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THE WOMEN IN HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE LAUNCHES SPEAKER DIRECTORY ADVANCING WOMEN IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

ATLANTA, GA, August 14, 2024 - To further showcase diverse voices at hospitality industry conferences worldwide, the [Women in Hospitality Leadership Alliance](#) has introduced an interactive Speaker Directory featuring over 700 talented senior-level women with subject matter expertise across all facets of the hospitality industry.

According to The Penn State School of Hospitality Management [2023 Women in Hospitality](#) research report, funded by the [AHLA Foundation](#) (a member of the Alliance), women held only 24% of the podium spots at hotel investment conferences and 37% of main stage speaking spots. However, women make up 58% of the hospitality industry workforce.

"Representation matters, and visibility is a key component to career advancement," said Rachel Vandenberg, who chairs the Alliance's Podium Committee and is the Founder of [Accelerate Women Leaders in Travel](#), an Alliance member. "Despite there being many women with significant expertise within the hospitality industry, there are still fewer women on stage."

In collaboration with conference organizers, the Alliance Podium Committee identified several recurring challenges to sourcing more diverse voices for conference stages and immediately set out to overcome those barriers and provide solutions. One key initiative was helping to identify as many thought leaders as possible, overcoming any perception that there are not enough women speakers to source, and providing a tool that the entire industry could use.

Lan Elliott, Principal of Acacia Hospitality LLC and Interview Host for Alliance member [DEI Advisors](#), who helped to lead the Directory effort, said, "In my experience, the women know the women! We hope the Directory leverages women's 'Rolodexes' to create a quick and useful tool for conference organizers to connect with many more women leaders for their events."



By allowing conference organizers to filter the list of over 700 speakers (and growing) by career background, title, company type, home base, and other data points, the Directory quickly yields a shortlist of speakers for any topic and stage. Conference organizers have immediately recognized the value. “A big thank you to the Alliance for leading this important initiative and for creating the Speaker Directory,” said Lee Hunter, Chairman of the Hunter Hotel Investment Conference. “This directory will serve as a wonderful resource for conference organizers as they plan, while bringing new voices and fresh perspectives to conference stages.”

“Every event benefits from having greater diversity of thought and balance across its speaker lineup. Showcasing speakers with a wide range of perspectives on the stage is a benefit for attendees while simultaneously ensuring greater visibility for these leaders, which will move the needle further on overall representation in the hospitality industry,” said Rachel Humphrey, Founder of the Alliance. “The Women in Hospitality Leadership Alliance Speaker Directory, powered by RaizUp, means that no conference should ever be lacking in representation of women speakers, no matter the topic, stage, or location. I am grateful to the members of the Alliance, to [RaizUp](#), an Alliance member who has donated and designed the interactive platform, and to the teams from ALIS/Northstar, HUNTER, The Lodging Conference, and NYU/Questex who demonstrate that, by working together, we can effect lasting change in the industry.”

The Women in Hospitality Industry Leadership Alliance is a consortium of 32 organizations advancing women in hospitality. For more information about the Alliance or to request access to or be included in the Speaker Directory, visit whlalliance.org or contact whlalliance@gmail.com.