

LEADING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS & Business Owners

10,000 Women and 10,000 Small Businesses Graduates Honored at Fortune Most Powerful Women Summit

More than 400 top female executives from business, government, academia, philanthropy and the arts gathered in Washington DC from October 15 to 17 for the 15th annual Fortune's Most Powerful Women Summit.

Lloyd Blankfein, Chairman and CEO of Goldman Sachs, hosted a mentoring roundtable with *10,000 Women* and *10,000 Small Businesses* graduates and select summit attendees. Penny Pritzker, US Secretary of Commerce, and Nina Easton, senior editor for Fortune Magazine, spoke about the importance of investing in women entrepreneurs and their leadership skills.

"Our investment in women entrepreneurs reflects much of what our business is about – growth, entrepreneurship and economic opportunity," Lloyd said.

Maria Rios, graduate of the *10,000 Small Businesses* program in Houston and founder of waste removal company National Waste, won the 2013 Fortune Most Powerful Women Entrepreneur Award. Since graduating from *10,000 Small Businesses*, Maria has expanded her operations and product line, which has resulted in a multi-million dollar contract with the city of Houston. She has also hired eight new employees and has seen a 24 percent increase in revenues.

"Instrumental in my success has been my faith, family, friends, and remarkable partners, such as the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* program," Maria said. She went on to describe the benefits of the program. "I learned the importance of enhancing business models and making my business more sustainable. The bottom line is this program has provided a robust foundation for increasing my business capacity and growth."

Lloyd also presented the sixth annual Goldman Sachs-Fortune Global Women Leaders Award to *10,000 Women* graduate Nora Haleem from Cairo, and Fortune-US State Department Mentoring Program participant Yin Myo "Misuu" Su from Burma. The award recognizes the two women for passing along their business knowledge and mentoring disadvantaged women in developing countries.

Nora, owner of Sparkle Printing Solutions, took over and saved her husband's printing company after he passed away. Despite being discouraged from entering the workforce by her friends and family, Nora sustained the business and the jobs of the company's 20 employees. She credits the training she received through the *10,000 Women* program to help make her into a more decisive leader and now mentors young women who aspire to enter the professional workforce. With the funds from the award, Nora will start a training program for 100 women over two years.

Misuu, the owner of Inle Princess Resort, is celebrating her business's 15th anniversary. Misuu has established a vocational school to train young graduates in tourism and hospitality – growing industries in her country. With the funds from the award, Misuu will provide educational training on the tourism industry to 40 disadvantaged students per year.

To date, *10,000 Women* has reached women in more than 43 countries through a network of nearly 90 academic and nonprofit partners and advisors. Since graduation, 74% of graduates have created new jobs and 83% saw an increase in revenue. The program continues to build momentum, and has created a worldwide network of women, each with their own challenges, experiences, and aspirations, but alike in their determination to succeed and to make an impact far beyond themselves.

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