



Midwest Women Entrepreneurs Collective (MWEC) Celebrates Women's Entrepreneurship Day with Awards Honoring Trailblazers

OMAHA, NE, UNITED STATES, November 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Midwest Women Entrepreneurs Collective \(MWEC\)](#) will host its inaugural Pioneer Awards Celebration this Thursday in partnership with the [Women's Entrepreneurship Day](#) Organization (WEDO).

Women's Entrepreneurship Day was first celebrated at the United Nations on November 19, 2014, and has since become the world's largest platform championing women innovators, job creators, and founders. In 2023, Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen officially proclaimed November 19 as Women's Entrepreneurship Day in Nebraska, recognizing the economic and community impact of the state's more than 68,000 women-owned businesses.

WEDO was founded in 2013 by Wendy Diamond, an impact investor and humanitarian inspired by the power of microloans to transform the lives of women living in poverty. After learning that women receive less than two percent of global venture capital funding, despite performing 66 percent of the world's work and driving 85 percent of consumer spending, she launched WEDO and the #ChooseWOMEN campaign to ignite a global movement for economic empowerment. More information is available at www.joinwedo.org.

[MWEC's 2024 Pioneer Award Honorees](#)

In collaboration with WEDO, MWEC will recognize three exceptional Midwest founders whose leadership and resilience exemplify the spirit of Women's Entrepreneurship Day:

Cella Quinn, Founder, Cella Quinn Investments – Finance Pioneer Award

The first woman stockbroker at Merrill Lynch and later the founder of her own investment firm, Quinn has spent decades advancing women's financial education and cultivating leadership networks.

Lynne Baldwin, Founder and President, BHMI – Technology Pioneer Award

A visionary software leader who co-founded BHMI in 1986, Baldwin helped build one of the Midwest's most respected engineering firms, gaining national recognition for innovation in payment processing.

Beth Ostdiek Smith, Founder, Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue – Philanthropy Pioneer Award

A mission-driven social entrepreneur, Smith has transformed food recovery and hunger relief

efforts across Nebraska through her leadership at Saving Grace.

Why This Celebration Matters

Women entrepreneurs continue to drive economic growth across the Midwest, yet they still face disproportionate barriers, including limited access to capital, fewer mentorship opportunities, and systemic inequities in investment and leadership. MVEC was created to address these challenges by building a connected and collaborative community where women can support one another, share resources, and grow together.

“Entrepreneurship should never be a solo journey,” said Pamela Finn, Founder of MVEC. “When women come together, entire communities rise.”

The MVEC × WEDO Pioneer Awards Celebration will take place on November 20 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Koley Jessen in Omaha.

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