Give Me 5 is a national program from Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) and American Express OPEN<sup>sm</sup> designed to help women business owners apply for and secure federal procurement opportunities. Give Me 5 derives its name from the Equity in Contracting for Women Act (2000), which stipulates that federal contracting officers award 5% of all contracts to women-owned businesses. With women presently receiving 3.4% of federal contract dollars, Give Me 5 aims to increase the representation of women-owned businesses that win government contracts by providing resources and information to make it easier for women to register their businesses with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the first step to gain eligibility to apply for federal contracts.

Federal contracts represent an enormous opportunity for the growth of women’s entrepreneurship. Women business owners could gain more than \$5 billion in annual revenues by reaching the 5% contracting goal, according to a statement issued by the U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee in March 2007. Through a blend of seminars, events and online resources, the Give Me 5 is helping women understand key steps they must take to prepare to apply for federal contracts, including registering a business with the CCR, certifying a business as woman-owned, identifying contract opportunities and writing solid proposals.

Contact Megan Markoff at 888.488.WIPP or via email at [mmarkoff@wipp.org](mailto:mmarkoff@wipp.org) to get registered on the CCR and for more information on Give Me 5. We encourage you to participate in upcoming Give Me 5 federal contracting training sessions:

➤ **Give Me 5 Training 106: Does the Government Buy What I Sell?**

Thursday, January 15, 2009, 3pm EST / 12pm PST

Find out if the Federal Government buys the product or service your business offers. Learn ways to research what they are buying, when they are buying and who buys the most so you can establish which agencies you will target when marketing. You will also learn how to determine if your price will be competitive with other vendors already offering the government products and services similar to yours. Course Instructor: Kaye Mitchell, President, Certify to Success. [Click here](#) to register now.

➤ **Give Me 5 Training 201: What to Expect When Doing Business with the Federal Government?**

Wednesday, January 21, 2009, 3pm EST / 12pm PST

Participants will come away with a blueprint of how to begin doing business with the Federal Government, from how to get GSA schedules and set aside designations to a discussion of IDIQ’s, GWACs and sole source set asides. Course Instructor: Charlene Turczyn, President, CMW and Associates Corporation. Participants must be WIPP Members. [Click here](#) to register now.

➤ **Give Me 5 Training 107: Four Easy Lessons in Free Market Research**

Wednesday, January 28, 2009, 3pm EST / 12pm PST

One thing is certain: if you want to win government business, you’re going to spend time and you’re going to spend money. All you get to choose is the mix. This vital one-hour webinar will show you how to find competitive intelligence and prospects from four free courses that will make your marketing and research budget go further when you’re just getting started. Course Instructor: Judy Bradt, Principal, Summit Insight. [Click here](#) to register now.

➤ **Give Me 5 Training 202: Exploring New Frontiers**

Wednesday, February 4, 2009, 3pm EST / 12pm PST

Guide to searching through FedBizOpps and using it as a marketing tool, along with the GSA Schedule and the CCR, as well as examining capture planning as a jump start to determine if the opportunity is right for your business. Course Instructor: Donn Miller-Kermani, Director, Women’s Business Center – Florida Institute of Technology. Participants must be WIPP Members. [Click here](#) to register now.

**\*These classes are all free to WCOE members as WCOE is a National Partner of WIPP\***

## Major Changes in FMLA Impact Businesses with more than 50 Employees

The Family Medical Leave Act has been substantially amended and change will be effective January 16, 2009. This will impact employers with 50 or more employees. The changes are too long to summarize in a single article, but WCOE provides you with this brief summary of recent changes relating to Notices to employees about FMLA right and expansion of FMLA right to family of service members. For more information, go to: <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/>

The final regulations now provide for four separate types of FMLA notice that must be provided by employers to employees: (1) “general notice” of employee FMLA rights, (2) “eligibility notice” to employees requesting FMLA leave, (3) “rights and responsibilities notice” to employees, and (4) “designation notice” indicating whether a given absence qualifies for FMLA leave.

“General notice” includes the conspicuous placement of the familiar poster listing employees’ FMLA rights, but the final regulations also include a requirement that new employees be separately apprised of their FMLA rights in writing, in an employee handbook or otherwise “upon hiring.” 29 CFR § 825.300(a).

“Eligibility notice” is largely a new concept in the final regulations. When an employee requests (or the employer identifies) a potential FMLA-qualifying leave for the first time during the applicable 12-month period, the employer must notify the employee of their FMLA eligibility status within 5 business days. If the employee is not eligible for FMLA leave, the notice must state “at least one reason” why the employee is ineligible. If the employee’s eligibility does not change by the next time FMLA leave is requested, no new eligibility notice needs to be provided. 29 CFR § 825.300(b). While eligibility notice may be provided by the employer orally or in writing, an approved form for this eligibility notice is provided by the DOL in an appendix to the final regulations.

“Rights and responsibilities notice” must be provided to employees in writing, detailing the employer’s expectations and any consequences of the employee’s failure to meet these expectations under the FMLA. Such notice must be provided with the “eligibility notice” .....  
(Continued on Page 6....)



## ABC Achieves Historic Membership Milestone

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) today announced that the association has hit the 25,000 membership mark. ABC's membership is comprised primarily of companies that perform work in the commercial and industrial sectors of the construction industry. This is the 15th time in 16 years that association membership has grown, and membership has increased 35 percent over the last 10 years.

Associated Builders and Contractors was launched in a Baltimore, Md., living room in 1950 by seven construction contractors who shared the belief that construction projects should be awarded based on merit to the most qualified and responsible low bidders. Today, ABC is the voice of the U.S. commercial and industrial construction industry with the White House, Congress, federal agencies, state and local governments, and the courts, as well as with the news media.

*Article Courtesy of Associated Builders and Contractors and Gail Raiman and Gerry Fritz*



**Don't Forget to Register for the WCOE Annual Meeting in Washington, DC!!!**

**March 22-24, 2009**

See Registration Form on Page 7

## Major Changes in FMLA Impact Businesses with more than 50 Employees (.....Continued from page 5)

.....described above and must include: (1) an explanation that if FMLA leave is granted it will be deducted from the employee's 12-week allowance, (2) requirements for employees to submit medical certifications and the consequences for failing to do so, (3) any employer requirements regarding the substitution of paid leave such as sick time or vacation, (4) requirements for employee to maintain health benefits during FMLA leave, including payment of premiums, (5) key employee status, if applicable, (6) employee rights to maintain benefits and to job restoration following leave, and (7) the employee's potential liability for unpaid health insurance premiums if the employee fails to return to work following leave. 29 CFR § 825.300(c). An approved prototype "rights and responsibilities notice" is provided by the DOL in an appendix.

Such notice must be provided with the "eligibility notice" described above and must include: (1) an explanation that if FMLA leave is granted it will be deducted from the employee's 12-week allowance, (2) requirements for employees to submit medical certifications and the consequences for failing to do so, (3) any employer requirements regarding the substitution of paid leave such as sick time or vacation, (4) requirements for employee to maintain health benefits during FMLA leave, including payment of premiums, (5) key employee status, if applicable, (6) employee rights to maintain benefits and to job restoration following leave, and (7) the employee's potential liability for unpaid health insurance premiums if the employee fails to return to work following leave. 29 CFR § 825.300(c). An approved prototype "rights and responsibilities notice" is provided by the DOL in an appendix.

"Designation notice" must be provided by employers in writing within five days (the analogous requirement in the 1995 regulations had required such notice within two days) after obtaining sufficient information to know whether a given absence is FMLA-qualifying or not. If leave is granted, the designation notice must include any "fitness-for-duty" certification that may be required by the employer before returning the employee to work. It also must specifically inform the employee of the amount of leave – "hours, days or weeks" – that will be deducted from the 12-week FMLA allowance. If this breakdown is unknown at the time the leave is granted (e.g., where the amount of leave is unforeseeable or sporadic), the employer must provide such information upon an employee's request, but the employer need not provide such breakdowns more often than every 30 days. 29 CFR § 825.300(d). Again, an approved prototype "designation notice" is provided by the DOL in an appendix.

Additionally, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (NDAA), Pub. L. 110-181. [amends the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 \(FMLA\)](#) to permit a "spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin" to take up to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a "member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness." The NDAA also permits an employee to take FMLA leave for "any qualifying exigency (as the Secretary [of Labor] shall, by regulation, determine) arising out of the fact that the spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation."

For employers with more than 50 employees, it is important that you contact her attorney or Human Relations specialist to bring you up to date on all the new requirements.



# WCOE 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

March 22-24, 2009 - Washington DC

*Presented by Women Construction Owners & Executives, USA*

## REGISTRATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Registration Fees:

Early Bird Registration-made and paid on or before February 17, 2009

WCOE members and affiliated partners: \$395.00

Non members: \$445.00

Registration after February 17, 2008 (credit card payment only)

WCOE members and affiliated partners: \$445.00

Non members: \$475.00

All "at the door" registrations: \$495.00

**Total amount** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Master Card

Visa

American Express

Signature Authroization: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are an affiliated partner of WCOE and are claiming the lower registration fee, please note your affiliation with your association of groups here: \_\_\_\_\_

Return the form via email to [info@wcoe.org](mailto:info@wcoe.org), fax to 650-551-5584, or U.S. Mail to: Women Construction Owners and Executives, USA 4401A Connecticut Avenue NW Washington DC 20008

**Willard InterContinental Hotel, Washington, DC - 800-327-0200 or 202-628-9100**

**Special Group Rate of \$350 per night March 19 through March 27.**

**WCOE Reservation Code #JU7**

**MAKE RESERVATION BY FEB 20!!!**

**BOOK NOW TO AVOID MISSING OUT ON WCOE GROUP RATE!**





# WCOE 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE March 22-24, 2009  
Willard Intercontinental Hotel, Washington, DC

## March 22, 2009- Sunday

- 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. **WCOE Board of Directors Meeting** – Taft Room
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. **WCOE Board of Directors Luncheon** – Stone Room
- 3:00 -5:00 p.m. **General Membership Meeting and Business Meeting** – Holmes  
Election of Officers  
Position Papers Approval
- 3:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **HIGH TEA Buffet**

## March 23, 2009- Monday

- 8:30 a.m. **Breakfast** – Taft Room  
Welcome to DC - WCOE President Deborah Wilder
- 9:00 a.m. **Breakfast Speaker:** Ann Sullivan, WIPP Lobbyist – Women Impacting Public Policy
- 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Department of Commerce – International Trade Mission Briefings  
14 & Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC
- 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. **Lunch Buffet – Taft – Table rounds**  
**Luncheon Speaker - TBA**
- 2:30-4:30 p.m. **Panel Discussion** – General Service Administration Briefing on Contracting Opportunities
- 6:00 – 9:00 pm **Capitol Hill Reception – 25<sup>th</sup> WCOE Anniversary Celebration**

## March 24, 2009 – Tuesday

- 7:30 a.m. **Breakfast at Capitol Hill Club and Capitol Hill Briefing**
- 9:00 a.m.-11:30 p.m. **Meetings with Senators and Representatives**
- 11:30 p.m. **Box Lunch on Capitol Hill**
- 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. **Small Business Administration Briefing**  
409 Third Street, SW, Washington, DC
- 3:30 p.m. **Closing remarks by President Deborah Wilder**
- 5:00-7:00 p.m. **2009 Board of Directors Meeting and Planning Session-** The Willard