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CORRECTION:

Our Where in the World is Women Employed article included last month's information. link went to the wrong page! If you want to find out all the happenings for this month, [click here!](#)

WE-Zine



PROGRESS, DELIVERED TO YOUR INBOX

 Women
Employed

**Our partner institutions are hungry for progress,
and we hope you are too!**

Dear %FirstName%,

As you might expect, Women's History Month is a robust month at Women Employed. Requests for expert insight, news appearances, or to join panels to discuss the latest and most pressing in relation to women's issues arrive in droves, and we do our best to contribute to as many conversations as schedules allow. Just as March is a time to reflect on the passing of winter and look forward to the arrival of spring, Women's History Month is a time to celebrate the hard-fought accomplishments, while keeping our foot on the gas as we continue to dismantle the barriers that keep us from equitable outcomes for all, especially at the intersection of gender and race.

The obstacles that prevent equitable outcomes in college completion are one set of barriers that Women Employed has remained committed to overcoming. Through the **[Accelerating Student Progress and Increasing Racial Equity \(ASPIRE\) Project](#)**, Women Employed has been collaborating with ten Illinois community colleges since 2021 to help institutions reform their developmental education programs. Developmental education programs have proven to be a major contributor to college dropouts and racial achievement gaps. By reforming these programs, the collaborative work aims to close equity gaps in higher education and increase equity, access, and success in education so that more women, their families, and communities can thrive.

Through our close work with our cohort of colleges, it became clear that our schools had an appetite for more conversations, insights, and tangible suggestions on how they could further racial equity in their classrooms and on their campuses. Born from that desire the ASPIRE Project hosted a year-long **[Racial Equity Speaker Series](#)** that launched in the winter of 2023. The series welcomed experts in racial equity in higher education to provide monthly workshops that provided resources and challenged status quo approaches, such as one-classroom-policy-fits-all mentalities; the reality of equity work is that equitable outcomes will require unequal intentional input, as students with greater hurdles will need extra support and flexibility. As our Racial Equity Speaker Series ended in February, we just launched a partnership with the University of Southern California to deliver a six-part Equity Minded Leadership Academy, where our schools will continue their efforts to further racial equity, inclusion, and belonging on their campuses. Our partner institutions are hungry for progress, and we hope you are too! So we'll keep you posted!

In Solidarity,

Lauren Wheeler
ASPIRE Program Specialist

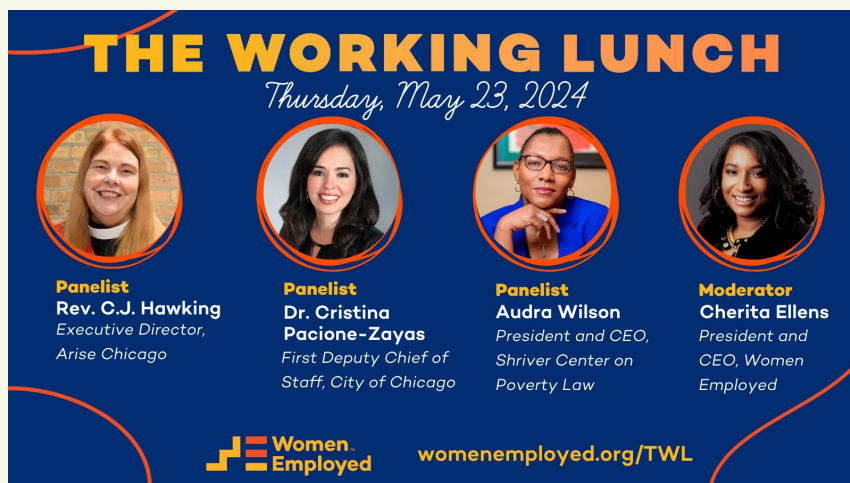
The Working Lunch: Announcing our 2024 Program



We are excited to announce the program for our signature annual fundraiser, ***The Working Lunch!***

At this year's luncheon, we will host an engaging panel discussion, moderated by WE President and CEO, Cherita Ellens, on the interconnection between the issues facing working women—including paid leave, caregiving, pay equity, access to education, job quality, and more—and how no single advocate or organization can do this work alone.

Joining Cherita for this thought-provoking conversation are **Rev. C.J. Hawking**, Executive Director, Arise Chicago, **Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas**, First Deputy Chief of Staff, City of Chicago, and **Audra Wilson**, President and CEO, Shriver Center on Poverty Law!



Learn More About Our Panelists

The Working Lunch

Thursday, May 23, 2024

**Networking Reception: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Program and Lunch: 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

The Hilton Chicago
720 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL

Reserve Your Tables and Tickets

Tickets are limited and selling fast! So, if you haven't already, please make sure to reserve your seats today.

Interested in being a table leader or sponsor? Questions about the event? Contact Michelle Schwartz at [**mschwartz@womenemployed.org**](mailto:mschwartz@womenemployed.org).

"She Says" with Pat Arnold



Pat Arnold will tell you that her secret power is her passion for writing. And at her core, she finds joy in supporting organizations that set out to make a difference in the lives of others. So, it's no surprise that attending Women Employed's (WE) signature event, [The Working Lunch \(TWL\)](#), in 2013 would have such a profound impact on her, leading Pat to lend her time and talents to WE in a number of ways. From serving on the Adult College Success Council (which has since been merged into the [Advocacy Council](#)) and the [Marketing Council](#), to using her years of media and public relations expertise to offer media training to staff, Pat has been a consistent supporter of Women Employed's work for eleven years. Even returning to our annual fundraiser, where her spirit is renewed each year by the testimonials shared by women who have benefitted from and been impacted by our work.

In this month's ["She Says,"](#) long-time Women Employed supporter and friend, Pat Arnold, shares why she's a supporter of WE's mission, how WE has impressed her over the years, and the importance of going **ALL IN**.

[Read More](#)

Did You See WE in the Chicago Sun-Times?



On March 10th, Women Employed's Sharmili Majmudar and Starr De Los Santos were interviewed along with Barb Yong, founder of the [Equal Pay Chicago Coalition \(EPCC\)](#) by the Chicago Sun-Times about closing the gender wage gap and what the EPCC is doing to support pay equity.

".. the Equal Pay Chicago Coalition is working to not only to embolden women to negotiate their pay but educate them on their rights and encourage employers to be more thoughtful about their approach to compensation.

"We should see this [the gender wage gap] as an injustice," said Majmudar, WE's EVP of Policy, Programs, and Research, who serves on the coalition's steering committee, which includes more than 50 organizations, businesses and government agencies. "We're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars that someone is losing out on over their lifetime because of the gender wage gap." said Majmudar."

Read the entire article here: <https://bit.ly/3xcWbAT>

Missed the Equal Pay Chicago Coalition's Pay Transparency Webinar?

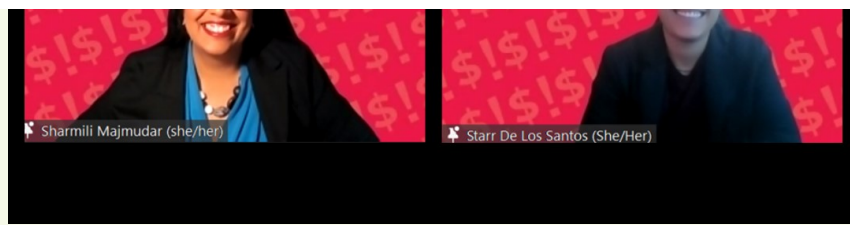


Thanks to all of you who joined the [Equal Pay Chicago Coalition](#) on March 11th for the first event in our 2024 Pay Equity Series: [Making Salary Transparency Work](#). The vibrant Equal Pay Day conversation touched on the significance of pay equity, how salary transparency helps foster a more inclusive workplace, lessons learned from employers who are already implementing salary transparency, and more!

We also want to express our deep gratitude to our panelists and moderator:

- **Moji Akinde**, Director of Social Impact & Financial Inclusion, Discover Financial Services
- **Katrina Johnson Jones**, Director, Human Resources, Compensation - Acquisition and Divestitures, BMO U.S. Financial Group
- First Deputy Chief of Staff, **Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas**, City of Chicago
- **Juliana Stratton**, Lieutenant Governor of Illinois
- Moderator: **Sharmili Majmudar**, Executive Vice President of Policy, Programs, and Research, Women Employed; Steering Committee Member, Equal Pay Chicago Coalition





Watch the Replay

Check Out Our Mural!



Have you been to an event at The Salt Shed Chicago recently? If so, you might have seen our gorgeous mural designed by WE's immensely talented Graphic Designer, Leticia Trujillo. Thank you so much to Wintrust for providing us this phenomenal opportunity, and to The Salt Shed for displaying this beautiful community art! Want to see it in person? Visit the Salt Shed at 1357 N Elston Ave, Chicago, IL 60642. The WE mural will be on display through the end of April!

Help WE Win BIG



Thanks to our amazing supporters, Women Employed has been a Top-Rated Nonprofit at GreatNonprofits.org for years. This year, we have the chance to win a \$20,000 media package from GreatNonprofits, enabling us to widen our audience and share our work to benefit even more people!

In addition to this stellar media package, WE will also:

- Be featured in a GreatNonprofits blog post.
 - Be mentioned on Twitter and Facebook.
 - Be profiled in an email to over 400K donors.
 - Have prominent placement on the GreatNonprofits' website.
- Help us expand our reach, by taking 3 minutes to [share YOUR connection to WE](#). All we need are 10 five-star reviews by June 30, 2024! WE thank you for your continued support!

Write a Review

Join the Women Employed Marketing Council



Women Employed Marketing Council



Hey Marketers! Do you have a background in marketing, communications, PR, social media, and/or advertising? Are you passionate about building a better future for working women **AND** looking for an opportunity to make an impact while expanding your network? If so, WE are looking for YOU!

The Women Employed Marketing Council meets quarterly, via Zoom, to:

- Assist with event planning and marketing strategies.
- Advise on WE strategies to engage key WE audiences.
- Organize online engagement, digital campaigns, print communications, and develop word of mouth marketing strategies.

Our next Marketing Council meeting is on Thursday, February 22nd from 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

To learn more about the Marketing Council and how you can join us, email Judy Miyashita, Director of Marketing and Communications at jmiyashita@womenemployed.org.

2024 Higher Education Advocacy Day

MISSION: COMPLETION
2024 Higher Education Advocacy Day

Tuesday, April 16
10 a.m.
Springfield, IL

Powered by:
**Coalition
for Transforming
Higher Education
FUNDING**

For more information, visit TransformHigherEdIL.org

Join the Coalition for Transforming Higher Education Funding for its **in-person 2024 Higher Education Advocacy Day!** It is a day to convene with advocates who are passionate about creating positive change for Illinois college students.

This year's theme is **Mission: Completion**, focusing on championing equitable funding policies and tuition investments that will help eliminate college completion barriers for Illinois students.

Raise your voice on April 16th and urge our state elected officials to support our efforts that will transform Illinois higher education!

[Register Now](#)

Where in the World is Women Employed



Women's History Month is always a busy time at Women Employed. And this March ushered in an abundance of panel discussions, site visits, conferences, galas, and much more! WE honored the life and legacy of Marilyn Katz, a Chicago advocate who truly did make history for women. And WE even found time to gather as a team to celebrate our very own Senior Development Officer, Amanda Sousa, as she prepares to welcome her baby girl!

WE are thankful for every stage, every rally, every celebration, and every event we are invited to attend and every opportunity to amplify our message. And we thank you for coming along with us on this ever-evolving journey. Here's a recap of where we have been and be sneak peak into where we are going next!

[Read More](#)

Take Action with Our Partners at Raising Illinois



Illinois' Early Intervention (EI) program provides critical services to children under age 3 who have or are at risk for significant developmental delays and disabilities. Women Employed's partners in the Raising Illinois coalition are urging Illinois' legislature to increase funding for the Early Intervention program by \$40 million in the FY25 budget.

This increase would not only allow more children to access life-changing developmental services and supports; it would also allow the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to authorize an increase of 10 percent—or more—to funding rates for providers, meaning more of the working people providing these critical services would earn wages that allow for financial security.

Take action to make this a reality. [Sign a petition](#), [contact your legislators](#), and visit [Raising Illinois' website](#) for more ways to help.

Stop By WE's Table at NAWBO Chicago's Conference



Women Employed's WE Hub Manager, Shelby Flores, will have a table showcasing our **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub (WE Hub)** at **Women Mean Business®**: NAWBO Chicago's Regional Entrepreneurial Conference & 41st Annual Fundraiser on April 25th!

The all-day conference, hosted by the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) Chicago, will bring together women business owners from Chicagoland, Wisconsin and Northwest Indiana, and will feature in-person networking and sessions on current topics critical to business owners. This year's theme of "**Women Mean Business®**" focuses on inspiring female entrepreneurs to make investments in themselves and grow their businesses. **Are you a women business owner? Will you be there? Stop by the WE Hub table and meet Shelby!**

When: April 25, 2024 from 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

Where: Hilton Chicago/Oak Brook Hills Resort & Conference Center

[Learn More and Get Tickets](#)

On The Blog

[ASPIRE Speaker Series—Angell Howard](#) [Statement on Illinois' Proposed Budget](#)

WE In The News

[The Rundown: WBEZ's Daily Newsletter](#)

WBEZ Chicago

[Women in Illinois make 80% of what men make, and advocates want to close the wage gap](#)

Chicago Sun-Times

[Ways to Celebrate Women's History Month](#)

Lawndale News

[TAG - The Aspen Group, Women Employed, and Midwestern Career College Announce Partnership to Help Low-Income Chicago Women Establish Careers in Dentistry](#)

PR Newswire

[Hustle. Play. Love.](#)

CAN TV

[Midday Fix: A specialty cocktail & details on Cider Summit Chicago 2024](#)

WGN

What We're Reading

Women of Color Need a Vacation

National Partnership
for Women and
Families

Black Women and Vulnerable Work

Urban Institute

Can Employer Demand Support Older Workers Today...And Tomorrow?

Center for Retirement
Research and Boston
College

Tip and Wage Theft Still Prevalent in Chicago Restaurant Industry Despite New Ordinance

The Chicago Reporter

No Recession? Thank Women

Time

Opinion: The U.S. economy needs older workers. Congress can help.

Market Watch



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