



News Release

409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210 ★ Washington, DC 20024 ★ 202-205-3850 (p) ★ 202-205-6825 (f) ★ www.nwbc.gov

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Contact: Stephanie Peacock,
(202) 205-6827
stephanie.peacock@sba.gov

Marsha Firestone Named to National Women's Business Council

Washington, DC – Dr. Marsha Firestone, founder and president of the Women Presidents' Organization (WPO), has been appointed to a three-year term on the National Women's Business Council.

The National Women's Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council created to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. Members of the Council are prominent women business owners and leaders of women's business organizations. The Council is committed to:

- *Conducting* research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations;
- *Communicating* these findings widely;
- *Connecting* the women's business community to public policy makers; and
- Providing programs and platforms for *change* in order to expand and improve opportunities for women business owners and their enterprises.

“As a recognized leader in the women's business community, Marsha will be a tremendous asset to the Council,” said Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman and CEO of Carlson Companies and Chair of the National Women's Business Council. “Her expertise in women's economic development will certainly help inform the Council's recommendations for policies and programs that encourage women's entrepreneurship. I look forward to working with Marsha and appreciate her willingness to serve.”

Dr. Firestone founded the Women Presidents' Organization in 1996 to serve as a peer networking organization for women whose businesses annually gross over two million dollars. The WPO currently operates in 30 locations nationwide and in Canada. Dr. Firestone has also served as Vice President of Women Incorporated and previously as Vice President of Training and Counseling at the American Woman's Economic Development Corporation

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(AWED). Prior to her involvement in women's economic development, she oversaw all operations and established educational direction as president of a for-profit educational institution. Her career also includes positions as: National Executive Director of the Women's American ORT, a volunteer organization with a membership of over 150,000; a full-time faculty member of the American Management Association Competency-Based Management Development Program; and a faculty member at the City University of New York and Adelphi University.

"I greatly look forward to serving on the National Women's Business Council," said Firestone. "My goal on the Council will be to focus on furthering the growth of women's businesses through access to information and influence, and the resources that accelerate their progress."

As the nation's advocate for the more than 9 million women-owned businesses in the U.S., the Council supports increased access to affordable health care; access to capital; access to federal contracts and international markets; and access to the information and expertise women business owners most need to succeed.

Women business owners currently represent almost 38% of all U.S. firms, with a growth rate twice that of all businesses. They employ one out of every four company workers and contribute \$3.6 trillion in annual revenues.

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