



CREW NY hosts Powerful Women Entrepreneurs lunch

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Shown (from left) are: Daria Salusbury, founder and CEO of Salusbury and Co.; Jennifer Carey, CEO of JLC Environmental Consultants; Allison Robin, CFO of Levien and Co. and CREWNY president; Maureen Henegan, CEO of Henegan Construction Co., Inc.; Ronnette Riley, owner of Ronnette Riley Architect; and Jeannette Boccini of News Muse.

New York, NY Entrepreneurship provides an opportunity to achieve economic security for anyone, but it's especially true for women who have traditionally experienced wage and prospect gaps in the workforce. Real estate, even though historically considered a male-dominated industry, continues to see an increase in female led businesses. At CREW New York's (CREW NY) March 3rd luncheon, "Powerful Women Entrepreneurs in CREW," the panelists discussed their backgrounds of entrepreneurship within the real estate field.

The panel consisted of Jennifer Carey, CEO of JLC Environmental Consultants; Maureen Henegan, CEO of Henegan Construction Co., Inc.; Ronnette Riley, owner of Ronnette Riley Architect; and Daria Salusbury, founder and CEO of Salusbury and Co., and was moderated by Jeannette Boccini of News Muse.

Carey, who said she loves taking risks and solving problems, said that entrepreneurship is a great way to create wealth, especially for women. She conveyed the importance for entrepreneurs to be "intellectually fearless" and to have a deep resilience to weather any and all rejections that may come. Her role in her firm has changed over the years as the company has grown, but her passion to find sustainable solutions to environmental challenges has been a driving force in her career. In her role as CEO, she supports the company's leadership team by strengthening the corporate culture and looks for opportunities to expand their services through awareness of their customer's needs.

Salusbury, the newest entrepreneur on the panel, said that what inspired her to start her business was realizing how much wealth she was generating for other people while she could do the same for herself. What she strives for every day is the ability to create something that did not exist before, whether that was an amenity or a lifestyle. She recommends asking yourself what a "new funky way

of doing something” could be and how you can “do something different than what is currently in the market.”

She quoted her mother, saying, “Competence is not gender specific or age specific. Have confidence in your own skills. You are never too old or too anything to start something new. But be realistic.” Salusbury is founder and CEO of Salusbury & Co. She advises leading international and national developers and architects on development, branding, and marketing to help bring their properties to market efficiently and effectively in the world’s most challenging markets. Prior to founding her firm, she spent 25 years at The Related Companies, where she served as senior VP and head of the luxury rental division consisting of more than 10,000 units nationwide.

Riley, a licensed architect, called herself “an unwitting entrepreneur” as she explained that she hit the proverbial glass ceiling early at her first company and felt she couldn’t rise much further after becoming the first female architect to oversee the design of a skyscraper from start to finish. This skyscraper was New York’s iconic Lipstick Building, and she was only 25. While managing the project, she overcame opposition from many men who resented her gender and youth, often being called too ambitious and aggressive. After her success with the Lipstick Building, Riley decided to open her own architecture firm and is now the proud owner of one of the few 100%-woman-owned firms in the country.

Riley said that one “can’t be afraid to do something new and must always keep moving forward” to remain a successful entrepreneur. She also said, “Making sure your money gets collected should be at the top of your priorities list. Better yet, change the conversation instead so get your money right away and know when to walk away. If you don’t protect your money how can you advocate for your clients?”

Henegan, who took over Henegan Construction from her father in 1991, found that no one skill can truly be considered the most important for a successful entrepreneur. “Hire people who are good at what they do,” she said. “In the beginning hire people who are good at wearing many hats, but as your company grows, hire experts. As a leader one has to evolve to know all aspects of the business, from schmoozing prospective clients to the very important task of collecting owed money – which includes knowing how to serve your clients with the best team possible.”

Henegan has herself worn many hats and served the company in various capacities—including legal counsel, financial officer, marketing and communications coordinator, project manager and administrative assistant—since 1975. As chair and CEO, she assembled a winning team of talent that has grown and developed the company’s reputation to the preeminent status it maintains within the construction industry today.

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