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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF NEW ORLEANS ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR FELLOWSHIP

October 12, 2020 NEW ORLEANS, LA – The Junior League of New Orleans (JLNO) is pleased to announce five finalists for its Woman Entrepreneur (WE) Fellowship. These women-owned businesses will pitch their ventures virtually before judges and a live audience on October 20, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

“We are thrilled to host our 5th annual WE Fellowship Pitch Event,” said JLNO President Kristin Moore. “Now, more than ever, small businesses need support and JLNO is uniquely positioned to help the WE fellow grow her business. The financial support offered through the grant and the in-kind services and contacts available through our diverse membership of professional women are unparalleled in our community.”

JLNO’s WE Fellowship will support the winning endeavor with mentoring and in-kind services provided by Junior League members. Through this collaboration the WE Fellow will set focused goals addressing her business’s specific needs and source expertise through the JLNO member network. The WE Fellowship also provides a \$5,000 grant, access to work/meeting space, nonprofit board training, and marketing opportunities with JLNO’s membership. The WE Fellowship grant is supported by a generous donation from Fidelity Bank’s P.O.W.E.R., Potential of Women Entrepreneurs Realized, program. Additionally, the five finalists have also received individual consulting to prepare for the pitch competition from trepwise, a local Growth Consulting Firm.

“The Fidelity Bank P.O.W.E.R. Program believes strongly in supporting the Junior League of New Orleans not only because we share the same commitment to develop the potential of women and to improve our communities through education but we are also committed to helping these women network and support them with promotion and marketing tools,” said Elizabeth “Liz” Broekman AVP, Fidelity Bank and Director of P.O.W.E.R.

The five WE Fellowship finalists are:

- **Kidz Kreationz LLC:** providing unique and meaningful arts programming for all children, to educate children in the arts, and to build a lifelong audience for the arts. Planning to offer a dynamic and constantly-evolving program with a focus on visual arts. Most activities will be open-ended and enjoyed on a walk-in basis.

Kidz Kreationz will be staffed by working artists, and all structures activities will be led by master artist-teachers.

- Magic Hands Solution: an all-natural odor eliminator collection that removes the smell of seafood, smoke, and spices from your hands. “Da Solution” is a 100% all-natural Waterless Odor Eliminator and deodorizes by removing the smell naturally, leaving hands smelling clean and feeling refreshed.
- Nola Wood Windows: the mission to lovingly restore the century old windows, doors, and shutters keeping with traditional methods and materials to shine like the day they were first installed. Teach homeowners how to do the work and, with future plans to teach apprentices the craft to set them on a path to owning their own business.
- Vibrant Market: a Clean Beauty, Wellness and Lifestyle store + spa where putting holistic health and efficacy first in skincare, services, resources, supplements, and makeup. Working to provide clients with resources to be the most Vibrant versions of themselves, inside and out, mind and body.
- WATER BLOCK: an urban design studio that addresses environmental and climate risks in neighborhoods through design, community engagement, and planning by engaging residents in urban design projects that impact their overall health. The youth arm, WATER BLOCK Kids, teaches elementary age youth about architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning and real estate through educational programs and products. Through this initiative, kids use a social justice lens to think critically about the conditions in their cities and neighborhoods.

Each finalist will give a six-minute presentation followed by a brief question and answer session. Broekman will host the event.. At the conclusion of the presentations, three judges will select the 2020-2021 WE Fellow. The judges are:

- Kelisha Garrett - Principal Consultant at Gen-X Consulting Group, a firm focused in business development, strategic sourcing and vendor compliance management; the Executive Director of the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce which covers a 10-parish region in southern Louisiana and the Chief Operating Officer & Vice- President of the Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation. In addition, she is a licensed Realtor in the State of Louisiana. During the lifecycle of her prior careers, she has worked in pharmaceutical research, financial advisory as a stockbroker, a legal nurse consultant, and a licensed realtor in the state of Louisiana.
- Cecile Hardy Tanguis - Founder of NOLA Couture, high-end custom fashion design brand founded in the wake of Hurricane Katrina with multiple locations including one in the new Louis Armstrong Airport; co-founder of Poke Loa, the first poke restaurant in Louisiana with five locations in the New Orleans area. The design of Cecile's brand, NOLA Couture, offers a unique way to showcase New Orleanians' hometown pride and includes manufacturing capabilities through sister company, NOLA Sewn. Through NOLA Sewn, Cecile recently assisted the local manufacturing of 250,000+ PPE masks and gowns in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cecile contributed to the opening of the

new Louis Armstrong airport, which sparked her newest business endeavour as partner in a wine bar and food concept that will be opening soon next to Cafe du Monde in the airport.

- Jay Taffet – Founder of Gracen Jules, venture development firm focused on start-up guidance, growth consulting, and capital raise support, as well as Airfoil Angels, a Gulf South angel investor network focused on connecting “founders and funders” towards process-friendly seed, startup and growth capital placements. Jay is an entrepreneurship instructor for college and community start-up programs and is an accomplished business and creative writer. He is also a long-time commercial pilot, and active in private air projects and aircraft transactions.

Virtual audience members will also have the opportunity to award a prize using a polling feature on the virtual platform. The event is free and open to the public and requires advance registration at www.jlno.org/pitch2020. For those that register, JLNO will share the link to the virtual platform prior to the event.

The Junior League of New Orleans is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.