

Capital Area United Way's Women United
presents

***Celebrate the
Power of Women***

honoring the impactful women
in the communities we serve

Awards Program 2024

CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY
WOMEN UNITED

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Capital Area United Way

Welcome

Laura Thomas, *Women United Chair, Antares Technology Solutions*

Mistress of Ceremonies

Renae Skinner, *Evening News Anchor, WVLA NBC Local 33 News*

Invocation

Bishop Delores J. "Dee" Williamston, *Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church*

Personal Reflection on Women United

Gwen Wild, *Mercedes Benz Baton Rouge*

Sponsor Remarks

Greta Fleming Gordon, *BASF*

Special Presentation

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome, *City of Baton Rouge, Parish of East Baton Rouge*

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Michelle Hardy, *Turner Industries*

Keynote Program

Keli Zinn, *Executive Deputy Director of Athletics & COO, LSU Athletics*

Presentation of Awards

Laura Thomas, *Women United Chair*

Amey Shortess Crousillac, *SVP Resource Development, CAUW*

Live Auction

Kelly Hurtado, *Bank of St. Francisville*

Call To Action

Karen Smith, *Turner Industries*

Holly Carruth, *Louisiana State University*

Door Prizes.....

Closing Remarks

Amey Shortess Crousillac

A portrait of Renae Skinner, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a red top and a red necklace, smiling. The background is a blue and white abstract pattern.

Renae Skinner

Mistress of Ceremonies

Renae Skinner, born Danielle Renae Skinner, has traded in her mountain view for some southern comfort, and she is enjoying every minute of it! Renae is a native of Denver, Colorado, and has always had a passion for journalism. She received her bachelor's degree in Broadcast Journalism at Langston University, the only HBCU in Oklahoma. From there her career has soared. She landed her first reporting job at KXXV-TV in Waco, Texas.

After a year, she was offered an evening anchoring gig at WXVT News in the Mississippi Delta. Renae also worked as a morning anchor in Rochester, New York, but came back down South to work at WCBI in Columbus, where she served as a morning anchor and reporter for four years. She then moved home to Anchor/MMJ in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the NBC affiliate there. She is dedicated to bringing viewers the stories that matter in the community.

Renae has won awards for her hard work, including an Associated Press Award for her reporting. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. When she's not chasing after the big story of the day, Renae enjoys volunteering, reading a good book, going to church, spending time with family and thrift store shopping. Renae also enjoys a good laugh! So, if you have a corny joke, don't be shy if you see her in public! If you have a story idea, don't hesitate to drop her a line!



Keli Zinn

Keynote Speaker

Keli Zinn, the first woman to lead the athletics department of West Virginia University (WVU), was hired in July 2022 as Executive Deputy Director of Athletics and Chief Operating Officer for LSU Athletics. At LSU, Keli oversees the daily operations of the athletics department, working closely with University leadership, senior athletics administration, and campus and community partners to support and advance the Tigers' growth and success. Her work includes administrative supervision of all 21 varsity programs, oversight of internal and external affairs, including capital projects, revenue generation, strategic initiatives, and more.

Under Keli's leadership, athletics has witnessed unprecedented success. LSU enjoyed one of the most celebrated years in recent history during Keli's first year in Baton Rouge. Capturing two national championships in baseball and women's basketball with 20 of 21 varsity sports reaching postseason competition, the Tigers placed in the Director's Cup Top 10 for the first time since 2008-09.

Her passion for sports combined with a keen business acumen has not only elevated the profile of LSU's athletic programs, but also secured a significant boost in revenue. Keli renegotiated LSU's multimedia rights partnership, securing a 21% increase in value, while the 2022-23 season also saw a remarkable increase in ticket sales, merchandise revenue and donor support. Keli's dynamic approach and ability to foster collaborative relationships played a crucial role in the growth of NILSU.

Through innovation, fan engagement, forging partnerships with local businesses, and reimagining sponsorship opportunities, LSU has firmly established itself as a leader in the NIL industry. Surrounded by some of the world's most sought-after college athletes, Keli secured a lucrative and unique access and rights agreement to produce *The Money Game*, an NIL-focused documentary series, airing on Amazon Prime Video, following Tiger student-athletes during the 2023-24 season. Keli arrived in Baton Rouge with nearly two decades of experience in Power Five athletics, serving in several roles at WVU.

In November 2021, Keli was selected as West Virginia Executive Magazine's cover recipient of the 2022 Young Guns Class, representing a generation of leaders who have accomplished great things through their careers in the business world and in their communities. A graduate of WVU with a bachelor's degree and master's degree in sports management, Keli is a 2020 inductee into the WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences Hall of Fame, and she has twice received national recognition from the Sports Business Journal.



Donna Saurage

Legacy of Service Award

Donna M. Saurage is a community activist and philanthropist who has been a shareholder of Community Coffee for 66 years. She serves on the board of Community Coffee Company, the #1 family-owned retail coffee brand in America, where she serves as Chair of the Citizenship Committee. Donna is the Sole Manager of CCC Holding, L.L.C., the owner of Community Coffee Company.

In addition to her role at Community Coffee, Donna serves as on the boards of several notable organizations, including Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University (FranU), Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, the Huey and Angela Wilson Foundation, New Schools for Baton Rouge, First Presbyterian Church Foundation, and Public Affairs Research Council. She also serves as the Chair of the Tocqueville Society of Capital Area United Way.

A portrait of Barbara Beckmann, an older woman with short blonde hair, wearing a red turtleneck sweater with a gold brooch. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blue abstract pattern.

Barbara Beckmann

***Excellence in Social &
Community Investment***

ExxonMobil Baton Rouge Senior Economic Adviser, **Barbara Beckmann** is a trailblazer and champion for inclusion, innovation, and mentorship. With over 60 years of experience, she has witnessed firsthand the profound impact of mentorship throughout her career. Dedicating herself to giving back, guiding, and investing in young employees, Ms. Beckman embodies the core values that define ExxonMobil.

As ExxonMobil's longest-serving employee across the globe, Barbara has paved the way for women in STEM over her illustrious career spanning six decades. She made history as the first female engineering graduate at the University of Mississippi, earning a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering in 1961. In 2024, she committed a \$5 million estate gift to her alma mater, which now plans to call for the Department of Engineering to bear her name in honor of the legacy gift.



Terri Newby-Mearidy

Woman of Inspiration

Terri Newby-Mearidy has been employed with ExxonMobil Baton Rouge for 24 years. She currently serves as the Baton Rouge Complex Environmental Compliance Testing Coordinator and is actively involved with a number of ExxonMobil Employee Resource Groups, including EXCITE, BEST, PRIDE, WIN, and The Wildlife Sustainability Team.

Terri has a longstanding commitment to community service and volunteerism. She has dedicated her time to organizations such as Goodwill Homes, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta and Pittsburgh, and the Capital Area United Way. A recent CAUW Volunteer of the Year award recipient, Terri's contributions to making a meaningful impact in her community continue to inspire many to become more involved in the capital region.

A photograph of two women, Julie Scott and Kacy Edwards, standing side-by-side against a blue background with a faint pattern. Julie Scott is on the left, wearing a black short-sleeved button-down shirt. Kacy Edwards is on the right, wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt with a pattern of small animals. Both women are smiling.

***Julie Scott &
Kacy Edwards***

***Women of Inspiration
Team Award***

Kacy Edwards and **Julie Scott** are the Executive Directors of Career Compass of Louisiana, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the number of students in Louisiana who attend post-secondary institutions after high school graduation. In 2006, Ms. Edwards and Ms. Scott made the brave decision to leave the teaching profession to address a real need they witnessed firsthand in the classroom – that of a lack of access to information about post-secondary opportunities available to students.

Because of their work at Career Compass, over 150,000 seniors across the state have graduated with a realistic, attainable plan to achieve their post-secondary goals. Kacy and Julie have been recognized with numerous accolades for their impactful work. In 2018, they were honored with the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation's "Angel Award."



Adrian Owen Jones

United 40 Award

Adrian Owen Jones serves as the Chief Growth Officer at ThreeSixtyEight, an advertising and branding agency, where she spearheads business development, agency strategy, and revenue generation while also overseeing key accounts. Adrian's dedication to education and community building is evident in her role as co-curator of Assembly Required, a nonprofit organization with the mission of positioning Baton Rouge as the creative capital of the south. Her diverse contributions underscore her commitment to effecting positive and enduring change, reflecting the essence of a rising difference-maker committed to lifelong service.

Women United Awards 2015 - 2023

Excellence in Social & Community Investment (formerly the Leadership of Excellence Award)

Jane Shank	2015
Janet Simmons	2016
Jennifer Maggio	2017
Melissa Juneau	2018
Camila Ford	2019
Padma Vatsavai	2020
Allison B. Hudson	2021
Ann Zanders	2023

Legacy of Service

Mary Terrell Joseph	2015
Gaylynne Mack	2016
Donna Britt *	2017
Lois Smyth	2018
Tamiko Francis Garrison	2020
Gloria Moncada	2021
Gwen Hamilton	2023

UNITED 40

Lindsey Rey	2019
Alsie Dunbar	2020
Jessica Trepagnier	2021
Emily Chatelain	2023

Woman of Inspiration

Lechana Rankins	2015
Claudia Marcela Hernandez	2016
Omayra Jazairli	2017
Jeanette Dansby	2018
Tristi Charpentier	2020
Carol M. Patin, M.D.	2021
Bridget Kaigler	2023

Women of Inspiration Team Award

Lauren Johnson	2020
Heather Millis	2020
Danielle Panepinto	2020

Spirit of Women United

Molly Israel Lejeune *	2021
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**deceased*

CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY WOMEN UNITED®

Women United comprises women who collaborate in giving, volunteering, and advocating alongside other like-minded women dedicated to enhancing the well-being of their community through education, economic mobility, healthy living, and access to basic needs.

For more information on joining Women United, Scan the QR Code below, or visit www.cauw.org/women-united, or contact Emily Boudreaux, Corporate Relationship Manager, at emilyb@cauw.org.

*We extend special thanks to our
Celebrate The Power of Women Committee:*

Holly Carruth, Celebrate The Power of Women Chair, Louisiana State University

Karen Smith, Celebrate The Power of Women Chair, Turner Industries

Michelle Hardy, Turner Industries

Jackie McCreary, CF Industries

Charlene Montelaro, Women United Past-Chair, GBR Food Bank, retired, Community Volunteer

Laura Thomas, Women United Chair, Antares Technology Solutions





"To improve lives by leveraging partnerships in our community to advance the common good through education, economic mobility, and healthy living."

www.cauw.org

*A special Thank You to our title sponsor, BASF
Thanks also to our in-kind sponsors: Cary Saurage Community Arts Center, Community Coffee, George Bell & Friends, & Mestizo Louisiana Mexican Cuisine*



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