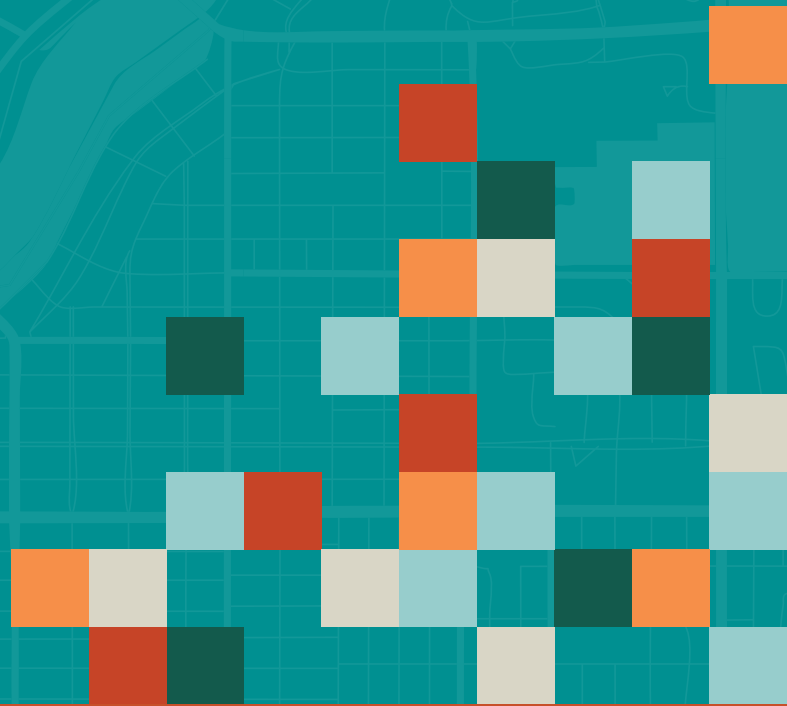


Women Moving Forward **Together.**

Building a resilient community of women
entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan.



ANNUAL REPORT
2021–2022





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A Message From The Board Chair

As I look back on another successful year, it was marked once again by navigating the new challenges the pandemic delivered. Throughout those months, the true tenacity and grit of our women entrepreneurs and the WESK team's dedication to supporting them shone through.

This year brought many new opportunities and initiatives to support more women entrepreneurs in our province. Providing continuing support past start up and into scale is the continuation of WESK's mission of empowering women throughout their entrepreneurial journey and driving economic growth in the process. Many of initiatives were guided by the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Gender Entrepreneurial Gap's Final Report, *Enabling Scale* in Saskatchewan, and the successful implementation of the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan.

Over my tenure on the WESK Board, and now as Board Chair, I've had the distinct pleasure to work amongst a strong Board of Directors made up of truly passionate individuals. I want to acknowledge Danielle Graff, outgoing Board Chair, for her contributions during her board leadership and officially welcome Jacqueline Almeida to the board. Continuous learning is highly valued by the Board. As such, we participated in ongoing development throughout the year to continue to enhance our board governance and streamline our processes to support the integral work being done.



As WESK continues to evolve to meet the needs of the province's entrepreneurs, notable impacts were felt throughout the year including the launch of the Saskatchewan Women Entrepreneurship Charter and brand identity, the successful implementation of the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund, and the focus on diversity and inclusion in all aspects of WESK.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to acknowledge and applaud the WESK team for their tremendous commitment, and officially welcome Jacqueline Almeida and Rhonda Spencer to the board. Their dedication, excitement, and passion are felt throughout the province. I look forward to another amazing year ahead as WESK continues to lead the country in providing innovative, impactful supports to women entrepreneurs.

Sincerely,
Colleen Dixon



A Message From The CEO

Little did I know that this CEO Message in the 2022 Annual report would be my last formal communication to the WESK community. Over the course of these 7.5 years WESK has evolved into a reputable and credible organization. We have encountered many challenges, surmounted obstacles, and celebrated many triumphs. I have watched this organization make a significant impact on the lives of women entrepreneurs in our province. You have inspired me and proven to be some of the most resilient entrepreneurs in Canada. I am honored to have developed these relationships and friendships.

I am grateful for the trust and confidence bestowed on me by my Board of Directors, which empowered me to seize opportunities and grow the organization. I am incredibly proud of the passion and tenacity of the WESK team. With an unparalleled commitment and talent, rest assured they will continue to support and serve you with no disruption.

This past year was one of adaption, characterized by enormous growth. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, 47% of women-owned businesses in Saskatchewan stayed fully open, compared to the national average of 37%. They also had a greater likelihood of reopening after a temporary shutdown. I am pleased to share these statistics, along with many others, from the *Women Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan Report* released by the Government of Saskatchewan in November of 2021. Alongside this report, the Government of

Saskatchewan announced The Scale Up for Entrepreneurs initiative. From this, WESK was formally awarded project funding for the Propel program. Propel is a one-year program designed specifically to support Saskatchewan women entrepreneurs by providing opportunities to obtain certifications and training to help grow and scale their businesses.

The Women-Owned Business Brand Identity was successfully launched in 2021 along with the Saskatchewan Women Entrepreneurship Charter and these initiatives have expanded to over 500 women-owned businesses and over 50 Charter Champions. We also signed four impactful memorandums of understanding with influential local organizations. There was an incredible response to our programs, Founders Table, Exchange, Matchstick, and the launch of Propel. Saskatchewan has truly set an example for the rest of Canada on how to uplift and support women entrepreneurs.

Serving as the CEO of WESK has been one of the most remarkable experiences of my life. To my colleagues, members, and friends, thank you for making the past 7.5 years so special. It has been an incredible journey, and the best is yet to come. I hope you will continue to support WESK in positioning Saskatchewan as a preeminent place for women to start, grow and scale their businesses.

Wishing you the very best,
Prabha Ramaswamy



We Strive to Help Women Entrepreneurs Succeed.

WESK is a collective of driven individuals inspired by our strong, diverse, business community.

Entrepreneurs are the heart of Saskatchewan, but women are often held back from realizing their business goals. WESK supports women who aspire to success! With support structures designed to encourage women in business, we provide essential supports to women entrepreneurs in pursuing their dreams.

We are a non-profit, membership-based organization with members in all industries across Saskatchewan. WESK provides programs and services for entrepreneurs starting, growing, scaling, or purchasing a business. Through community support, resources, and education tools, we remove the common barriers that women in business face.

When women join the WESK community, they can access endless possibilities designed to unite empowered entrepreneurs of every age, stage, and culture. We build supportive communities for all Saskatchewan women in business.

OUR MISSION

Empowering women entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan to start, grow, and scale businesses to drive economic growth.

OUR VISION

To close the gender entrepreneurship gap in Saskatchewan.

OUR VALUES

WESK is driven by the values of collaboration, inclusivity, and boldness.

WHAT IS THE GENDER ENTREPRENEUR GAP?

There is a significant gender entrepreneurship gap in Canada. By understanding and addressing the unique barriers that women entrepreneurs face, we can enhance opportunities to scale businesses and boost economic growth in our province.

How much more robust our province and country could be if we created an environment that empowered women entrepreneurs? It's more than a social and moral imperative — it's an economic issue.

Programs & Services

BUSINESS ADVISING

Unlimited, 1-to-1 business advice, free with a WESK membership.

FINANCING

Up to \$150,000 available to majority woman-owned Saskatchewan businesses.

FOUNDERS TABLE

A collection of supports to help women throughout all stages of her tech entrepreneurial journey.

MATCHSTICK

For Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit women interested in entrepreneurship who want to bring their ideas to life.

THE EXCHANGE

For established women entrepreneurs looking to take their business to the next level of growth and profitability.

WESK SUMMIT & GALA

WESK’s annual entrepreneurship conference and awards gala.

TRAINING & EVENTS

Whether you’re looking for the opportunity to network, learn the ropes on how to start your business, or to simply find like-minded people, look no further — WESK events are designed for you to do all of that and more.

Our Team

This past fiscal year has been very busy at WESK with an increase in several new initiatives. We want to thank our members and partners for the trust you placed in WESK to assist in helping to meet your business goals.

We are grateful to the board members for their insights and direction. Thank you to our Board, staff, and partners for a widely successful year.

OUR BOARD

Colleen Dixon	Chair	Jacqueline Almeida	Director
Danielle Graff	Past Chair	Kelly Bannister	Director
Leanne Johnson	Vice Chair	Leigh Kaufmann	Director
Claire Bélanger-Parker	Director	Rhonda Spencer	Director

OUR TEAM

SASKATOON OFFICE

Prabha Ramaswamy	Chief Executive Officer
Allie Hearnden	Executive Assistant & Communications Coordinator
Cara Cote	Manager of Client Services
Courtney Morrison	Business Advisor
Emily Martens	Administrative Assistant
Jeanine Armillotta	Lending and Administrative Coordinator
Jodi Macmillan	Accountant
Josie Fries	Marketing Advisor
Nick Kochar	Program Advisor
Olu Fatoyinbo	Lending Advisor

REGINA OFFICE

Amanda Parkinson	Business & HR Advisor
Brittany Scott	Program Coordinator
Heather Blouin	Special Projects Manager
Jaimie Polsom	Program Coordinator
Parth Patel	Business Advisor
Stephanie Smith	Program Coordinator

Our Membership

WESK was founded 26 years ago with six members. Since then, our organization has grown substantially, positively impacting the Saskatchewan economy. Diversity is one of our core values as an organization, and we aim to be as inclusive as possible. We are proud of our diverse membership, which includes members located all over our province from various industries and stages of business. In the coming fiscal year, we will continue building an inclusive community founded on education, advocacy, and support!

CHANGES IN 2021-22

In April 2021, WESK revamped our membership model, moving from one option to three. This reflects the needs of our members and allows them to grow into the WESK community as their business continues to expand. We initiated this program to promote a more inclusive space for entrepreneurs at every level. New members can become involved with WESK as a Pioneer, Trailblazer, or Changemaker.



The Pioneer (\$25 + GST)

The Pioneer package is ideal if you have an idea or are thinking about entrepreneurship. If you want to be in WESK’s sphere of influence but don’t know where to start, The Pioneer package is perfect.

The Trailblazer (\$125 + GST)

The Trailblazer package is ideal if you are starting a business and want continual support from WESK throughout your journey. We will connect you to resources for Saskatchewan entrepreneurs, and the people you need to get established.

The Changemaker (\$375 + GST)

The Changemaker package is ideal if you are already established and are looking to grow your business with us and take it to the next level. WESK will help you scale your company and make meaningful connections to other entrepreneurs and corporate execs. At this level, you get it all. Think of it like VIP access to the business community.

From Tattoos to Worldviews:

HALEY’S STORY

Haley is making a mark on Saskatoon’s tattoo scene with a tattoo gun and her drive to change how we perceive tattoos in professional spaces. Haley is the owner of Honey Bee Tattoo Collective, but her work extends beyond the beautiful and open space. She continues to work to end the stigma surrounding professional working women with tattoos - a task that’s nearly as painful as the tattooing process itself. Changing public opinion about tattoos has been an uphill fight since the beginning. However, Haley aims to make a difference through meaningful conversations about women entrepreneurs’ vulnerability and relatability.

Haley sat down with WESK to talk about her vision and what she’s doing to shift the conversation about tattoos:

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR?

I’ve always had big dreams, and never felt like that was something I could accomplish in a typical work setting. Even after starting my career as a tattoo artist, I didn’t fit into the traditional industry standard, and felt like I could be doing so much more with my platform. I see so much potential within our growing community, and a clear gap in this currently booming industry. I opened Honey Bee to create a space for myself, and others like me, to work and grow uninhibited.

WHAT SUPPORTS HAVE MEANT THE MOST TO YOU ALONG THE WAY?

The unwavering support from my family and friends has undoubtedly been the most meaningful to me, I could not have gotten even remotely this far without them. However, the response and the support from the community, my peers and



Haley Gardiner | Honey Bee Tattoo Collective

my clients, has absolutely been the driving factor for me and truly means everything to me. I never expected the immediate acceptance into the community and to see the impact I’ve made already means that everything was worth it.

HOW HAS WESK MADE AN IMPACT IN YOUR JOURNEY AS AN ENTREPRENEUR?

WESK made this entire journey possible for me, not only financially but with invaluable guidance and continuous support. They have opened the doors to a great community, and continuously provided me with valuable networking opportunities and experiences.

WHAT MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHER WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS?

As intimidating as the current state of the world might seem, it’s an incredible time for opportunities if you can see them, especially for women or those from other minorities. If you have good intentions, that will be recognized and received; the support from your community and your peers will surprise you. It will never be easy but it will be so worth it.



2021 in Review

April 7, 2021

Launch of new membership model, Women-owned brand identity, Saskatchewan Women Entrepreneurship Charter, and Digital Hub (new website)

September 16, 2021

The Exchange Year 2 kicked off with a virtual retreat

January 31, 2022

Launch of new Matchstick workshop: Sparking Entrepreneurship in You

January 20, 2022

theHIVEYQR pilot program launch

May 16 - 22, 2021

Women Entrepreneurs Week in Saskatchewan
· May 19 & 20, Launch of WESK Summit and Gala rebrand during a virtual gala and business conference

November 30, 2021

Government of Saskatchewan releases a new report entitled "Women Entrepreneurship in Saskatchewan report (economic scorecard, advancing SAC recommendations)

January 19, 2022

Launch of expanded Founders Table program

March 10, 2022

WESK Propel program launched, part of the Government of Saskatchewan's Scale Up For Entrepreneurs Initiative

Another successful year for women.

Financing

18 new loans, totalling \$1.4 million	\$77, 863 average loan amount
9 startup loans	7 expansion loans
2 purchased businesses	207+ jobs created / maintained
John & Bernice Williams & North Prairie Developments Equity Investment Fund	
Managed by WESK, this fund has disbursed a total of 16 equity investment loans, totalling \$112, 641 since its inception in 2012	

Membership

767 total members	1, 675 information requests
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Business Advising

68 All Access Appointments across human resources, marketing, accounting, and legal	
1, 364 business advising appointments	173 new advising clients

RRRF

30 RRRF loans	\$36, 250 average RRRF loan
264 jobs saved	\$1 087, 500 disbursed in RRRF loans

Training

112 workshops	2, 345 participants
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Events

33 events held in 2021-2022	1, 541 event attendees
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Since 1995

Since WESK began in 1995, almost 10, 000 women have accessed our business advising services! This milestone identifies our core mandate as a clear necessity in Saskatchewan. With over \$40 million dollars accessed through our financing program in our tenure, we are proud to be a necessary fixture in women's lives and Saskatchewan at large; by creating over 1800 jobs in the province through our funding program alone! With the generous help of the Prairies Economic Devel-

opment Canada (PrairiesCan), formerly Western Economic Diversification, we have increased our funding capacity for women entrepreneurs. In 1995, Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan), formerly Western Economic Diversification, provided WESK with a total of \$5 million, which WESK has grown to \$8.2 million, allowing us to provide financing for even more entrepreneurs.

Our Initiatives

This year, we were proud to be an effective support system in our community. Small businesses were among the hardest hit throughout the pandemic. It felt important for us to ensure that women entrepreneurs had access to support, funding, and advice at every level of their careers.

Programs

THE EXCHANGE

This program was developed for established entrepreneurs looking to take their business to the next level. Our first year of the program wrapped up in May 2021 with an amazing virtual retreat. The retreat featured keynote speakers Tina Beaudry-Mellor from Economic Development Regina and Catherine Metrycki from Callia Flowers.

The second year of the program kicked off with a bang! While year 1 was focused on pivoting due to the pandemic, this year focused on learning and ensuring all participants have the information and resources they need to grow/scale. Our kick-off retreat was held on September 16th, 2021 and featured Danielle Graham of Archangel/Fierce Founders as the keynote. We were also lucky to have Tracey Kowalchuk facilitate a DISC workshop for all attendees. After great feedback from year 1, our format shifted from live expert presentations to pre-recorded expert videos with live Q&A sessions each month. We



also held retreats from December 14-16th (in-person and virtually) with Jolene Watson, who facilitated a networking workshop that was really productive for our participants!

Year 2 Stats

- 7 cohorts with revenues ranging from under \$100,000 to over \$1 million
- Approximately 75 participants

We are looking forward to year 3, which will focus on "Growth in Action" and implementing the learning from the past 2 years. We are looking forward to seeing each other for in-person retreats this coming year.

FOUNDERS TABLE

This program offers a collection of supports to help women throughout all stages of their tech entrepreneurial journey. In Canada, female founders in technology are under-represented and comprise only 6% of the tech sector. The long-term vision of Founders Table is to move the needle on the representation of women founders in this sector. Since 2019, Founders Table has been explicitly offered to female tech founders or women in tech. The Mastermind groups are now well underway, and it's going great! The groups have gelled, and already they are helping each out with advice and connections.

In addition to providing places for women to meet, we partnered with StartUp TNT to host a Women in VC event on March 24th at the Saskatoon Club. In addition, we offered a Compass pathfinding event to help women in tech navigate the different players in the industry with Co.Labs, Cultivator, and SaskTech.

Participants had the opportunity to meet, learn, and discuss topics like building their dream team, connecting design principles with product development, deep diving into digital marketing, and learning how to pitch funders with the utmost confidence.



CONNECTING WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

Founders Table is now a collection of programs and supports to help women at any stage of their tech entrepreneurial journey, including:

- Mastermind Groups
- Tech Advising
- Mastermind Group Participants: A link to book with our tech advisor will be provided upon program start.
- Tech Hub (coming soon)
- Compass: A Pathfinding Event
- Tech Loan Fund (coming soon)

MATCHSTICK

Launched in 2018, this program is designed for Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit women interested in entrepreneurship and who want to bring their ideas to life. Created in consultation with Indigenous and Metis entrepreneurs in the province, we are proud to provide this program.

From January - March of 2022, WESK piloted a new Matchstick workshop called "Sparkling Entrepreneurship in You", facilitated by Destinee Peter, owner of Tangles Hair & Beauty Salon in Regina. This pilot program is virtual and has 16 women registered from across Saskatchewan. In this program, participants will understand if entrepreneurship is a good fit, explore and build their business idea, and learn business fundamentals.





Propel

Propel is a one-year training program developed as part of the Government of Saskatchewan's Scale-Up for Entrepreneurs Initiative. This program is designed specifically to support Saskatchewan women entrepreneurs growing and scaling their businesses. Program design and development are underway, and recruitment is complete. We are excited for the Propel Program to launch early in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Propel provides opportunities for women entrepreneurs to:

- Obtain micro-credential training certifications
- Complete self-led learning modules
- Apply learnings directly to their business
- Have access to coaching and mentorship



theHiveYQR

In partnership with Economic Development Regina (EDR), and FHQ Developments, WESK launched theHiveYQR in January 2022, as a pilot program for Regina entrepreneurs. The program is structured as an informal peer mentorship program, where any level of entrepreneur may receive advice, and where any business expert can share advice. By leveraging this energy and community, theHiveYQR facilitates connections to help all entrepreneurs succeed.



PRESENTED BY
EDR, FHQ, WESK

Ministry of Corrections

In September 2021, WESK completed a 'train the trainer' session with representatives from the Ministry of Corrections. The Sparking Entrepreneurship in You program started as a partnership between the Ministry of Corrections and WESK. We created the program content, and the Ministry of Corrections will present the program to incarcerated women in Saskatchewan. In this program, women will build confidence in their future, learn about business basics, and create a business vision board.





Branding with Purpose

In April of 2021, WESK launched a movement to help Saskatchewan entrepreneurs identify themselves as a local woman-owned/led business. Businesses who partake receive access to the “Saskatchewan Woman-Owned Saskatchewan Business” logo, are added to our women-owned database and have the opportunity to be featured across WESK’s social channels.

As of March 31, 496 women-owned businesses have joined the movement!



Saskatchewan Women-Owned Business Database

Whether you’re looking to diversify your supply chain, find a new board candidate, or simply support a local woman entrepreneur, look no further! Our ever-growing database of certified women-owned businesses includes plenty of businesses from right here in Saskatchewan. We’re sure you’ll find something great!

Saskatchewan Woman-Owned Business Campaign

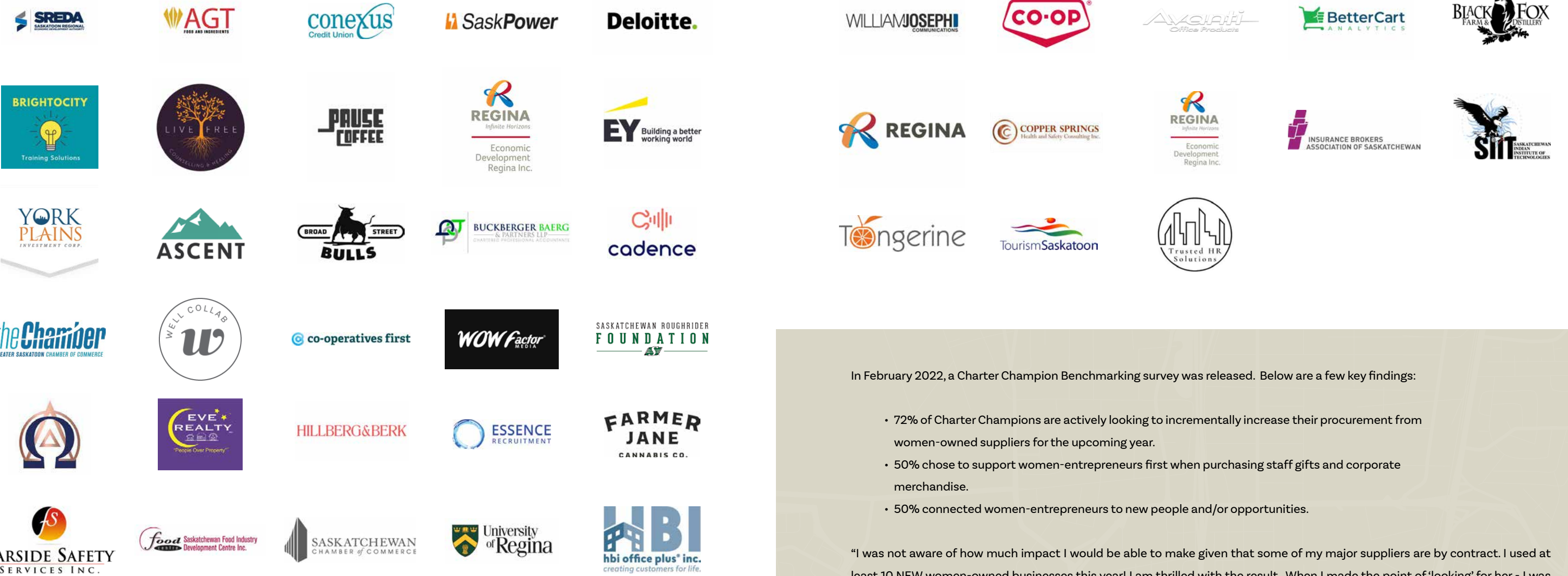
In the past year, WESK has been running a Women Entrepreneurship Wednesday campaign where each week, a new woman entrepreneur in Saskatchewan is featured on WESK’s social media channels. Eight of these features included spotlight videos, while the other features included a social media post with information about the entrepreneur and her business



Charter Champions

The Saskatchewan Women Entrepreneurship Charter is an initiative launched by WESK to address the gender entrepreneurship gap in our province. The Charter comprises four principles to provide guidance and examples of how organizations can best support local women-owned businesses.

MEET OUR CHARTER CHAMPIONS



In February 2022, a Charter Champion Benchmarking survey was released. Below are a few key findings:

- 72% of Charter Champions are actively looking to incrementally increase their procurement from women-owned suppliers for the upcoming year.
- 50% chose to support women-entrepreneurs first when purchasing staff gifts and corporate merchandise.
- 50% connected women-entrepreneurs to new people and/or opportunities.

“I was not aware of how much impact I would be able to make given that some of my major suppliers are by contract. I used at least 10 NEW women-owned businesses this year! I am thrilled with the result. When I made the point of ‘looking’ for her - I was able to find her. All it takes is a decision.”

– Current Charter Champion



Core Services

Our core services remained fully accessible during the 2020-21 fiscal year, allowing women the opportunity to seek financial support and one-to-one business support at a time when they needed it most.

BUSINESS ADVISING

Unlimited, 1-to-1 business advice, free with a WESK membership.

FINANCING

Up to \$150,000 is available to Saskatchewan businesses that are majority woman-owned.

TRAINING

Learning never stops for an entrepreneur. WESK's signature workshop, Business Plan Basics, provides an in-depth step-by-step for developing a business plan. This 1-hour virtual workshop teaches first-time entrepreneurs the strategies for moving their business idea out of their heads and into a concrete plan.

This year, WESK connected over 2,500 entrepreneurs to training through more than 100 workshops. Each week, we offered different webinars on a variety of business topics.

We are proud of the diversity of topics and focus areas we covered this year, and we look forward to continuing these webinar series into the coming year.



EVENTS

WESK hosts a series of events focused on growth and support throughout the year. Attending these events and networking with like-minded professionals can help women get the most out of their membership.

WESK SUMMIT & GALA

WESK's annual entrepreneurship conference and awards gala.

UNCORKED

A monthly networking event in Regina.

SHAKEN WITH A TWIST

A monthly networking event in Saskatoon.

PROGRAMS

FOUNDER'S TABLE

A collection of supports to help women throughout all stages of her tech entrepreneurial journey.

MATCHSTICK

For Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit women who are interested in entrepreneurship and want to bring their ideas to life.

THE EXCHANGE

For established women entrepreneurs looking to take their business to the next level of growth and profitability.

Advising & Support in Focus



Confidence matters in business, and WESK is here to help women step into bold leadership as entrepreneurs. No matter what stage of the journey an entrepreneur finds herself in, our business advisors are here to lend an ear, provide guidance, and point to the right resources.

Members are quick to tell us about the impact of having someone take the time to understand their business goals and challenges, support them in creating a business plan, or help them take the next step toward their vision. These supports are invaluable, especially in light of the gender-based barriers for women.

ALL-ACCESS EXPERT ADVICE

The All-Access Expert Advice Program is an exclusive opportunity to connect with professionals in Saskatchewan. The WESK roster includes leading experts in marketing, legal, accounting, and human resources industries!

This high-impact, low-barrier service provides tailored support for women, whether starting, growing, or scaling a business. The All-Access Expert Advice Program has been running since 2018, and we owe it all to our partners and specialized experts. Your generous support of this program helps fill in the gaps for women running small businesses across the province.

FINANCING

A key finding of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on the Gender Entrepreneurship Gap was that women are less likely to secure capital than men. WESK understands how hard business capital can be to access - particularly for women - and our WESK Financing Fund aims to address this gap with loans of up to \$150,000.

We are thrilled to continue the legacy of financial support for women entrepreneurs. This year, we funded several new loans through the WESK Financing Fund and helped protect many Saskatchewan jobs through the Regional Relief and Recovery

Fund (RRRF). If your business is majority woman-owned and controlled (51%), come to talk to our friendly business advisors to see how a loan could help you grow your business. Interest paid from your loan goes back into our financing fund, which helps us provide even more loans to women entrepreneurs.

John and Bernice Williams and North Prairie Developments Equity Investment Fund

Managed by WESK, this fund has disbursed a total of 16 Equity Investment Loans - totalling \$112,641 - since its inception in 2012.

Regional Relief and Recovery Fund

The Government of Canada announced the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund to provide financial support directly to small and medium-sized women-owned businesses. Loans of up to \$60,000 were available through WESK to address COVID-19 impacts on short-term stability. This access to financing will support small enterprises that are unable to access more extensive federal relief funding programs or unable to obtain a loan/credit from traditional financial institutions struggling with working capital needs.

Since 1995

2037
jobs have been created
through our financing program

\$7.3 million +
has been leveraged as a
result of our financing

784
loans have been
disbursed for women

Events in Review

This year, WESK hosted many events to support and showcase women-owned businesses in the province, from creating a database of women entrepreneurs in the province for the public to using our platforms to highlight women in our community. These campaigns were highly successful, and we will continue to add to them in the coming years!



Shaken With A Twist & Uncorked

Each month, WESK brings forward a respected entrepreneur or business professional for a fun and inspirational interview at our Shaken with a Twist and Uncorked events, which take place in Saskatoon and Regina, respectively. Thank you to our engaging hosts Shawna Nelson, Janet Lee, and Jolene Watson!

Both events provide an opportunity to hear candid advice, reflections, and tips for entrepreneurs based on the wisdom

of experienced entrepreneurs. We're so grateful to all our sponsors and speakers who shared their stories this year. We welcome members and non-members alike to these events, and it's a great way to get involved with WESK and see what our organization has to offer.

This fiscal year, we were pleased to interview:

Shaken Speakers:



Danielle Robson
Serial Entrepreneur



Christine Marie
Awasis Boutique



Amy Morris
LetoMom



Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote
Black Fox Farm & Distillery



Rachel Drew
Cadence



Kara Firman
Guide Hair Salon / Guild Studios



Ritu Malhotra
March Consulting



Brenda Nowakowski
Brelin Holdings Ltd.



Marie Robertson
Marie Robertson Fitness & Beauty

Uncorked Speakers:



Jenifer Dubois
Miyosiwin Salon Spa



Lisa McIntyre
The Optical Shoppe



Jana & Robyn Ham
Serial Entrepreneurs



Lisa MacMurchy
Brewed Awakening Coffee



Taylor Chapman
Good Spirit Kombucha



Colleen Cretin
Good Spirit Kombucha



Meridith Schmidt
Last Mountain Distillery and Lokel Vodka



Jolene Watson
Clarity Coaching



Katelyn Sebastian
Driftstone Consulting



Donna Rae Crooks
Brain Snacks

WESK Summit & Gala

We were so excited to be able to host our first annual WESK Summit & Gala. Our conference and awards gala is an incredible place for women entrepreneurs to network while celebrating each other's business and community outreach achievements. While the Gala was virtual this year, we are grateful to everyone for spending their time with us, learning and networking with our community of strong women entrepreneurs.

The events, previously known as WESK's Small Business Conference & Celebration of Achievement & Entrepreneur Awards Gala, have now been rebranded to the WESK Summit and WESK Summit Gala.



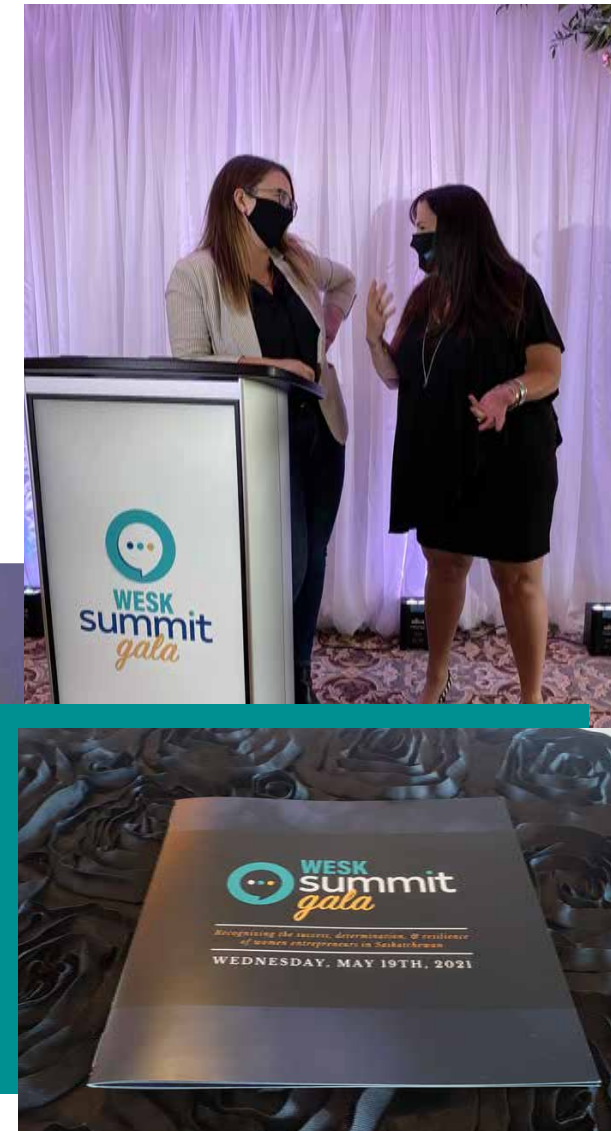
The Summit took place virtually on Thursday, May 20. Attendees were treated with engaging workshops, powerful keynote presentations, insightful panel discussions, and plenty of chances to network. We were exceptionally pleased with the turnout despite the limitations of offering the Summit online.

Featured Keynote:

- Michele Romanow, Co-Founder of ClearCo, and Dragon on Dragons' Den

Other speakers included:

- The Power of Resilience: Ashley Mielke, The Grief and Trauma Healing Centre Inc.



- Top 5 Tips for Marketing Your Business Using Social Media by Travis Low, Blue Moose Media
- Becoming Inclusive Leaders by Jacqueline Almeida, Alpha + Omega Strategies
- Panel Discussion: Resiliency, Reaction, Recovery: Leading Through a Pandemic: featuring Angelica Fehr (Twisted Goods), Shaina Lynden (Ryde YXE Cycle Studios), and Jess Tetu (Just for You Day Spas), and moderated by Valerie Sluth (Praxis Consulting)

On May 19, 2021, WESK recognized five women entrepreneurs from Saskatchewan with awards at the virtual WESK Summit Gala. The event fell during Women Entrepreneurs Week, which, as proclaimed by the Government of Saskatchewan, ran from May 16 through May 22, 2021. In alignment with Women Entrepreneurs Week, the WESK Summit Gala provided an opportunity to not only recognize awards finalists and recipients but also applaud and showcase all of Saskatchewan's women entrepreneurs.

Award Winners

THE 2021 RECIPIENTS ARE:



Jennifer Denouden
(Avana)
**Community Involvement
Award Recipient**



Jennifer Dubois
(Miyosiwin Salon Spa)
**Indigenous Entrepreneur
Award Recipient**



Monique Simair
(Maven Water and
Environment)
**Innovation Award
Recipient**



Heather Monaghan
(Helping Hands Care Group)
**Resilience Award
Recipient**



Christine Hrudka
(Pharmacy First)
**Celebration of Achievement
Award Recipient**



Saskatchewan Business Council



WESK is proud to be a part of The Saskatchewan Business Council (SBC). The SBC was formed in 2017 to operate as a resource between Saskatchewan businesses and the provincial government. The group is made of a collection of organizations that represent different businesses within the province. WESK is proud to bring the voices of women entrepreneurs to the provincial government as one of 18 regularly participating organizations of SBC. We work with other organizations to share ideas, offer program insights, and discuss government relations.

The SBC is an independent collection of like-minded associations and business support groups mandated to:

- Promote the positive contributions of Saskatchewan’s business community
- Proactively inform and advance ideas on common priorities that enhance the competitiveness of Saskatchewan’s business climate
- Collaborate on providing feedback or consultation to the government on business-related issues
- Be a vehicle to share relevant information with colleagues to further the Council’s priority items and individual advocacy efforts.

Over the past year, we have been proud to represent women’s voices in an otherwise difficult time for Saskatchewan business owners. Among the hardest hit over the course of the pandemic, advocating for local businesses was necessary. This year, we contributed invaluable insight to SBC’s communications both internally and with the Government of Saskatchewan. We are proud to continue to advocate for women throughout the many changes for Saskatchewan business owners and CEOs.

Advocating For Women Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan

We continue to work hard to ensure that while providing support and community for women entrepreneurs, we are also lobbying to create permanent change in our communities and at the municipal and provincial levels. This fiscal year, WESK supported businesses struggling through the Covid-19 pandemic, advocated to close the wage gap, and provided a framework for access to spaces by advocating for equitable business practices.

Enabling Scale in Saskatchewan

On November 30, 2021, the Government of Saskatchewan released a new *Women Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan* report, which provides statistical information about female self-employment and women-owned businesses by sector from 2007 to 2020.

The report also compares women-owned businesses and male-owned businesses in Saskatchewan and Canada for business indicators like employment, revenue and assets.

The report further advances the recommendations in the *Enabling Scale* in Saskatchewan report developed by WESK’s Advisory Committee on Gender Entrepreneurship Gap.

Read the Report on WESK’s website on the Newsroom page.



Your success is our main goal.

From start-up to scale up, your success is our only goal. Since 1995, WESK has helped thousands of women start, purchase and expand their businesses through access to business support, financing, and training.

WESK is proud to be affiliated with the Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC). Committed to the growth of women's entrepreneurship, WEOC works with women's enterprise support organizations, like WESK, to champion innovation, broaden expertise, and enhance collaboration.



Women's Enterprise
Organizations of Canada

WESK IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY PRAIRIESCAN



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