

CONNECTIONS

“THERE ARE SO MANY CREATIVE TYPES THERE. I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR DETROIT.”

Getting to Know Your Fellow Flyer: Deirdre Joy Smith

STORY ALEX HOYT
PHOTOGRAPHY BEN QUINTON

What brings you to London?

The organization I founded and run, Power: Opening Doors for Women, is hosting our second annual program in London, so I'm here meeting with city and business officials. We bring together a dynamic group of women to help each other move up the corporate ladder. We're also identifying companies that don't have women on their corporate boards. The goal is to start turning that activism into results.

Who will be speaking at the program?

We have Fiona Woolf, the former Mayor of London; Vicky Pryce, an economist and the former joint head of the U.K.'s Government Economic Service; and even a man—Alex White, a director at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

When did you start the organization?

Twelve years ago. In addition to Chicago and London, we now have programs in Shanghai, Houston, and Detroit.

Speaking of Detroit, is that a Shinola watch?

It is indeed! I went to Detroit this past summer—it's our second-largest market. Shinola is a bright beacon. They have their manufacturing there; they're employing a lot of people. It felt like it was turning around. Right out in front of the Chase Plaza, they had cabanas out, food trucks everywhere, a piano anyone could play. There are so many creative types there. I have high hopes for Detroit.

