

# News Release



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## **Junior League of New Orleans Hosts WE Fellowship** *Annual Pitch Competition for Women Entrepreneurs in Greater New Orleans*

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 before judges and a live audience on April 5, 2022 at 5:30 PM.

"We are excited to host our 6th annual WE Fellowship Pitch Event as a stand-alone event for the first time," said JLNO President Shannon Brice. "Having a stand-alone event showcases the importance of this fellowship to our female entrepreneurial community. This year's sponsors have made the event possible. We are grateful for our recurring sponsors Fidelity Bank P.O.W.E.R. and trepwise, and we are also thrilled to have new sponsors: The Scout Guide New Orleans, Basics Plus: Communication and Learning, and Fire House Loft. We also have an impressive lineup of female judges this year to choose our winner."

JLNO's WE Fellowship will support the winning endeavor with mentoring and in-kind services provided by Junior League members. 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. For the first time this year, the winner will be featured in a 1 page spread in The Scout Guide New Orleans Volume 11.

"The Fidelity Bank P.O.W.E.R. Program continues to value the WE Fellowship program and chose to support the grant for the second year in a row. We are impressed with the caliber of finalists and their drive to develop successful businesses. Through our partnership with the Junior League of New Orleans, we can improve our communities and develop the potential of women through education, networking, and tangible support," said Elizabeth "Liz" Broekman Vice President, Fidelity Bank and Director of P.O.W.E.R.

The five WE Fellowship finalists are:

- CITRONOLA, LLC: 100% dedicated to providing caffeine-free, alcohol-free, unsweetened, or lightly sweetened alternative refreshments you can enjoy guilt-free.
- NOLA Learning Support and Consulting, L3C: a Low Profit Limited Liability Company with a mission to provide intervention and academic support to students with mild/moderate learning differences in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana

- Lively Sauces: delivers a line of sauces focused on making healthful eating easy and delicious. Every sauce is packed with vegetables and nutrient-dense ingredients. They are ready to eat and can be enjoyed as a dip, dressing or sauce for your meal.
- Bomb Ass Fro: a natural hair care company with a mission to empower women to rock their natural curls without the hassle. Our Curl Defining Jelly is a multi-use hair gel that reduces the never ending steps of layering styling products to achieve the perfect curly hair style. Apply our Curl Defining Jelly after washing and conditioning your hair to small sections, let it dry, and you're out of the door! Whether you prefer to wear a wash and go or twist out, Bomb Ass Fro promises zero flaking, zero crunch, ultra definition and just enough hold to make your style last through the week.
- FLY with Alisha Reed: owner, Dr. Reed has been a licensed pharmacist for almost two decades and has seen first-hand how self-care impacts health in the community. The World Health Organization defines self-care as: "the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider." The FLY Pharmacist acts as an advocate to empower and educate her community to make self-care a priority in their lives. As a Self-Care Strategist, Dr. Reed provides the tools and training necessary to create a successful self-care plan. Launching her very own self-care product makes it even easier to practice self-care at home.

Each finalist will give a five-minute presentation followed by a brief question and answer session. Taylor Morgan and Kate Mick, Co-Chairs of the WE Fellowship Committee, will host the event. At the conclusion of the presentations, three judges will select the 2020-2021 WE Fellow.

The judges are:

- Christa Cotton, owner, El Guapo Bitters - While studying at Auburn University, Christa Cotton helped her parents open Thirteenth Colony Distilleries, Georgia's first legal distillery since prohibition. After a stint in advertising in New Orleans, Christa purchased the El Guapo trademark. Specializing in zero-proof bitters, El Guapo has expanded into syrups and mixers and is Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) certified as a woman owned business. Christa is a 6x Good Food Award winner, LEE Initiative mentor, Les Dames d'Escoffier Legacy Award: Fine Spirits recipient, and a Fellow in both the Tory Burch Foundation and the James Beard Foundation Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership program. She's successfully raised seven figures in investment capital and is currently in the process of opening a bitters brewery, the first of its kind in America.
- Artemis Antippas, owner, Greek Girls Rice Pudding - Artemis Antippas is the Owner + Founder of Greek Girls Rice Pudding, a business proudly born and based in her beloved hometown, New Orleans, Louisiana. Greek Girls is an authentically delicious Greek treat prepared using an ancient family recipe that has been passed down by the women in her family for 200 years. Produced using only a handful of straightforward, natural ingredients, you can find her family's rice pudding on shelves throughout the Southwest region. Greek Girls Rice Pudding is also the winner of the 2018 WE Fellowship. Artemis is also a visual artist and exhibits her work in galleries and museums nationally.
- Michelle Johnston, Gaston Chair of Business Loyola University New Orleans and Author of *The Seismic Shift in Leadership* - Dr. Michelle K. Johnston is a management professor, executive coach, and leadership expert helping leaders achieve results through meaningful connection. She is an award-winning professor studying leadership and business communication, and her research has shown a clear link between a team's effective communication and its positive financial performance. Michelle is a celebrated

keynote speaker presenting at conferences and events nationwide. She received her Ph.D in Communication from Louisiana State University, and she was named to the prestigious 100 Coaches group, which consists of the top executive coaches around the world. Michelle serves as the Gaston Chair of Business at Loyola University New Orleans where she teaches in the graduate and undergraduate programs in the College of Business. She lives in her beloved city of New Orleans, Louisiana, with her daughter, Elizabeth. The Seismic Shift in Leadership is her first book.

The WE Fellowship program and pitch competition are possible thanks to this year's sponsors: Fidelity Bank's P.O.W.E.R. Program, trepwise, The Scout Guide New Orleans, Fire House Loft, Basics Plus: Communication and Learning.

### **ABOUT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF NEW ORLEANS**

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. More information on the organization can be found at [www.jlno.org](http://www.jlno.org).