



WCOE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2026

**Women Rising Up
in Construction**

Women Construction Owners & Executives, USA

Advocacy • Opportunity • Connection • Leadership • Community

NO HAUNTING NEWS HERE • HAPPY HALLOWEEN, WITCHES!

THIS ISSUE AT A GLANCE

OCT 7
ITL Meet & Greet

OCT 14
National Webinar

OCT 19-23
Fall + WEW

NOV 20
SBA Comments

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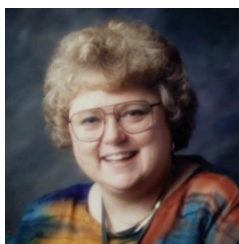
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Member Spotlight - Ida Brooker



Ida Brooker, a WCOE charter member since 1984, built a pioneering career across Boeing, Alaska North Slope projects, construction finance and industry leadership. A past WCOE president and current WCOE Resource Center chair, she continues to champion women in construction.

[READ IDA BROOKER'S FULL SPOTLIGHT →](#)

01 • UPCOMING EVENTS

October and November are packed with WCOE National, chapter, advocacy, federal contracting and networking opportunities. Events are listed in chronological order.

OCT 7

ITL Meet & Greet

WCOE DMV / The Barbour Group
• Westin Dulles • NCR MATOC subcontracting.

[REGISTER →](#)

OCT 8

WCOE NY

Women of Excellence •
Eastchester, NY • Legacy Award:
Leandra Joseph.

[REGISTER →](#)

OCT 8

42nd MED Week

Constellation-supported partner event • Philadelphia • economic opportunity.

OCT 14

National Webinar

FREE • SBA proposed rules, DEI updates and USDOT DBE reevaluation status.

[REGISTER →](#)

OCT 15

Alsobrooks Reception

WCOE DMV + Doris Zografos •
Bolton Hill, MD • VIP 6:00 PM.

[RSVP →](#)

OCT 19-20

Fall Conference

WCOE USA + WCOE California •
Marriott Coronado, San Diego.

[DETAILS →](#)

OCT 21-23

WEW Experience

“We Must Be Our Own Capital” •
Gaylord National Harbor.

[DETAILS →](#)

NOV 3

Construction Angels

CREW Baltimore + WCOE DMV •
Checkerspot Brewing • BINGO fundraiser.

[REGISTER →](#)

NOV 18

Cocktail Zoom

WCOE National virtual networking • 6:00 PM ET.

[REGISTER →](#)

Event flyers and expanded details appear in their related sections below.

02 • LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - URGENT NEWS TO SHARE

SBA Extends Comment Period on Small Business Size Standards

WCOE submitted extensive comments on SBA’s proposed Small Business Size Standards and revised methodology. WCOE raised concerns that proposed increases could reduce opportunities for genuinely small construction businesses and urged use of a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) measure rather than simple headcount.

New deadline: November 20, 2026 • Document Nos. SBA-2026-0199 and SBA-2026-0265

[SUBMIT COMMENTS →](#) [READ FULL WCOE SUMMARY →](#)

Surface Transportation Bill + DBE Program

USDOT’s September 25 changes to DBE certification remove automatic presumptions based on race or sex and require individualized assessments. Existing DBEs face reevaluation, generally by December 24, 2026. WCOE is also tracking congressional DBE reauthorization and surface transportation legislation.

[CHECK USDOT STATUS BY STATE →](#) [READ MORE →](#)

Congress Heads into the Midterm Election

Congress is moving into its election-period recess ahead of the November 3 midterm elections. Temporary government funding and current surface transportation authorizations run through December 11, shifting several major decisions to the post-election session.

[READ MORE: YEAR-END CONGRESSIONAL OUTLOOK →](#)

Election Outlook: November 3

The source draft highlights control of the House and Senate, several closely watched Senate contests, and the potential impact of the results on federal contracting and small-business policy in 2027.

[READ MORE: ELECTION OUTLOOK →](#)

03 • WCOE IN MOTION

WCOE USA Goes to Wyoming

WCOE USA and The WCOE Resource Center Corp were proud sponsors of the first-ever Wyoming AGC Women in Construction Summit. Elisabeth Decoursey and Lynette Thompson were featured speakers, joining more than 80 women across the industry.



[READ MORE ABOUT THE WYOMING SUMMIT →](#)

WCOE National Programs

Michelle F. Kantor, Esq. leads the October 14 national federal-contracting webinar. The November 18 Cocktail Zoom continues WCOE's national virtual networking series.

WCOE VIRTUAL PROGRAM LIVE ON ZOOM

HOW SBA'S PROPOSED RULES WILL RESHAPE FEDERAL CONTRACTING

FOR EVERY SMALL BUSINESS, VETERAN, DBE AND WBE/MBE FIRMS, DEI UPDATES AND USDOT DBE RE-EVALUATION STATUS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2026
2:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Cost: FREE



Explore how SBA's proposed size standard changes could affect your business eligibility and competition for government contracts. This session also covers DEI developments, USDOT DBE re-evaluation, and guidance on submitting effective public comments.



Scan the code or click below

PRESENTED BY
Michelle F. Kantor, Esq.
McDonald Hopkins, LLC

REGISTER IN ADVANCE

us26wcoe.com/meetings/register/AnQW6UQ2KDCWdWdL3Jw
After registering you will receive a confirmation email with joining information.

SPONSORED BY



WCOE National's Federal Contracting Committee



WCOE Resource Center
© WCOE 2026



Zoom Virtual Happy Hour

Wednesday November 18
6:00 - 7:00 PM EST

[OCT. 14 REGISTER →](#) [NOV. 18 REGISTER →](#)

04 • WCOE DMV EVENTS + FEDERAL OPPORTUNITY

International Towers NCR MATOC - October 7

International Towers, LLC has been awarded a prime contract under the U.S. Army's National Capital Region MATOC. Qualified subcontractors and specialty trade partners are encouraged to meet the ITL team, introduce capabilities and discuss upcoming bidding opportunities.

[REGISTER / MORE INFORMATION →](#) [READ FULL OPPORTUNITY →](#)



YOU'RE INVITED

SUBCONTRACTOR MEET & GREET

Please join International Towers, LLC for an opportunity to connect, collaborate, and build strong business relationships.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

We invite subcontractors, specialty contractors, and industry partners interested in developing strong, long-term business relationships and working with ITL to bid on upcoming task orders as they are released throughout the five-year period.

THIS MEET & GREET IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO:

- Meet the International Towers, LLC team
- Learn more about our company and capabilities
- Connect with ITL representatives
- Introduce your company and areas of expertise
- Discuss potential subcontracting opportunities
- Build relationships for upcoming task orders
- Position your company for future teaming and bidding opportunities

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION SEVEN INSTALLATIONS

The MATOC effort includes seven installations geographically aligned within approximately a 70-mile radius:

- ★ U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground (USAG-APG)
- ★ Fort Belvoir (USAG-FBWA)
- ★ Fort Detrick (USAG-FDTI)
- ★ Fort George G. Meade (USAG-Meade)
- ★ Fort Walker (USAG-WALK)
- ★ Joint Base Myer Henderson Hall (USAG-MYH)
- ★ Arlington National Cemetery (ANC)



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2026
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

The Westin Washington Dulles Airport
2520 Waterfront Terrace
Herndon, VA 20171

Rivanna Ballroom
Directly off the lobby
Introduction Presentation: 11:30 AM ONLY

INTERNATIONAL TOWERS, LLC
BUILDING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Come connect. Come collaborate. Come build for the future.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A RECEPTION IN SUPPORT OF

SENATOR ANGELA ALSOBROOKS



HOSTED BY:
Doris Zografos
and
Women Construction Owners and Executives DMV Chapter (DC-MD-VA)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2026

BALTIMORE, MD | 6:30-8:00 PM

VIP Host Reception with Senator Alsobrooks: 6:00-6:30
Bolton Hill - Address Provided Upon RSVP

SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTIONS

VIP Host: \$3,500* | VIP Co-Host: \$1,000*
Sponsor: \$500 | Friend: \$250
*Includes VIP Host Reception with Senator Alsobrooks

RSVP HERE: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/261015balti>
or email donald@angelaalsobrooks.com

Checks can be made payable to: Alsobrooks Victory Fund, 750 First Street NE, Suite 1070, Washington, DC 20002

Alsobrooks Victory Fund is a joint fundraising committee for Senators and House Members. The first \$5,000 of all cash contributions from a person must be made by the date of the event. The first \$5,000 of all cash contributions from a person must be made by the date of the event. The first \$5,000 of all cash contributions from a person must be made by the date of the event. The first \$5,000 of all cash contributions from a person must be made by the date of the event.





ILLUMINATING PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY: Inclusive Wealth. Bold Future.






42nd MED WEEK
ILLUMINATING PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Powering Enterprise. Accelerating Growth. Building Legacy.

Thursday, October 8, 2026
Chase Bank | 15 South 52nd Street | Philadelphia, PA 19139
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Workshop | Networking 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Register Here:



WHO SHOULD ATTEND?
Emerging and established small business owners, entrepreneurs, and executives ready to strengthen their operations, expand corporate opportunities, and position their businesses for sustainable growth.

WHAT YOU'LL GAIN

- Strategic insights for accessing capital
- Pathways to corporate and procurement opportunities
- Tools to strengthen operations and business resilience
- Strategies to protect assets and build generational wealth
- Connect with industry leaders. Gain actionable insights.
- Power what's next for your business.

[ITL REGISTER →](#)

[ALSOBROOKS RSVP →](#)

42nd MED WEEK
OCTOBER 8

Construction Angels Benefit - November 3

WCOE DMV is co-partnering with CREW Baltimore to raise money for Construction Angels. Networking runs 4:00-6:00 PM at Checkerspot Brewing Company with BINGO following.

[REGISTER / SPONSOR →](#)

05 • MEMBERS + RESOURCES

New Members for September

HILARY POUNDS

WBENC, WOSB Certified | CEO, Inception Energy Solutions + Pounds Pickle Company
Waco, Georgia

[LINKEDIN →](#) [WEBSITE →](#)



MCDONALD HOPKINS

New Corporate Alliance Partner - Business Level.
Michelle Kantor, Esq. represents the firm for WCOE through its Chicago office.

[WEBSITE →](#) [MICHELLE KANTOR - LINKEDIN →](#)

CAP Member Resource from Travelers

Travelers shared a one-minute resource: "Construction Workers Mental Health Statistics: Results of Travelers Survey."

[READ THE TRAVELERS ARTICLE →](#)

06 • CHAPTER NEWS

WCOE DMV

Erica Jablonsky in the Limelight

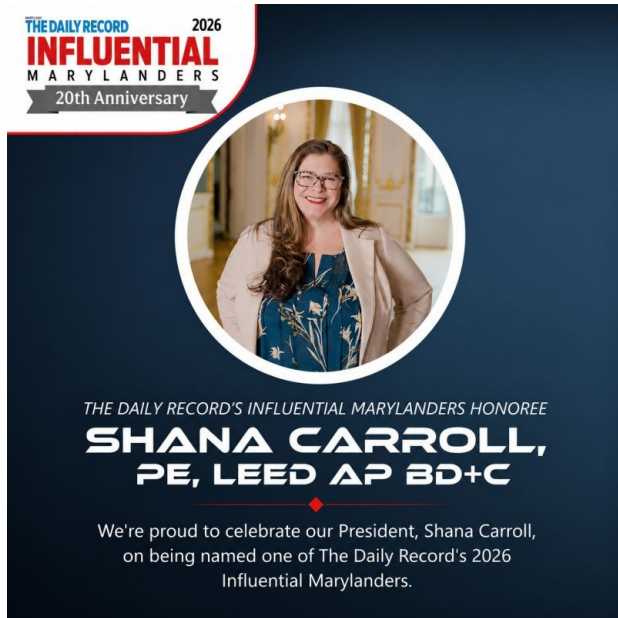
Erica launched Parkway Solutions LLC, a fractional business-development company helping small construction firms grow. Her recent conversation explores connections, reinvention and building a company under your own name.

[WATCH PODCAST ON YOUTUBE →](#) [LISTEN ON SPOTIFY →](#) [READ MORE →](#)

WCOE New York

The chapter had a busy September, including a Habitat for Humanity Women Build. Its inaugural Women of Excellence event on October 8 honors Legacy Award recipient Leandra Joseph of Kolar Design.

Shana Carroll



[REGISTER →](#) [LEANDRA LINKEDIN →](#) [READ MORE](#)



07 • CORPORATE ALLIANCE PARTNERS + MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Recognizing Our Corporate Alliance Partners

Thank you to the organizations supporting WCOE's mission, member community and advocacy work.



Mark Your Calendar

OCT 7
ITL Meet & Greet

OCT 8
WCOE NY + MED Week

OCT 14
National Webinar

OCT 15
DMV Reception

OCT 19-20
Fall Conference

OCT 21-23
WEW Experience

NOV 3
Construction Angels

NOV 18
Cocktail Zoom

NOV 20
SBA Comment Deadline

[WOMENBUILDAMERICA.COM](https://womenbuildamerica.com) →

WOMEN RISING UP IN CONSTRUCTION
BUILD • LEAD • ADVOCATE • CONNECT

08 • READ MORE LIBRARY

The newsletter keeps the front pages concise. These extended summaries preserve the additional detail from the updated source document. Use the **READ MORE** links throughout the newsletter to jump here.

SBA Small Business Size Standards - Extended Summary

WCOE submitted lengthy comments on both SBA's proposed Small Business Size Standards and its revised methodology. WCOE expressed concern that proposed increases would undermine opportunities for genuinely small construction businesses to compete for federal contracts and that the methodology used to determine the standards was flawed.

WCOE also commented on the proposed change for construction from a receipts-based standard to an employee-based standard and stressed the need to use a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) measure rather than simple headcount.

Following substantial public concern and requests for additional time, SBA extended the comment period by 60 days. The new deadline is November 20, 2026. Proposed Size Standards: SBA-2026-0199. Revised Size Standards Methodology: SBA-2026-0265.

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Surface Transportation Bill + DBE Program - Extended Summary

The future of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program remains an important issue for women-owned construction firms. The September 25 DOT changes eliminate automatic presumptions of social and economic disadvantage based on race or sex. Businesses must instead establish disadvantage through individualized assessments, and existing DBEs face reevaluation that state certification programs generally must complete by December 24, 2026.

The House proposal includes five-year DBE reauthorization with guardrails but without the presumptions contained in earlier authorizations. The House Transportation and Infrastructure

Committee approved the bipartisan five-year BUILD America 250 Act on May 22 by a 62-2 vote. Congress subsequently extended existing surface transportation authorizations through December 11. WCOE will continue tracking legislation and its implications for women-owned transportation construction businesses. DOT's status site provides a link for each state; a "Complete" status refers to completion of firm recertification.

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Congress After the Election - Extended Summary

Congress is moving into its traditional election-period recess so Senate and House members in contested races have time to campaign. The Senate recess is scheduled from October 5 through November 6, while House members are already back in their districts. Congress will reconvene after the November 3 midterm elections.

Congress already approved temporary government funding and extended existing surface transportation programs through December 11, 2026, taking a potential government shutdown off the table until after the election.

After the elections, Congress is expected to return for a lame-duck session with federal appropriations, expiring program authorizations, annual defense legislation, infrastructure permitting reform and longer-term surface transportation funding on the agenda. The current Congress concludes in January 2027, and legislation not enacted before then generally must be reintroduced in the new Congress.

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Election Outlook - Extended Source Summary

The updated source draft discusses the narrow balance of power in Congress and highlights several Senate races receiving attention, including Alaska, Georgia, Iowa, Maine, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas, with Michigan and New Hampshire also noted as states to watch.

The draft emphasizes that the November results will shape congressional leadership and the legislative environment for small business and federal contracting issues in 2027, and encourages members to vote.

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WCOE USA Goes to Wyoming - Full Story

This September marked a historic milestone as the Associated General Contractors of Wyoming hosted its inaugural Women in Construction Summit. WCOE and The WCOE Resource Center Corp were proud to be sponsors. Elisabeth Decoursey, past president of WCOE, and Lynette Thompson, national board secretary and chair of the membership committee and Young Professional program for The Resource Center, were invited as featured speakers, joining more than 80 women from across the industry.

Elisabeth shared her journey into construction, the challenges she has faced and the impact WCOE has had on her career and personal growth. Lynette unveiled details about The WCOE Resource Center Corp's soon-to-launch Young Professional program, designed to cultivate the next generation of industry leaders.

The event also reinforced the importance of connection: women in Wyoming are navigating many of the same challenges faced by WCOE members across the country, making the summit a reminder that the movement extends well beyond any one region.

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International Towers NCR MATOC - Full Opportunity

International Towers, LLC has been awarded a prime contract under the U.S. Army's National Capital Region MATOC, a five-year contracting vehicle supporting facility sustainment, modernization, repair and minor construction across seven installations in Maryland, Virginia and the Washington, D.C. region.

Upcoming task orders may involve general trades, civil/site work, concrete, roofing, electrical, HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, demolition, paving, utilities and other specialty trades. The October 7 Meet & Greet gives firms an opportunity to meet ITL, present capabilities and discuss future subcontracting opportunities.

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Member Spotlight - Ida Brooker

Ida Brooker, one of WCOE's charter members from 1984, built a pioneering career with Boeing, on nuclear-power and Alaska North Slope projects, and later as CFO of the Carl Hovick Company. Her work spanned estimating, contracts, finance and leadership during an era when women were still rare in senior construction roles.

She later returned to Boeing, served as an AAA Construction Council arbitrator and represented WCOE with the State Department Overseas Building Operations Advisory Council. A past WCOE president and current WCOE Resource Center chair, she remains active through Construction Consulting Northwest and Contractor Compliance and Monitoring Inc.

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Erica Jablonsky - Extended Chapter Spotlight

Erica Jablonsky launched Parkway Solutions LLC after more than a decade inside a major construction association, building a fractional business-development company around relationships, persistence and a new identity under her own brand.

WCOE New York - Extended Chapter Update

WCOE New York capped a busy September with its Habitat for Humanity Women Build and will host its inaugural Women of Excellence event October 8, honoring Legacy Award recipient Leandra Joseph of Kolar Design.