



8th Annual ROTARY/One Chicago Woman of the Year Awards

APRIL 6, 2021

Erik Cempel, ROTARY/One President
Lisa Russ, Chair, Woman of the Year Committee





HONORING SERVICE

The Rotary Club of Chicago is the founding Club of the world's premier international business and service organization.

Rotary members are business and community leaders who volunteer their expertise, compassion, and resources to improve communities at home in Chicago as well as in communities around the world.

It all started in 1905 at the corner of Randolph and Dearborn. The Rotary Club of Chicago, known as ROTARY/One, was founded by four businessmen who decided to meet on a regular basis for professional synergy and friendship. They soon began to pull their collective talents together and started solving community problems. Within 10 years, Rotary was on the east and west coasts and in Canada. 116 years later, Rotary is an international organization of women and men, over 1.3 million strong, part of 33,000 clubs and in almost every country in the world.

The common thread has been sharing fellowship, business synergy, and Service Above Self. This year, at our 8th Annual Chicago Woman of the Year award luncheon, we honor women who exemplify the principles on which Rotary was founded.



PROGRAM

Welcome – Erik Cempel, President, ROTARY/One
Chicago Woman History - Lisa Russ, Chair, Woman of the Year
Higher Thought – Marshall Schmitt, Immediate Past President ROTARY/One
ROTARY/One Spotlight- Aleta Williams, Chair, JOB1 Committee

Keynote Address

Elizabeth Colón

President of the National Association of Women Business Owners

Introduced by: Neli Vazquez Rowland

Chicago Woman of the Year Award Presentations

Trish Atha

Founder and Board President, Ignition Community Glass

Introduced by: Donner Kahl

Barbara Best

Principal and Co-Founder, Capital Strategies Investment Group

Introduced by: Mina Amir-Mokre

Hedy Ratner

Founder and President Emeritus, Women's Business Development Center

Introduced by: Maxim Schrogin

The Rotary Story - Introduced by Marga Hewko, President-Elect, ROTARY/One

Closing Announcements - Erik Cempel

Meeting Adjourned



TRISH ATHA

is a passionate multicultural educator and youth mentor with 25 years of non-profit leadership experience focused on intercultural capacity building and collaboration. Her guiding light as an executive leader is the 'Beloved Community' envisioned by Dr. King, "A society based on justice, equal opportunity, and love of one's fellow human beings." Trish has been active on a range of boards with educational and social justice missions, including School of the Art Institute of Chicago, North Shore Country Day School, City Year Chicago,

Global Youth Leadership Institute, and Facing History and Ourselves. At Facing History, she served as Advisory Board Chair from 2013 to 2016, leading and bringing about lasting change to the demographic metric guiding board membership.

In 2014 Trish founded Ignition Community Glass (ICG) to advance racial equity in the arts, and actively chip away at the diversity gap in glass art. She recognized the power of providing Chicago youth access to the dynamic and therapeutic elements of glass making. Through hands-on collaborative glass art experiences, her students experiment, incubate ideas and explore creativity, and learn about science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), while building social emotional and life skills inherent in the glass making process such as perseverance, resilience, patience and focus. She has formed numerous community partnerships to accomplish this work and has inspired hope, sparked imagination, and instilled a love of learning to more than 2,000 youth in Chicago.

Currently, she is focused on addressing the disproportionate impact the pandemic is having on disenfranchised communities and meeting some of the needs of Chicago youth. She expanded ICG's program model to provide life coaching and mentoring, offering a safe place of support, expression and growth for her students during these difficult months. Additionally, she shifted in-person learning to a virtual platform to continue to engage students creatively. While the modifications in her program model have provided a much-needed bridge during the pandemic, Trish plans to take the learning and opportunities gained during these unsettling months forward to reach more youth.

Trish is most proud of being a Mother, both to her own cherished children and to the many other extraordinary young people that affectionately call her mom. She credits her three adult children, Ben, Cayley & Sam, and the young adults who grace her life, as her greatest teachers in life, who enliven and grow her spirit with new possibilities every day.



BARBARA BEST

is a Principal of CAP STRAT, and Founder of the CAP STRAT Women's Forum. She primarily focuses on business development and raising awareness of her firm's investment advisory and asset management services for institutions and individuals; and she also leads their Women's Forum in Chicago, building this community since 2015.

Barbara is passionate about supporting, empowering, and advocating for women, especially to own their voice and

power over their financial resources so they can enjoy success and fulfillment in all aspects of life. She also has a strong network and is extremely generous in and passionate about supporting and connecting others to further their personal and/or professional goals.

Barbara has been identified as one of Chicago's Most Influential Women by the Chicago Business Journal and has been recognized for her community service and leadership. She has always been involved in her communities, actively participating as a contributor, volunteer, and leader in various organizations. She currently is a Founding Board Member of the Women in Entrepreneurship Institute at DePaul, Vice-Chair of Women Leaders in Philanthropy for the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation, a mentor for Women's Leadership and Mentoring Alliance (WLMA) among other philanthropic activities.

Barbara received her B.A. in Economics, magna cum laude, from Boston College and studied at London School of Economics and Faculte des Lettres in France; received a Business Certificate in Finance from the Professional Program of New York University. Barbara has received the Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF®) and PLANSPONSOR Retirement Professional (PRP) designations.

You can also learn more about her on her [LinkedIn profile](#).



HEDY RATNER

is founder, President Emerita of and Consultant to the Women's Business Development Center. The Women's Business Development Center, founded in 1986, has received national and international recognition for advocacy and programs for women's economic empowerment. WBDC serves women in 9 Midwestern states, developing and strengthening successful women owned businesses. WBDC provides counseling, training, financial, certification and procurement assistance in Spanish and English for emerging

and established women business owners, veterans and for child care businesses.

An advocate and activist for women's issues for more than 50 years, Hedy Ratner is dedicated to social justice and advocacy for the empowerment of women and minorities locally, nationally and internationally. Ratner was appointed by President Clinton to the National Women's Business Council. Appointed by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle to the Cook County Commission on Human Rights and the Cook County Small Business and Supplier Diversity Commission. Ratner was appointed by Illinois Governors Edgar and Ryan to the Illinois Women's Business Ownership Council, the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Illinois and reappointed by Governor JB Pritzker to the Business Enterprise Council.

Ratner was honored to officially represent the U. S. Department of State on the economic empowerment of women in many developing countries.

Honors include: Chicago Foundation for Women Founders Award; Lifetime Achievement Award from Enterprising Woman magazine; Lifetime Achievement Advocacy Award from the Federation of Women Contractors; Athena International Women's Leadership Award; U. S. Small Business Administration Women's Business Center Award and the SBA Advocate Award; Anti-Defamation League's Women of Achievement Award; University of Chicago Alumni Public Service and Diversity Award.; National Association of Women Business Owners Public Policy Advocate of the Year, and the Bank of America Community Leader Award among others.

Her educational background includes an M.Ed from DePaul University; an M.S. from the University of Chicago; A. B. and M.Ed. from University of California and an Associate of Arts degree from Los Angeles City College.



ELIZABETH COLÓN

Keynote Speaker

Elizabeth Colón is the President and Founder of Metaphrasis Language & Cultural Solutions, LLC, an award-winning interpreting and translation services company. As a pioneer and innovator in the language services profession, her passion and dedication for providing access to quality language offerings as well as educational resources has won Elizabeth and Metaphrasis numerous awards and recognitions

including Crain's 2020 Business Notable Entrepreneur, 2017 Negocios Now: Latina In Business Award, the National Association of Woman Business Owners', Woman Business Owner of the Year award (2015), the U.S. Small Business Administration, 2014 Small Business Person of the Year, Enterprising Woman's Magazine 2014 Woman of the Year, Hispanic Business Magazine Top 500 Hispanic Owned Businesses (2011-2013).

Her success and commitment to her corporation, the economic development of the Chicago region, as well as her dedication to the community at large, is further demonstrated as the First Latina President of the National Association of Women Business Owner – Chicago, Co-Producer of the Latina Expo and Host of her own Talk Show, BoricuaTalks. After 11 years of serving on the Humboldt Park Health Foundation Board (formerly Norwegian American Hospital) she has taken on a new role serving on the Health Equity Committee.



PREVIOUS HONOREES

May 2019

“ Rosa Berardi, Cindy Housner, Terry Savage

May 2018

Yvonne C. Jones, Amanda Lannert, Deborah Steiner and Public Service Award:
Dr. Janice K. Jackson

May 2017

Karen Eng, Maricela Garcia, Diana White
Lifetime Achievement: Barbara Monsor

June 2016

Paula Fasseas, Evelyn Jones, Maria Paz Salas

June 2015

Theresa Mintle, Marcenia Richards, Barbara Zawacki

June 2014

Toni Preckwinkle, Deborah Rickert, Janice Rodgers

June 2013

Victoria Brander, Patricia Jahn, Lisa Madigan



ERIK CEMPEL

President, ROTARY/One

Erik Cempel has been a member of the Rotary Club of Chicago for 10 years. He is focused on having a measurable impact on the community, particularly in education. Erik has served as Programs Chair, on the International Service Committee, and as JOB1 Business Relations lead for our Club's jobs and scholarships program for Chicago's disadvantaged youth.

Erik joined Rotary at the urging of his wife, a Rotarian from South Korea, in order to network. He has stayed in Rotary due

to the fellowship, service, and the ability to learn about diverse fields while surrounded by service-oriented individuals. Erik also is President of the Chicago Engineers' Foundation, delivering STEM programs to Chicago schools, providing \$120,000 in scholarships annually to Chicago students, and then offering career development and mentoring to those awardees. He is the founder and past chair of the Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT) Chicago Chapter; he was a long-time board member for the Illinois Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and served as scholarship chair and Midwest District Conference chair. He currently serves on ITE International's Advocacy Committee.

Professionally, Erik has 19 years' local, national, and international experience in the planning and implementation of transportation infrastructure and policy. He currently runs his own consulting firm, Cempel International Transportation Consulting. Previously, he was Amtrak's Program Manager for the implementation of the \$1 billion Chicago Union Station Master Plan. For most of his career, Erik was a Principal of Cambridge Systematics, where he led transportation planning studies around the world and was regional manager for staff in the central US. He also worked for two years as a researcher at the Korea Transport Institute. He shares his transportation and global experience as a guest lecturer at DePaul University. Erik graduated with a Master's degree in Transportation Systems from Cornell University with a minor in Urban Planning.



LISA RUSS

Chair, Chicago Woman of the Year

Lisa Russ has worked in professional communications, writing, marketing and sales for the majority of her career.

She has always had a passionate interest in art and music, having grown up in a family where both played a major role in her every day life. After spending almost 20 years in communications, training and marketing roles with CBIZ, a national business services firm, the opportunity to represent Nina Irwin brings two important worlds together.

Lisa has been involved with The Rotary Club of Chicago since 2001, serving in a number of capacities including President, 2012-2013. Part of her inspiration for Chicago Woman of the Year came from her experience with serving on a CBIZ internal board designed to develop, attract and retain female talent. Developing opportunities for Nina's work also ties directly into Lisa's interest in supporting and showcasing women's contributions.



ROTARY/One BOARD AND OFFICERS

ROTARY/One BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Erik Cempel - President
Marga Hewko - President-Elect
Timo Rehbock - President-Elect Nominee
Matthias Amberg - Treasurer
Laura Inns - Secretary
Marshall Schmitt - Immediate Past President

Directors

Sarah Buck
Catherine Delahunt
Kay Fleischer
Hervé Jacquiau
Marilyn Lopez
Betsy Meisenheimer
Josephine Stawicki
Aleta Williams

ROTARY/One FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Gail Anderson - Chair
Michael Faris - Vice Chair
Steve Weihmuller - Treasurer
Theodore Nebel - Secretary

Trustees

Marga Hewko
Andrea Luehmann
Martha Maugh
Timo Rehbock
John Wilhelm

CHICAGO WOMAN OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE

Chair - Lisa Russ

Gail Anderson
Erik Cempel
Tamra Drees
Kay Fleischer
Ellyn Harris

Shelbi Hoffman
Donner Kahl
Marilyn Lopez
Nitha Nagubadi
Betsy Meisenheimer

Timo Rehbock
John Romans
Marshall Schmitt
Josephine Stawicki
Neli Vazquez Rowland



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

4/13/2021 - William D. Danko, Author and Professor Emeritus at SUNY-Albany

4/20/2021 - José Velasco - Autism at Work Ambassador at SAP Americas

4/27/2021 - James M. Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director, Metra

MAY

5/4/2021 - Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot

5/11/2021 - Gia Biagi, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Transportation

5/18/2021 - Maria Woltjen, Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

5/25/2021 - U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth

Be sure to visit the ROTARY/One website for the most up-to-date meeting and event information.

Rotary
Club of Chicago



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