

# POWER Surge

OPENING DOORS FOR WOMEN®

## A Note From the Founder & President

### POWER Philadelphia Highlights

POWER celebrated its fifth anniversary in Philadelphia on September 27. The program was presented by Comcast – POWER founding sponsor. Over 200 participants from the business and civic community gathered at the Kimmel Center's newly renovated rooftop garden for the celebration.

Governor Ed Rendell opened the general reception programs with comments on leadership. Gail Evans, former Executive Vice President, CNN, and Author, *Play Like A Man, Win Like A Woman*, gave the high-impact keynote address. All of the participants received an autographed copy of her book, compliments of PECO.

Ebonne Ruffin, senior manager of diversity communications, Comcast, spoke about the company's commitment to diversity and its continued mission to support organizations like POWER across the country. Charisse Lillie, Vice President, Community Investment, Comcast Corporation, and President, Comcast Foundation, closed out the reception stating that women are born leaders, and provided a list of suggested reading on leadership.

Prior to the reception, the guests participated in interactive professional development sessions:

- *Brand Yourself for Success*, C. Perry Yeatman, former Senior Vice President, Kraft Foods, Inc.
- *Managing Across Generational Teams*, Erica Dhawan, Founder & CEO, Gen Y to Genius
- *Leadership Matters*, Terri Dean, President, TcRn Group, Inc.

The evening culminated with four simultaneous dinners with a terrific line-up:

- *Women on Boards: Pursuing a Seat at the Table*; Co-Host Companies: Comcast and Diversified Search
- *Women in Pharmaceuticals & Life Sciences*; Host Company: KPMG LLP
- *Women in Charge: Corporate Leadership; Non-Profit Public Service Leadership; Government Leadership; Entrepreneurs*; Host Company: Sunoco, Inc.
- *Hard Shoes or Stilettoes? The Crossover Between Business and Politics in the Workplace* Host Company: PECO Energy

**CLICK HERE to see what women are saying about POWER Philadelphia.**

Thank you, Philadelphia! Your **Sisterly Affection** paved the way for POWER to establish programs in other markets.

Deirdre Joy Smith  
Founder & President  
POWER: Opening Doors for Women

## POWERSpotlight: Beijing – by Jing Cesarone

### Getting Acquainted with Female Executives in China

In today's China, female executives face a land of remarkable opportunities as well as age-old challenges. To understand Chinese female executives, it is important to know where they come from, where they are today, and where they are heading tomorrow.

For more than 2000 years, Confucianism has influenced the thought and behavior of the Chinese. Regarding the role of women, simply put, it stipulates the subservience of women to men as natural and proper. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the pendulum has swung completely the other way, with the Chinese government adopting policies to enforce equality between the sexes. I grew up in China believing that women can do whatever men can do, and, as a woman, you are not only allowed to do so but are expected to be like a man.

Since China entered the world's stage some 30 years ago, no other country has witnessed such dramatic transformation. More than a half billion women living and working under the influence of China's cultural legacy enjoy unprecedented opportunity.

In today's China, 48.5% of China's 1.4 billion total population is female. With 47% of the country's labor force participation, some 25 percent of women are at senior-level positions, which is above the world average of 21%. However, female executives in China face various challenges. I sat down with some female executives during a recent trip to China and gained tremendous insights.

In today's China, more than ever before, women face incredible opportunities provided by China's

brehtaking economic growth. In fact, China is considered a very female-friendly business environment by female executives such as Jennifer Li, CFO of Baidu, China's "Google." Chinese female executives are more ambitious, with over 75% aspiring to hold a top corporate job, compared with just over half in the U.S., according to a recent survey.

However, they do face many challenges and obstacles. The demanding nature of today's high-profile jobs can easily break their work/life balance. With the traditional role defined by Confucianism, women executives basically have only one choice: job or family. As a result, many executive women delay marriage or choose not to get married, or not to have kids.

Not surprisingly, just as everywhere else, gender bias is still common. Chinese executive women are generally shut out from those male-dominated relationship-building activities such as golf and drinking sessions. As a result, women are less likely to be selected by male mentors as candidates for more senior positions.

While Chinese executive women are getting more independent and motivated to progress in their careers, they are in great need of external supports. My conversations with a few Chinese female executives indicate that most of them don't have clear career goals, and don't have mentors or sponsors to help them chart their career goals. Their busy schedules don't allow them time to actively pursue this type of much-needed help, in spite of the fact that they don't feel completely satisfied with their current

Wishing you a joyous holiday and a healthy, prosperous new year!



### Save the Dates!

- Inaugural POWER Beijing **March 28, 2013**
- 9<sup>th</sup> Annual POWER Chicago **May 30, 2013**
- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual POWER Philadelphia **September 26, 2013**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Annual POWER Detroit **October 24, 2013**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual POWER Atlanta **November 7, 2013**



careers. That's exactly why they were so excited when they heard about POWER: Opening Doors for Women.

Many immediately expressed great interest in POWER because it made them feel a sense of belonging. They need inspiration, support, advice, and guidance from these women who have not only experienced but also know how to handle the kind of challenges they are facing.

And that is exactly what the POWER program has to offer. Regarding the career development topics, the women showed most interest in those related to Leadership Development, How to Build a Web of Influence, and Skills Building, especially in the areas of negotiation, presentation, and communication skills. These topics are similar to those that receive great appreciation from women in the U.S.

Fighting fiercely in the cut-throat talent war in China, many multinational companies realize just how critical it is to build women leadership and have started proactively adopting talent strategies that focus on female executives in China. I am excited to see POWER bring its program to Beijing next year because it gives us all an opportunity to get acquainted with our counterparts in China, share our achievements, challenges and tactics, and build a network of support and influence.

## The Thirty Percent Coalition

by Vicki Kramer

### POWER Joins New National Effort for Board Diversity

POWER has joined a national effort to achieve gender diversity on corporate boards, becoming one of approximately 40 members of a new national organization – the Thirty Percent Coalition.

According to reports by ION, Catalyst and Governance Metrics International, women only hold roughly 12 - 16% of US public company board seats today. The US numbers have remained essentially stagnant over the past five years, while, in other countries, change has occurred through legislated quotas and other government, regulatory and stock exchange efforts.

In November 2011, a group of 27 US industry leaders, including senior business executives, national women's organizations, institutional investors, corporate governance experts and board members gathered in New York for a high-level summit to address the lack of gender diversity in corporate boardrooms and to consider what could be done in this country to accelerate change. By the close of the summit, participants had formed the Thirty Percent Coalition to address gender diversity on boards through collaborative action and to achieve the goal of women holding 30% of board seats across public companies by the end of 2015.

In June 2012, the Thirty Percent Coalition's Institutional Investor Committee organized about 75 institutional investors with approximately \$1.2 trillion in assets under management, including seven state treasurers and several large pension and mutual funds, and national women's organizations, to sign a letter to the 41 companies in the S&P 500 that do not have any women on their boards. The letter urged these companies to consider the value that gender diversity brings both to the company and its shareholders and offered to collaborate with them, working together to achieve a gender diverse board. The Coalition has begun a dialogue with the 12 companies that responded and sent follow-up letters to companies that did not respond to the initial letter. Institutional investors are currently evaluating filing shareholder resolutions with companies that do not provide a response to the letter. In the longer term, the Coalition's Institutional Investor committee plans to undertake a similar engagement with the 179 companies in the Russell 1000 that do not have any women on their boards.

Another Coalition committee has developed a letter to over 100 companies that have more than two women directors. It will be signed by a core group of CEOs and Board chairs who will invite their peers to become supporters of the Coalition, endorse our mission of increasing gender diversity in the boardroom, and encourage other corporate leaders to take the steps necessary to make change happen.



## Reflections on POWER

CNA is very proud of its partnership with POWER Opening Doors for Women. Each year, the program gets stronger and stronger, much like the networks that have formed for the women of CNA. The 2012 POWER Chicago event was a success.

POWER uniquely offers an array of speakers as well as forums to meet and connect with others all within the time constraints of a few hours. Not many of us make time for full day events, which makes the format of POWER particularly valuable. In a few short hours, we are able to benefit so much, and the connections that we make last a long time.

For the women of CNA, POWER programs provide an opportunity for us to meet women from other places and also to connect with other women from our company. POWER also provides a great opportunity for us to interact outside the workplace with discussion of important topics that benefit our professional development and success. Carla Harris was a fabulous speaker, and many of us are still talking about her "pearls" and keep her book on our desktop. Carla guided us to think about deep topics in a very simple and practical way. We would like to thank Deirdre for extending the opportunity to us. We can't wait for the next one!

Debbie Nutley  
Senior Vice President  
& Senior Human  
Resources Officer  
CNA



## POWERSpotlight: Detroit

POWER hosted its third annual program in Detroit on October 25th. Over 100 women participated in the program. Barbara Kaufman, author, *Attitude*, delivered the evening's keynote address and had the participants on the edge of their seats with her '10 Steps to Developing a Winning Attitude.' Below are highlights from Barbara's presentation:

- Make it happen! The things you want in life will most likely not just fall into your lap. It takes effort!
- Network, network, network! Life and business are both about relationships. Learning to build stronger, lasting relationship will serve you well both personally and professionally.
- Diet and Exercise! We all know how great your attitude is when you look and feel great. Whether your goal is to lose a few pounds or tone up, stick to a plan. It's hard work sometimes but the health benefits will make your attitude soar.

Among our 2012 Detroit sponsors was Fifth Third Bank who recently signed on as a national sponsor for the 2013 POWER programs.

### Thank you from the POWER Team!

- Deirdre Joy Smith  
*Founder & President*
- Durre Muhammad  
*Special Programs Manager*
- Aaja Corinne Carr  
*Program Assistant*

## POWERCircle

### POWER would like to recognize our partners:

#### ATLANTA

- Cool Girls, Inc.  
**[www.thecoolgirls.org](http://www.thecoolgirls.org)**

#### CHICAGO

- ATHENA International  
**[www.athenainternational.org](http://www.athenainternational.org)**
- Chicago Financial Women  
**[www.chicagofw.org](http://www.chicagofw.org)**
- Chicago Foundation for Women  
**[www.cfw.org](http://www.cfw.org)**
- NAWBO Chicago Area Chapter  
**[www.nawbochicago.org](http://www.nawbochicago.org)**
- Women's Business Development Center Chicago Chapter  
**[www.wbdc.org](http://www.wbdc.org)**

#### DETROIT

- Automative Women's Alliance Foundation  
**[www.awafoundation.org](http://www.awafoundation.org)**
- Michigan Women's Foundation  
**[www.miwf.org](http://www.miwf.org)**
- NAWBO Greater Detroit Chapter  
**[www.nawbogdc.org](http://www.nawbogdc.org)**

#### PHILADELPHIA

- InterOrganization Network  
**[www.ionwomen.org](http://www.ionwomen.org)**
- NAWBO Greater Philadelphia  
**[www.gonawbophilly.org](http://www.gonawbophilly.org)**
- United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey  
**[www.unitedforimpact.org](http://www.unitedforimpact.org)**
- Vision2020  
**[www.drexel.edu/vision2020](http://www.drexel.edu/vision2020)**
- Women's Business Development Center Philadelphia Chapter  
**[www.womensbdc.org](http://www.womensbdc.org)**
- Women's Way  
**[www.womensway.org](http://www.womensway.org)**

#### NATIONAL

- Catalyst  
**[www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org)**
- Forté Foundation  
**[www.fortefoundation.org](http://www.fortefoundation.org)**
- Thirty Percent Coalition  
**[www.30percentcoalition.org](http://www.30percentcoalition.org)**

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POWERSurge is published bi-annually by POWER: Opening Doors for Women®. We welcome your feedback!

Send questions, comments and content ideas to: **[power@womensnetworkingcommunity.org](mailto:power@womensnetworkingcommunity.org)**

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