

WPF Forum News

A publication of the Women's Professional Forum

February 2024



**February Meeting Wednesday, February 14
12:30pm - 1:30pm
Starmount Country Club**

**PLEASE NOTE:
ACTIVE & ACTIVE RETIRED RSVP ONLY
if you can NOT attend**

**EMERITUS & SUPPORTING MEMBERS
RSVP to attend**

Bringing a Guest?
Email Sherry Barr at admin@wpforum.org with your guest's name & employer.
Guest fee \$30, cash or check at the door.

RSVP to admin@wpforum.org
by Noon on Friday, Feb. 6

IMPORTANT DATES
2/22 Board Meeting
2/22 News Deadline

Special Interest Groups

Upcoming Events

WPF Member Directory

WPF Facebook Page

"We become bolder in our brightness. If you know your light, you will know yourself." Michelle Obama

A message from WPF President, Erica Parker

During our recent board retreat, we engaged in an "icebreaker" activity that involved circulating with sticky notes and affixing one word to each member's back, describing them as perceived by others. It's always illuminating to understand how we're perceived by our peers, revealing how we present ourselves daily. A noteworthy anecdote emerged during this exercise: one member consistently received the same descriptor from nearly everyone - "funny." (I will have a small gift for whomever responds to me via email eparker@triadbusinessbank.com first with the name of the "funny" board member).



(Pictured here are a few of my sticky notes from the January board retreat)

Discovering one's essence is a journey; some of us inherently grasp our defining trait, while others, like myself, may find it less apparent. This exercise proved invaluable in confirming our individual lights, empowering us to boldly embody them. Reflecting on the words pinned to my back, I find validation. I've often wondered about my inclination to support others during their darkest hours, persistently showing up when it's easier to withdraw and conceal. My light, it seems, is on of support.

Supporting others through their joys is effortless, but it's in the midst of their trials that the true essence of one's light shines. It's the bold light that stands unwavering, even when meeting their gaze feels overwhelming due to the pain mirrored in their eyes. It's the bold light that remains steadfast in the face of heartache and loss, willing to mourn alongside them. Carrying this light isn't always easy; it can weigh heavily. Yet, consider the solace it brings to those touched by its glow. In those fleeting moments, akin to a sunbeam, your light offers relief from their burdens, momentarily lifting the weight as you shoulder it in their stead. Shine Bright!!

Erica

Housekeeping

As many of you are aware, we're in the process of transitioning to a new automated system for sending reminders and announcements. Regrettably, our initial attempt at sending out meeting reminders didn't go as planned. We experienced a significant number of no-shows, with a total of 31 members absent, and 8 attendees who showed up without prior RSVP, resulting in a net cost of \$713 to the club.

This unexpected setback has put additional strain on our already tight budget. In response, the board has decided to waive the late fee for January, considering the oversight in sending out reminders. However, if you're willing and able to assist in offsetting the incurred expense, we kindly request that you bring a check for \$30 to the next meeting. It's important to note that our meetings are held every 2nd Wednesday of the month. Moving forward, we won't be able to waive the no-show fee, so please ensure your RSVP is updated accordingly.

February Meeting

Starmount Forest Country Club

Connect As If Your Life Depends on It

Did you know that your WPF membership may be helping you to live a longer, happier life? Come learn more about how your deep, meaningful connections with others contribute significantly to longevity and happiness.



Jennifer Mencarini grew up in Arlington, VA and is a proud graduate of the University of Virginia. (WAHOOWA!) She went to Emory for law school and then moved to Dallas for 18 years, where she built a successful law practice, largely representing health care providers who had been sued for malpractice. She also completed a Master's degree focused on human rights and social justice. After moving to Greensboro in 2015, she provided holistic professional development support to law students for six years at Elon Law. Since 2021, she has been the Director of Diversity & Inclusion at Fox Rothschild, an AmLaw 100 firm with 29 offices nationwide.

Jennifer serves on a number of boards of directors, including WPF, WPF, the Association of Law Firm Diversity Professionals, and the Greensboro Bar Association. She is happily married to her husband Steve, and is helping to raise his two boys, Sam (15) and J.J. (13). In her spare time, she loves to read, practice yoga, do Pilates, and spend time with friends. She adores dogs and is enjoying raising and snuggling the family's new puppy, Camden. Jennifer speaks French and loves to travel to France and just about anywhere. She has been to South Africa, Bali, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Canada, and all over Europe.

Frenesa K. Hall, MD is a native of Queens, NY and moved south for medical school at UNC after graduating from Harvard University.

After residency, she hung out her shingle in Lawrenceville, GA and had a successful solo, primary care practice for 9 years. She moved on to start a house call practice in the Atlanta area and later an opportunity to work in life insurance medicine moved her, and her wife of 38 years, to Greensboro just over 13 years ago.

She currently works for American National Insurance Company as a medical director, continues to work with several Atlanta house call clients and a few here in Greensboro. Well versed in allopathic and functional medicine, Dr. Hall created a wellness/wellbeing coaching program, MD Wellness Soulutions (<https://www.mdwellnesssoulutions.com/>), to help people make positive changes in their overall health and wellbeing.

For fun, she plays electric bass in the band Taboo Sue (<https://www.taboosueband.com/>), accompanies singer-songwriter (and wife of a WPF member Jeanie Duncan) Lyn Koonce and at open Blues Jam at Ritchey's (owned by the son of WPF member Lynn Ritchey). She loves to read, bake pound cakes, travel, and spend time laughing with friends and family.

What's for lunch?

- Butternut squash bisque
- Tomato Basil Bisque with Cheesy Crostini Garnish
- Baked sweet potato bar with assorted toppings
 - Bacon, candied pecans, scallions, cinnamon butter, pineapple chutney

- Mixed greens salad bar with displayed toppings
 - Matchstick carrots, diced tomatoes, cucumbers, artichoke hearts, olives, bacon
 - Ranch, balsamic vinaigrette and blue cheese dressings
- Fresh Cut fruit platter
- Sticky Toffee Pudding with Toffee Sauce & Whipped Cream

Greeters and 4 minute Specials

Please consider being a greeter or sharing a 4 min special for an upcoming membership meeting this year.

Greeters: Arrive to the monthly meeting of your choice around 11:50am. Sherry will provide you the purple greeter sash. Grab your nametag, stand near one of the entry doors and welcome your fellow WPF sisters. [SIGN UP HERE](#)

4 Min Special: If you have never done one please consider signing up for one of the dates available. This is a chance for you to tell us about you, not just your work but what makes you-you! This year 4 min specials will be given after the program and we ask that you try to keep them to a few short min. Not comfortable speaking to the group? No problem, write a 4 min special to go in a newsletter.

Email Marleegfoster@gmail.com with your 4 min special for a newsletter and we will include it during this year.

Pardon our Growth as we migrate over to a new email and newsletter system. We welcome your feedback, so email Sherry at admin@wpforum.org with any questions or comments.

WPF 2024 Board of Directors

Erica Parker
President

Lorri Yaskiewicz
President Elect

Jasmine Beard
1st Vice President

Jennifer Mencarini
2nd Vice President

Marlee Foster
Secretary

Leigh Ann Klee
Treasurer

Laura Burton
Membership Chair

Lisa Hazlett
Programs Chair

Chandra Hackenbruch Foundation President

Kate Panzer
Director at Large

Ashley Raper
Director at Large

WPF is committed to supporting and endorsing equal opportunities for all people without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or genetics.

NEWS & UPDATES

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

From Laura Burton, WPF Membership Committee Chair

It's that time of year again—dues and change of status requests are coming due on March 1, 2024. Dues can be paid online through our website or via check. If you would like to request a change of status, please reach out to Membership Chair Laura Burton (lbarton@foxrothschild.com) or 336-337-1942.

It's also New Member application season. Your Membership Committee would like to provide a quick overview of applicant requirements. The new member application is available on the website. Additional information can be found on the website and in the Sponsor Document.

Remember: Qualifying members may sponsor or co-sponsor NO MORE THAN TWO applicants in a year (June 1 to May 31). Supporting members, Membership Committee members, and the WPF President may not serve as primary or secondary sponsors.

To qualify for Active membership, applicants must:

- Be employed full-time or be employed in a career where the content and professionalism of the work is the measure of eligibility and not the number of hours worked.
- Work or reside in Guilford County.
- Be an experienced upper-management executive, licensed or degreed professional, business owner, or official elected or appointed to public office.
- Have a minimum of five years' professional experience and a minimum of two years' experience in the same or related field of work in which she is engaged at the time of her application.
- Be cleared by their Primary Sponsor for an available slot in the appropriate Occupational Field Category.
- Be sponsored by a total of three sponsors. The primary sponsor must be an Active or Active Retired member. Secondary sponsors may be Active, Active Retired or Emeritus members.
- Prospective members must attend a total of three WPF lunch meetings, one with each of her sponsors, within the twelve months prior to application filing.

We will provide information regarding sponsorship requirements and responsibilities next month. Please reach out with questions: Membership Chair Laura Burton (lbarton@foxrothschild.com or 336-337-1942).



WPF FOUNDATION

2024 Board of Directors

Chandra Hackenbruch, President

Leslie Loyd, Vice President

Frenesa Hall, Secretary

Jody Susong, Treasurer

Directors at Large:

Andrea Bunn

Laura Burton

Beth Fisher

Keyshia Gray

Susan Gutterman

Maria Hanlin

Kimberly Marriott

Amy Meinecke

Jennifer Mencarini

Martha Peddrick

FOUNDATION NEWS

From Chandra Hackenbruch, WPF Foundation President

By the time you read this message the Grants Committee will be reviewing grant applications and narrowing down applicants to be awarded grants that have been enabled by the generous giving of our dear WPF sisters.

I came across a quote that reminded me that great acts are made up of small deeds. Margaret Mead said “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Often times we think what makes a difference in the world is to do “big” things when often times it’s the small things of many people that can make the biggest impact! Maybe you are considering giving to the Foundation but wondering if the gift you are giving really make a difference to women and girls in Guilford county. Think about the fact that over the past 4 decades, we have been able to award over \$300K in grants to causes and programs in Guilford County that matter to you and every dollar given, contributed to this amazing accomplishment! Now that is how we effect change in our community!

So as you consider giving to the Foundation this year, remember that every dollar given collectively by our sisters has the power to make a difference in Guilford County! We are grateful for every gift given - Thank you!

DEIB Task Force

As many of you know, WPF has been considering important questions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in our membership for some time now. In addition to information obtained from the engagement survey last year, we also focused our Fall 2023 Small Group Dinner questions on DEI issues related to our organization and our membership. Concerns and ideas included those around furthering the diversity of our membership, ensuring inclusion of all members, and creating a sense of belonging throughout our organization.

The 2023 Board began a discussion about how to best address the issues raised in the survey and at the Dinners moving forward, and that charge has been picked up by our current Board members. As a result, we are creating a DEI Task Force that will be chaired by Board member Jennifer Mencarini. Task Force meetings will begin at the end of February and continue through November, at which time its recommendations will be presented to the Board.

It's critically important for us to capture the diverse lived experiences, voices, and suggestions of our membership on the Task Force. We hope you will consider participating as a Task Force member in 2024. To indicate your interest, please email me (ericagreggparker@gmail.com) and Jennifer (jennifer.g.mencarini@gmail.com) at your earliest convenience. In your email, please include a few sentences about why you would like to be a part of this endeavor. Thank you for your consideration of this invitation. We look forward to hearing from you.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

LADIES OF LEISURE

LOL is thrilled to announce our February outing, a private Floral Design Workshop on **February 8, 10am-12pm**, led by the renowned Tonya Morris, Owner and Creative Director of ABBA Design. Based in downtown Greensboro near Deep Roots, ABBA Design provides full-service event planning and premier floral design services and is responsible for many of the gorgeous flower arrangements at various local weddings, funerals, and everything in between.

The Floral Design Workshop is \$30 per person and will be held at the ABBA Studio, 700 N. Eugene St, Greensboro, NC 27401. Please plan to bring your own snacks and/or beverages of choice. RSVP to retired@wpforum.org.

FINANCIAL DIVAS

Wednesday, February 28

9-10 am

**Weaver Park Center Bldg,
324 W. Wendover Ave, Suite 140**

Join us in the "O" to share and learn "What You Need to Know About Taxes in Retirement - So You Can Act Now and Be Prepared". Anyone sharing is encouraged to please consider bringing a handout/summary takeaway for group attendees.

Women of Wall Street (WOW)
New York City
April 19-22, 2024

The WOW Investment Club, some members of the Books and Arts Club, and others inside and outside of WPF are planning our annual trek to NYC! The dates are April 19 to April 22, 2024, (or longer if you want to stay).

We'll be staying at the West House Hotel where we stayed this year as well as the Park Central Hotel, which is right around the corner from the West House. Please coordinate with a roommate if you wish. Theatre tickets can be booked on Broadwaytickets.com if you wish as well. There will be some dinners planned, I'm sure, after the first of the year.

If you are interested in going, please let Peggy Ward know at peggy.ward8@icloud.com and I will add you to the email list for further communications.

SIPPIN' SISTERS

HAPPY MARDI GRAS everyone!

Sippin' Sisters is celebrating with Erica Parker and Kim Trone as hostesses!

Kim Trone's home

February 20

6:30 pm

Come taste real Cajun delicious Gumbo and tasty treats by Erica! We will paint stemless glassware with bold colors of the fleur de lis with beautiful designs provided by Kim and Janice.

We will enjoy the trademarked refreshment - the blue "hurricane" as well as other softer options to drink.

Please Venmo your spot to
Kimberly-Trone-1
\$30 to reserve
(15 spaces only - limited due to supplies)
Cheers!
Erica, Kim and Janice

Women of Wall Street
February 15, 2024
Mt. Pisgah Church

The first BUSINESS MEETING of the year will be on Thursday, February 15, at 6 pm at Mt. Pisgah Church.

Please contact Peggy Ward at peggy.ward8@icloud.com for more information.

ANYTHING GOES
Wild Women in the Mountains
Blowing Rock, NC
March 22-24, 2024



As our over 20 year tradition continues, Wild Women in the Mountains will be happening March 22-24, 2024. Unlike most things, our pricing will stay the same at \$125. That includes a 2-night stay at one of the best and most entertaining homes in the Rock, discount shopping in the Blowing Rock area, appetizers Friday night, breakfast Saturday and Sunday and the most delicious dinner on Saturday. You will also be in the company of the best Wild Women in WPF.

Space is filling up quickly. Please get your check and reservation into Sarah Shoffner ASAP!! If you want some more information, please contact Mebane.

Mebane Ham
mebane@mebaneham.com

DINING OUT

February Dining Out
Location & Host: TBD
Date/Time: Wednesday February 28th @ 6:30 p.m.

***If you would like to receive email updates for Dining Out, please notify Amy Meinecke by email at diningout@wpforum.org

Book Club

Tuesday, February 6 @ 7 pm
Host: TBD

Tuesday, February 6 @ 7 PM WPF Book group's next book is Tom Lake by Ann Patchett. If you would like to host this meeting, please email Polly Sizemore at pollydsizemore@gmail.com.
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Books and Arts

February 1, 2024
Kris Landrum's home

We all know that 2024 is looming, which means we need to make plans for Books and Arts activities for the year. Please be part of this process and help us make 2024 our best year ever! Come with ideas for activities and a willingness to help organize the events. This gathering is a fun way to begin the year, meet some of your WPF sisters and insure a variety of event options for '24. A light dinner will be served.

If you'd like to come, email Kris Landrum (klandrum@tuggleduggins.com) or Michele Smith (msmith@hillellevans.com). Put this event on your calendar!

SERVICE TO OTHERS

Tuesday, February 13th from 6:00 – 8:00
The Family Room
204-C S. Westgate Drive, Greensboro

Service to Others will be sorting and organizing at The Family Room, Tuesday, February 13th from 6:00 – 8:00. The Family Room is located at 204-C S. Westgate Drive, Greensboro.

Families that foster are not able to get upfront financial support to provide the children with what they need when they first come into care. The children often come into their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The Family Room can provide the resources they need, including beds, clothes, toys, strollers, cribs, diapers and blankets. Resources are always provided at no cost to families that foster.

RSVP to Jody Susong at jsusong@triad.rr.com if you would like to participate.

WORKING MOMS

Tuesday, February 20
4-5 pm
Happy Hour - WineStyles

Working Mom's group is part support group and part resource group. We learn so much from each other and have the chance to share the trials and tribulations of being a working Mom in this day and age. There is always laughter, an empathetic ear, and sometimes a great suggestion to help you when you thought you have exhausted all possible options.

We alternate meeting times between lunch and an early cocktail hour. Remember that setting intentional time for what makes you happy as a working Mom is the best thing for your sanity. Moms of all ages and types are welcome. Even if your kids are grown and off the payroll, you are still a mom and that job hasn't ended.

Marlee Foster is the SIG leader and sends out meeting invites for this SIG in Outlook calendar so no excuses! If you need to cancel, no problem we get it. We are working moms too, just text Marlee (336-235-1596) or send a decline to the meeting invite. We meet on the third Tuesday most months.

To be added to the calendar invites email her at marlee.foster@conehealth.com.

Women's Professional Forum, PO Box 38594, Greensboro, NC 27438
[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)