



WEL to Unveil Winners of its Corporate Salute Awards on February 11, 2009

Sixteen Florida companies with Women in their Boardrooms will be honored

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - January 5, 2009 - WEL ([Women Executive Leadership](#)), a Florida based organization that advocates, educates, and connects accomplished women, will announce the winners of its 2008 Corporate Salute on February 11, 2009 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Fla. Over the last few years, women executives have brought a great deal of change to the corporate landscape. WEL is successfully bringing some change of its own by enabling greater gender diversity to the corporate world here in Florida.

At its Corporate Salute, WEL will honor 16 Florida companies that have two or more female Directors on their Boards. Sherry S. Barrat, Executive Vice President for Northern Trust Corporation and President of Personal Financial Services, will be the keynote speaker. Ms. Barrat also serves on the Board of Directors for FPL Group, one of the 2008 Florida award winning companies. Eleanor Bloxham, Founder and President of The Value Alliance, an esteemed author and recognized expert on corporate governance, will also speak at the event.

“To not only survive but thrive in the current economy, Florida companies are embracing the widest and best talent pool available. WEL plays a key role in helping them identify accomplished women who are ready to bring innovative thinking and leadership,” said Cindy Kushner, President and Founder of WEL. “We help introduce highly talented women to the selection process of Corporate Board and Executive-level positions. Through our efforts, leading companies are able to enlarge their pool of highly qualified candidates and help them expand beyond the same recycled executive talent that is often used for such important positions.

In addition to our local network, WEL can tap into a database of over 10,000 potential candidates as a result of our membership with ION (Inter Organization Network). ION is a consortium comprised of 12 regional organizations, representing Florida, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Nashville, Detroit, and Baltimore, all of which work to advance women to positions in the Boardroom and in the Executive suite. These executive women’s groups join together as ION to combine their energies, to leverage their strengths, and to maximize their individual and aggregate influence in order to increase the number and percentage of women who comprise the leadership of Corporate America.”

About Women Executive Leadership

WEL advocates, educates and connects accomplished executive women. Through extensive networking opportunities and educational workshops, the organization helps prepare female leaders for corporate Board and executive suite positions. WEL enables women to raise their profile and move to the forefront of executive search opportunities. Its signature event, **Corporate Salute**, provides an important advocacy platform that brings necessary attention to the landscape of gender diversity in the corporate world. WEL will salute the award winning



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companies and release its 2008 Census Study that details and benchmarks the status and number of women in the Boardroom and in executive positions of Florida's Top 150 public companies. All qualified members from the corporate sector, private enterprises and not-for-profit organizations are encouraged to join WEL. For membership information and to attend the Corporate Salute, please visit www.WomenExecutiveLeadership.com

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