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PROGRESS, DELIVERED TO YOUR INBOX



Dear %%FirstName%%,

This is such a wonderful and energizing time of the year. I love seeing all the social media posts of proms, graduations, and college decisions. I appreciate the buzz I hear from my employees on upcoming summer vacations, and chatter about gardens and home improvement plans. Now, unlike most people, I then tie this back to our work. For some our work may be insignificant. I traveled to South Africa a couple of months ago and was struck by something I saw written by Bishop Desmond Tutu, "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." The work we do builds the security people need to enjoy all of these spring and summer milestones.

From fighting for paid time off that can be used to achieve greater work/life balance, spend time with family—attending graduations or taking that vacation, or taking care of things around your home that you been ignoring; to advocating for racial equity in higher education or full MAP funding so that everyone who wants it has access to post-secondary opportunities. Additionally, I think about our **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub (WE Hub)** and how we are ensuring that women have access to build additional income to vacation or put their kids in that awesome summer camp. It serves as a reminder that the work we do here at Women Employed is ensuring ALL women have the opportunity to flourish, prosper, be well—THRIVE. And, this brings me joy!

Last week we hosted our annual signature fundraiser, **The Working Lunch**, and because of the generous support of many of you, we raised close to \$400K. These funds allow us to continue going ALL IN and making certain all women can work at safe and fair workplaces, follow the career pathway of their choice, pursue their education, or start or grow their business, and achieve economic mobility with fewer barriers. And, hopefully that brings you joy as well.

Thank you for your support! With it, you are changing lives, enabling more of us to experience the joy that spring and summer bring, and together doing the little bits of good that overwhelm the world.

In Solidarity,

Cherita Ellens
President and CEO

Thank You for Attending *The Working Lunch*

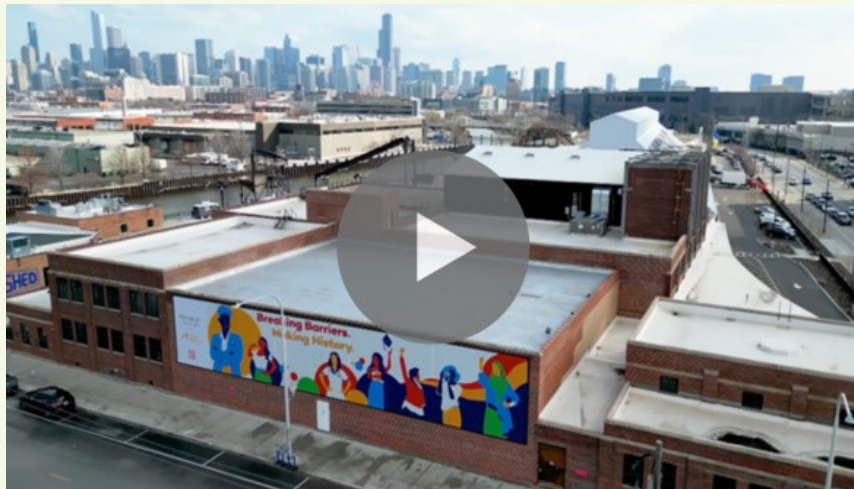


WE would like to thank all of you who went **ALL IN** with us last week at our signature fundraising event, **The Working Lunch!** We were so inspired by our champion honorees, **Arise Chicago** and **BMO**, and Emerging Power Builder, **Amber N. Anderson**, Executive Director and Founder of the Black is Gold Organization, for their dedication to building a better, more equitable future.

Our panel conversation on the interconnection between the issues facing working women, and the collaboration needed to drive change, left us feeling motivated to drive this work forward. Thank you to **Rev. C.J. Hawking**, Executive Director of Arise Chicago; **Dr. Cristina Pacione-Zayas**, Chief of Staff for the City of Chicago; and **Audra Wilson**, President and CEO of the Shriver Center on Poverty Law, for such a thought-provoking conversation.

[Learn More About Our Panelists and Honorees](#)

Thank you to everyone who attended in-person or virtually, was a sponsor, donated, or purchased a raffle ticket—your support made our annual celebration possible. It is because of your continued generosity that we are able to go **ALL IN** on building a better future for women and families.



[The Impact of Going All In](#)

“She Says” with Amber Anderson



She Says

“ I have the plans and the vision, I just needed the platform. And I'm grateful Women Employed is giving me a platform to educate even more people about Black is Gold Organization and the importance of creating safe spaces for Black women and girls. ”

Amber N. Anderson



A planter is often described as a farmer, grower, or producer, and Amber N. Anderson is the embodiment of that and more. In 2017, the then-16-year-old began planting seeds for what is now **Black is Gold Organization**, a nonprofit that focuses on empowering young Black women and girls in high school and college throughout the United States. Now, seven years later, the nonprofit leader is watching as those seeds blossom into something greater than she could have ever imagined. To date, the Black is Gold Organization has served over 400 young Black women and girls through their Girl Boss 101 Saturday Mentorship Program and Black is Gold University Program. Providing them with access to not just scholarships, job/internship opportunities, social-emotional learning resources, and self-care tools, but community. Ensuring that all those who come out of Black is Gold Organization's programs walk away with both the tools they need to succeed in life and each other.

In this month's "She Says," **Women Employed's 2024 Emerging Power Builder honoree**, Amber N. Anderson, shares with us the motivation behind the Black is Gold Organization, overcoming access to funding sources, what's next for her and her organization, and how she is making herself proud.

Read More

Read Our WE Hub Report



For over 50 years, Women Employed has been creating fundamental, systemic change for working women, and we believe that entrepreneurship is a pathway to building wealth and economic security for women. However, women—and especially Women of Color—face additional barriers to business ownership. To better support women in Illinois who want to achieve their own vision of success through entrepreneurship, we created the **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub (WE Hub)**, which launched in September of 2022.

Since launching, we have connected with women who have started, or who are seeking to start, their own businesses and we have learned a great deal about their needs and experiences. So we are pleased to announce our brand new report, **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub: Listening and Learning from Women Entrepreneurs**. The report shares our learnings and provides recommendations for ways that the broader entrepreneurship 'ecosystem' can better meet the needs of Black and Latina/x women entrepreneurs.

You can download the report here:
<https://womenemployed.org/resources/womens-entrepreneurship-hub/>

4 Black Mompreneurs You Should Know





May 10th was National Small Business Day, and here at Women Employed, we are proud of the work we have done to assist women entrepreneurs realize their vision of success through running a business. Through our [Women's Entrepreneurship Hub \(WE Hub\)](#), we are providing Black and Latina/x women small business owners with options, resources, and tools to take their businesses from ideas and side hustles to pathways to economic freedom. Since launching the WE Hub September of 2022, we have helped over 400 women successfully launch and/or build on existing businesses. And with Black women being the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs, we have no plans of stopping anytime soon.

This Small Business Day, we highlighted four Black Mompreneurs (who also happen to be WE Hub users) from the organization, Hustle Mommies. Created by founder, Ariel DeNey Rainey, [Hustle Mommies](#) provides inner city moms with resources to advocate for their families and communities. For more than a year, Women Employed (WE) has partnered with Hustle Mommies by attending and judging pitch competitions, assisting women with registering for WE Hub, and providing mentorship to budding entrepreneurs, showing them that with the right support, community, and resources, their vision of success is attainable.

So, whether they are elevating the voices of Black mothers who reside in underserved communities, helping women regain their confidence and rediscover their beauty, supporting and empowering single mothers, or assisting individuals in investing and home ownership, here are [four Black Mompreneurs](#) you should know.

[Read More](#)

Know Your Paid Leave Rights

Did You Know?



As of January 1st, workers in Illinois have a right to earn and use paid time off.

Learn more:
sicktimeil.org

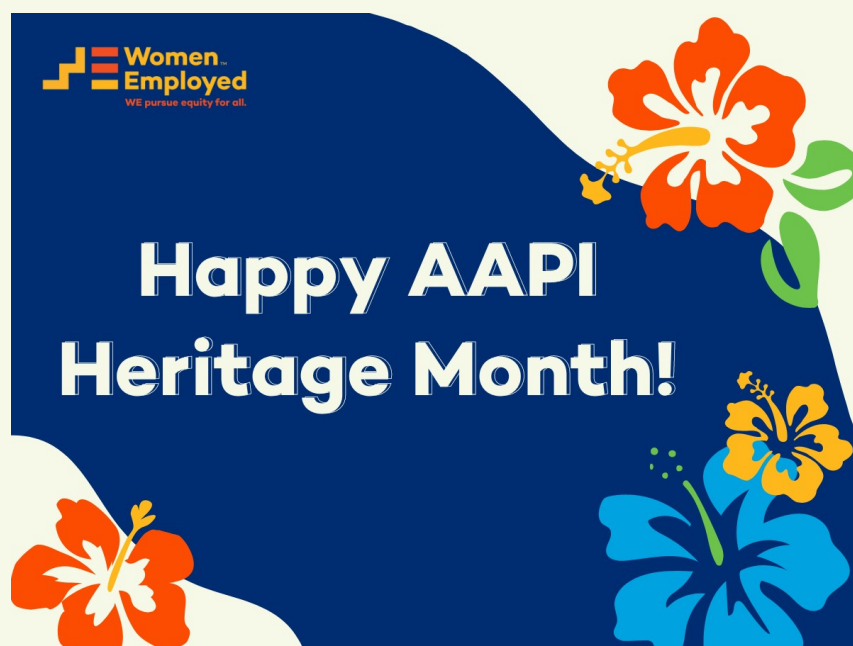
More than 1.5 million additional Illinois workers now have access to paid leave through the Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Under the new law, which went into effect on January 1st, full- and part-time workers can earn up to 40 hours of paid leave per year. This new paid leave benefit can be used for any reason, including: recovering from your own illness, caring for a sick family member, school closures, reasons related to domestic or sexual violence, visiting a family member in jail or prison and other court-related reasons, and COVID-19 related reasons such as the need to quarantine or get vaccinated.

Work in Illinois? Make sure you know your paid leave rights! Learn more at sicktimeil.org.

AND help spread the word! Make sure your family and friends know their rights too! [Download our digital toolkit](#) and share our posts and graphics.

**Note: Workers in Chicago and Cook County may have different rights. [Check out this fact sheet](#) to learn more about which rights apply to you.*

AAPI Heritage Month



May is AAPI Heritage Month! All month long on our social media channels (you can find us @WomenEmployed), we have spotlighted Asian American women leaders who have made an impact for working women—including Ai-jen Po, President of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and Caring Across Generations; Julie Su, acting Deputy U.S. Secretary of Labor; and Sue Ko Lee, leader of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Whether they are uniting American families in a campaign to achieve bold solutions to the nation's crumbling care infrastructure, advancing justice on behalf of low-paid and marginalized communities, or leading a strike against low wages and poor working conditions, these three trailblazers have dedicated their careers to improving the lives of working women and provided them with support they need to thrive.

To learn more about these women and their impact, visit our [Instagram](#).

Where in the World is Women Employed?



Where in the World is



May is always a big month for Women Employed—it's the month we host our signature fundraising event, *The Working Lunch*. But while making sure that our annual celebration was a great success (and it was!), we still found time to step away from our day-to-day responsibilities to join our partners for rallies, brunches, speaking engagements, and trainings—even trips to Washington, D.C. for two different conferences!

From advocating in Springfield for funding for higher education and early childhood programs, to forming connections in new programmatic areas with the YWCA Metropolitan Chicago, WE is unstoppable. Want to hear about all the places we've been this month? Keep reading to learn more about where in the world is Women Employed.

And be sure to read all the way to the end to find out where we're going next!

[Read More](#)

Join Our Marketing Council Summer Social



Women Employed Marketing Council



Hey Marketing Council, it's time to get social! Now that warmer, longer days are upon us, it's time to come from behind the computers and step out into the sunlight. Join us for an after-work networking mixer to connect and discuss how to better amplify WE's message, all while enjoying summertime temps and breathtaking views of Chicago's famed skyline on top of one of the city's many rooftops.

The Marketing Council Summer Social will take place on Tuesday, June 25th at 5:30 p.m. For location information and to confirm attendance, email Judy Miyashita, Director of Marketing and Communications at jmiyashita@womenemployed.org.

WE In The News

'To Empower and Uplift Women': Women Employed Draws 650 to its Annual Luncheon

Rebellious Magazine

For Dem convention, media matters

Politico

First Women's Bank celebrates Chicagoland nonprofit mission partners

Crain's Chicago Business

A greater percentage of women are working than ever before

Marketplace

AARP Illinois and financial leaders work to protect Social Security

Rolling Out

Groups urge state legislators to pass worker freedom of speech law

Chicago Sun-Times

Metro East region, programs showcased in workforce summit

The Telegraph

Take the Lead: Unveiling Pay

Diversity Woman Magazine

Women Employed fighting for workplace equity, Arionne Nettles' new book on Black culture in Chicago

WGN Radio 720

What We're Reading

Women are consistently less satisfied with their jobs than men

Quartz

Worker Well-Being is Community Well-Being

Illinois Partners for Human Service

Report: Community College Students Lack Information About Career Paths

Community College News Now

College is hard enough — try doing it while raising kids

North County Public Radio

Final Title IX rule enshrines protections for LGBTQI+ students

Higher Ed Dive

The consistent unemployment gap between Black and white workers

Marketplace

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