

2025 CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN

FEBRUARY 12, 2025 | In-Person Conference

External Program Grid

“Power in Unity”

KEYNOTE & MAIN STAGE SPEAKERS

HALLS 2 & 3

KEYNOTE PROGRAM | 10:15 AM - 1:20 PM

Emcee: [Janelle Wang](#), News Anchor, NBC Bay Area

Introduction and/or Remarks: [Mary Bui-Pham](#), VP, Business Technology, Indeed; Board Secretary, California Conference for Women

Keynote Speaker: [Padma Lakshmi](#), NYT best-selling Author, Emmy Award-nominated Host & Executive Producer of Hulu's *Taste the Nation in Conversation with* [Michal Lev-Ram](#), Journalist & Special Correspondent, *Fortune*

Introduction and/or Remarks: [Ellen Lee](#), Director, Technical Program Management, Google

Keynote Speaker: [Simone Biles](#), Athlete and Advocate *in Conversation with* [Laura Britt](#), Emmy-winning Host and Reporter, NBC Sports

Remarks: [Molly Snyder](#), VP, Stakeholder Engagement, Target

*** LUNCH INTERMISSION | 11:30 AM - 11:55 AM ***

Remarks: [Frances Wong](#), Director, Marketing & Communications, Visit San Jose

Remarks: [Matt Mahan](#), San Jose Mayor

Introduction and/or Remarks: Board President, [Hillary Weingast](#), VP, Deputy General Counsel & Head, Corporate Social Responsibility, Juniper Networks; Board President, California Conference for Women

Keynote Speaker: [Brittney Griner](#), Olympic Gold Medalist, WNBA Champion, All-Star, Activist & NYT best-selling Author *in Conversation with* [Lulu Garcia-Navarro](#), Award-winning journalist, Host of *The Interview* at *NYT Magazine*

Introduction and/or Remarks: [Jen Kirkpatrick](#), VP, Americas Networking Sales, Cisco

Keynote Speaker: [Jane Fonda](#), Two-time Academy Award-winning Actor, Producer, Author, and Activist *in Conversation with* [Janelle Wang](#), News Anchor, NBC Bay Area

Remarks: [Andrea Robertson](#), Managing Director, United

**Order of appearance is subject to change.*

SESSION I: 8:45 - 9:45 AM	SESSION II: 1:45 - 2:45 PM	SESSION III: 3:15 - 4:15 PM
<p>LEADERSHIP TRACK EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS</p> <p>EXECUTIVE BALLROOM 210 (CDGH) That’s a Good Question Navigating New Work Environments</p> <p>The opportunities to build and manage a career have diversified tremendously. There are more tools and technologies than ever before to explore careers, find new jobs, and connect with people to build skills, get noticed, and get promoted, whether working remotely or in an office. In this interactive session, based on our wildly popular <i>Women Amplified</i> podcast segment “That’s a Good Question,” the audience drives the conversation. Executive Mentors including Conference board members, senior professionals and community leaders will respond to LIVE attendee questions offering insights and lessons learned on how to ensure your career is on track and what factors to consider when negotiating your scope of work and salary.</p> <p>Moderator: Hilda Gutierrez, Emmy Award-winning Investigative Reporter, NBC Bay Area</p> <p>Executive Mentors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jen Coleman, Partner, Spencer Fane LLP • Nicole Johnson, Global Director, Social Impact, Cadence Design Systems • Christie Smith, Leadership Expert and Author • Dolores Smith, Vice President Human Resources, Pharm Development & Manufacturing, Gilead 	<p>LEADERSHIP TRACK WORKSHOP</p> <p>EXECUTIVE BALLROOM 210 (ABEF) Leading High Performing Teams Through Productive Conflict</p> <p>Many of us avoid conflict, which can lead to us dodging difficult decisions, hindering teamwork and productivity. But what happens when we actually invite conflict into our workplace? In this session, Dr. Liane Davey will explore why conflict is needed, ways you can create a healthy conflict culture, and strategies to resolve conflict productively. With real-world examples and practical tools, she will provide an essential field guide for leaders at all levels so you will walk away seeing even the most contentious conflicts as potentially beneficial—instead of adversarial.</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Liane Davey, Organizational Psychologist, "Teamwork Doctor," <i>NYT</i> best-selling Author</p> <p>Host: Jeff Benton, Founder and CEO, Paragon Performance Evolution</p>	<p>LEADERSHIP TRACK WORKSHOP</p> <p>EXECUTIVE BALLROOM 210 (ABEF) Leading High Performing Teams Through Productive Conflict</p> <p>Many of us avoid conflict, which can lead to us dodging difficult decisions, hindering teamwork and productivity. But what happens when we actually invite conflict into our workplace? In this session, Dr. Liane Davey will explore why conflict is needed, ways you can create a healthy conflict culture, and strategies to resolve conflict productively. With real-world examples and practical tools, she will provide an essential field guide for leaders at all levels so you will walk away seeing even the most contentious conflicts as potentially beneficial—instead of adversarial.</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Liane Davey, Organizational Psychologist, "Teamwork Doctor," <i>NYT</i> best-selling Author</p> <p>Host: Dr. Sandra Solano, Stress Management Expert, Paragon Performance Evolution</p>
<p>PREP CALL: Completed</p>	<p>PREP CALL: Completed</p>	

CAREER TRACK

EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS

EXECUTIVE BALLROOM 210 (ABEF)

That's a Good Question | Reinventing Your Career Portfolio

The future of work encompasses entire categories of jobs that are rapidly becoming obsolete. In this interactive session, based on our wildly popular *Women Amplified* podcast segment "That's a Good Question," the audience drives the conversation. We'll explore what your career framework looks like, and how you can effectively pivot and reinvent yourself to keep your skills relevant, whether switching job functions, entering a new industry, or returning to the workforce after a break. Executive Mentors including Conference board members, senior professionals and community leaders will respond to LIVE attendee questions offering insights into strategies to stay connected with your network and continue to build relationships in time-efficient ways, ensuring you're ready to embrace the pivot and forge ahead with a focus on your brand and a robust skills toolkit.

Moderator: [Suzanne St. John-Crane](#), CEO, American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley

Executive Mentors:

- [Anna Dapelo-Garcia](#), Founder & President, Lean In Latinas
- [Erika Moore Ewearitt](#), Non-Profit Executive Leader
- [Quita Highsmith](#), VP, Chief Diversity Officer, Genentech
- [Megan Schoettmer](#), Regional President, PNC Bank

Host: [LaVanya Hardin-Wright](#), Head, Giving & Social Impact, Genentech

PREP CALL: Completed

LEADERSHIP

WORKSHOP

EXECUTIVE BALLROOM 210 (CDGH)

TRUST: The New Language of Leadership

In today's dynamic work environment, the ability to build, maintain, and restore trust is a cornerstone of effective leadership. Whether dealing with layoffs, restructuring, or other crises, leaders face the challenge of communicating in ways that uphold trust, keeping their teams engaged, motivated, and aligned with organizational goals. Join Minda Harts for a session focused on mastering the art of trust-building, providing practical strategies for fostering transparent and effective communication, ensuring that leaders can speak a language that resonates with their teams. Learn actionable scripts and steps to address and repair trust issues, as well as techniques for cultivating behaviors that enhance teamwork, increase engagement, and drive superior performance.

Speaker: [Minda Harts](#), Author & Professor, NYU

Host: [Molly Snyder](#), VP, Stakeholder Engagement, Target

PREP CALL: Completed

LEADERSHIP

WORKSHOP

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Speaker: [Minda Harts](#), Author & Professor, NYU

Host: [Erin Connor](#), Director, Social Impact, Cisco

PREP CALL: Completed

CAREER TRACK
EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS

MR LOWER LEVEL 20

That’s a Good Question | Bright Futures in Tech Workplaces

The opportunities to work in technology are exciting and women in these “future is now” workplaces are well-positioned to thrive. Yet, gender bias and lack of representation in leadership roles remain ongoing challenges for women. In this interactive session, based on our wildly popular *Women Amplified* podcast segment “That’s a Good Question,” the audience drives the conversation. Executive Mentors including Conference board members, senior professionals and community leaders will respond to LIVE attendee questions offering insights and lessons learned, exploring predictions for positive environmental changes and innovative solutions that have been proven successful in creating bright futures for women in this workspace.

Moderator: [Jade Hernandez](#), News Anchor & Reporter, Audacy

Executive Mentors:

- [Jannie Affeld](#), VP, Finance Engineering, Google
- [Neda Cvijetic](#), Global Head, R&D for Robotics, Johnson & Johnson
- [Eileen He](#), VP, Software Development, Oracle
- [Sweta Patel](#), Sr. Director, Product Transformation, Juniper Networks

PREP CALL: Completed

CAREER TRACK
WORKSHOP

MR 230BC

The Aligned Mindset: How High-Achieving Women Navigate Workplace Challenges

Many ambitious, driven women grapple with common career challenges—decision-making dilemmas, feelings of overwhelm or insecurity, and difficulty finding the inner strength and courage to act in the face of fear. How can these obstacles be reframed to cultivate a more effective mindset so that you can drive forward with confidence? In this session, Dr. Sohee Jun will address the pressing professional anxieties that often disrupt your peace of mind and share innovative strategies for developing a mindset that aligns with your career goals and aspirations. Leveraging insights from qualitative data, she offers practical pathways to tackle workplace challenges, learn from past mistakes, and celebrate your achievements. This session provides the tools and perspectives needed to unlock your full potential and navigate your path to success with resilience and purpose.

Speaker: [Sohee Jun, Ph.D.](#), Mindset expert, best-selling Author & Leadership Coach

Host: [Mary-Jane Strom](#), Interim CEO, Girl Scouts of Northern California

PREP CALL: Completed

CAREER TRACK
WORKSHOP

MR 230BC

The Aligned Mindset: How High-Achieving Women Navigate Workplace Challenges

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Speaker: [Sohee Jun, Ph.D.](#), Mindset expert, best-selling Author & Leadership Coach

Host: [Frances Wong](#), Director, Marketing & Communications, Visit San Jose

PREP CALL: Completed

SPECIAL WELLNESS OFFERING

MR LOWER LEVEL 21

Take Control of Your Stress Response

Science shows that effectively managing our own stress helps us resonate with those around us. This session will teach you methods to develop sustained shifts in behavior, leading to greater productivity, improved health, enhanced mental clarity, increased resilience, and more energy. Join us to learn how the ongoing integration of these strategies can transform your leadership and impact your life.

Speaker: [Jeff Benton](#), Founder and CEO, Paragon Performance Evolution

Speaker: [Dr. Sandra Solano](#), Stress Management Expert, Paragon Performance Evolution

Host: [Raquel González](#), President, Bank of America, Silicon Valley

CAREER TRACK

PANEL

MR LOWER LEVEL 20

How to Cultivate Engaged, Productive, and Happier Teams

One of the most crucial factors influencing whether people stay or leave a job is the company's culture. As individuals become more socially conscious, a focus on wellness, work-life balance, and meaningful connections become vital elements to consider beyond the work itself. We will explore employee productivity and success beyond job scope and tangible shifts to achieve a fulfilling work experience where everyone feels like they belong. After initial remarks from thought-leader Denise Soler Cox, a panel of professionals will offer insights to help leaders create supportive and flexible environments for teams to thrive, nurture environments of belonging, and develop strategies to navigate complicated dynamics that can negatively impact employee performance and satisfaction. Attendees will leave empowered, inspired and armed with practical tips to develop a culture of belonging and be engaged, productive and happier at work.

Thought Leader: [Denise Soler Cox](#), award-winning Filmmaker, Author, & Founder, High Quality Human

Panelists:

- [Kristen Hall Eskew](#), VP, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, OneDigital
- [Kirsten Kuykendoll](#), Head, Talent, Fidelity Investments
- [Kristen Starr](#), Engineering Director, Social Impact, Indeed

CAREER TRACK

PANEL

MR LOWER LEVEL 20

Unlocking the Power of AI: Practical Insights for Everyday Use

AI often feels like an overwhelming and intimidating force, perceived as a threat to jobs and irrelevant to your role in the workplace. However, these are common misconceptions and when utilized correctly, AI can actually help take your career to the next level and free up valuable time at work and in life. Thought-leader Jen Kirkpatrick will give initial remarks to help demystify AI and will then be joined by a panel of professionals to share real-world examples and practical tips to explore how AI can be a valuable tool that boosts your productivity and efficiency, enhances brainstorming and elevates innovation. Attendees will leave empowered and with actionable insights to immediately implement in your day-to-day, transforming AI from a daunting concept into a practical ally.

Thought Leader: [Jen Kirkpatrick](#), VP, Americas Networking Sales, Cisco

Panelists:

- [Bernadette Berger](#), Director, Innovation, Alaska Airlines
- [Hannah Calhoon](#), VP, AI & Head of AI Innovation, Indeed
- [Susan Gonzales](#), Founder and CEO, ALandYou

PREP CALL: N/A

PREP CALL: Completed

PREP CALL: Completed

	<p>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRACK WORKSHOP</p> <p>MR LOWER LEVEL 21 Eliminating Toxic Productivity</p> <p>For decades, societal pressures have had us scrambling to do more, achieve more, overcome more - all with the promise that we'll feel accomplished, fulfilled, worthy . . . even happy. But it comes at a price: our mental and physical health. In a world obsessed with getting more done, Israa Nasir will dismantle the hustle culture myth and offer us research-backed insight on the patterns and dynamics that keep us always busy but never satisfied. This session will help you recognize the emotional patterns that drive toxic productivity habits and cultivate a healthier perspective on achievement. Join this session to untangle yourself from the web of toxic productivity and embark on a transformative journey to reclaim your time, energy, and joy.</p> <p>Speaker: Israa Nasir, Author & Founder, Wellguide</p> <p>Host: Marci Wiser, On Air Talent & Host, The Live 105 Morning Show, Audacy Media</p>	<p>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRACK WORKSHOP</p> <p>MR LOWER LEVEL 21 Eliminating Toxic Productivity</p> <p>For decades, societal pressures have had us scrambling to do more, achieve more, overcome more - all with the promise that we'll feel accomplished, fulfilled, worthy . . . even happy. But it comes at a price: our mental and physical health. In a world obsessed with getting more done, Israa Nasir will dismantle the hustle culture myth and offer us research-backed insight on the patterns and dynamics that keep us always busy but never satisfied. This session will help you recognize the emotional patterns that drive toxic productivity habits and cultivate a healthier perspective on achievement. Join this session to untangle yourself from the web of toxic productivity and embark on a transformative journey to reclaim your time, energy, and joy.</p> <p>Speaker: Israa Nasir, Author & Founder, Wellguide</p> <p>Host: Cynthia Stark, Director, Alphabet Regulatory Response, Investigations and Strategy, Google; Board Member, California Conference for Women</p>
	<p>PREP CALL: Completed</p>	

<p>AUTHOR SIGNINGS Bookstore Lounge Hall 1 <i>(timing & titles subject to change)</i></p>	
<p>1:30 - 2:00 PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padma Lakshmi, <i>The Best American Food and Travel Writing 2024</i> and <i>Tomatoes for Neela</i>
<p>4:30 - 5:00 PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liane Davey, <i>The Good Fight: Use Productive Conflict to Get Your Team and Organization Back on Track</i> • Minda Harts, <i>You Are More Than Magic</i> • Israa Nasir, <i>Toxic Productivity: Reclaim Your Time and Emotional Energy in a World That Always Demands More</i>

THE STAGE
Location HALL 1

*Mini career and wellness masterclasses to support your professional and personal growth.
Five minutes are reserved at the end for audience Q&A.*

8:15 - 8:40 AM

WELLNESS | Money on My Mind: 5 Steps for Financial Wellness

Building financial confidence is just like building confidence in life—it grows with practice. In this session, Kristin Kanders will guide you through five key steps to take control of your financial future. You'll learn how to start with a solid foundation by educating yourself, understanding your risk tolerance, and ensuring your money works for you. Discover strategies for investing that fit your comfort level and learn how to negotiate job offers and advocate for your worth. Finally, you'll learn the importance of goal setting and the power of practice—it's the repetition that builds true financial confidence. Leave this session ready to take actionable steps toward mastering your money.

Speaker: [Kristin Kanders](#), Head, Marketing & Engagement, Plynk

8:45 - 9:10 AM

CAREER | Owing Your Voice: Finding Confidence in What You Have to Say

In this session, marketing expert Raquel Toledo will explore the transformative power of owning your voice, celebrating the unique stories and experiences that shape us all. Through personal insights and practical steps, she'll uncover how honoring cultural values, embracing vulnerability, and building confidence in everyday moments can strengthen our ability to speak up and be heard. Key takeaways include recognizing the value of one's background, advocating for others and oneself, and trusting that you belong—no matter the setting. By the end, you will feel empowered to take small, meaningful steps toward using your voice with authenticity and purpose.

Speaker: [Raquel Toledo](#), Marketing Communications Manager, Heffernan Insurance Brokers

9:15 - 9:40 AM

WELLNESS | Taking Your Health to The Next Level With Metabolic Self-Care

Metabolic health is crucial for our body's ability to efficiently process energy from food. Although we can't observe our cells at work, we can adopt daily habits to support and optimize their function. In this engaging session, Dr. Juneja will introduce six simple yet powerful practices that can make a lasting impact on cellular metabolism. Learn how to incorporate daily movement, shift from stress to relaxation, align with your circadian rhythm, consume a colorful array of produce, simplify food choices through planning, and reflect on setbacks with curiosity. Join us to gain practical insights into creating a strong foundation for metabolic wellness.

Speaker: [Kavita Juneja, MD](#), Head of Metabolic Therapeutic Development, Corcept Therapeutics

9:45 - 10:10 AM

CAREER | Workload Overload and Setting Boundaries

In today's fast-paced world, many of us experience the weight of "workload overload," whether it stems from career pressures, family responsibilities, volunteer commitments, or the myriad of demands that life throws our way. In this session, Spencer Fane's Karen McCay explores practical strategies for regaining control by setting boundaries aligned with your priorities and will guide participants through the essential first steps: identifying how time is spent, assessing the motivations behind those choices, and evaluating whether those activities truly align with personal and professional goals. Participants will learn how to delegate effectively, let go of unnecessary obligations, and seek support from peers or mentors for a fresh perspective. The session will also delve into different types of boundaries—rigid, blurred, and invisible—and how to establish ownership over your time and priorities. By learning to say "no" or "not now" and recognizing the freedom this brings, attendees can reclaim balance and focus. This empowering discussion offers actionable insights for managing overload with confidence and grace and focuses on finding liberation in forgiving yourself for inevitable missteps and the importance of self-kindness and celebrating accomplishments both big and small

Speaker: [Karen McCay](#), Partner, Spencer Fane

<p>1:45 - 2:10 PM</p>	<p>CAREER Attracting & Retaining Talent through Enhanced Employee Benefits</p> <p>In today's competitive labor landscape, attracting and retaining talent is essential for a business' long-term success. This session explores the critical role of talent as a company's greatest asset and the importance of aligning benefits offerings to meet diverse workforce needs, across various life stages. Participants will learn how companies are going beyond salary to provide meaningful benefits and the importance of educating employees on leveraging these offerings to achieve personal and financial goals. Highlighting PNC's industry-leading Organizational Financial Wellness capabilities, this session seeks to inspire companies to develop and implement innovative, tailored benefit programs that work well for them and for the talent they want to recruit and retain for their teams.</p> <p>Speaker: Michelle Francisco, VP & Market Leader, Organizational Financial Wellness, PNC Bank</p>
<p>2:15 - 2:40 PM</p>	<p>CAREER Mentoring Up & Down</p> <p>Join Emily Guy of Google for an insightful session on the art of mentoring in today's dynamic workplace. Explore the fundamentals of Mentorship 101, including the key responsibilities, setting expectations, and understanding the distinct roles of mentors, sponsors, and coaches. Discover how to "mentor down" by shaping and empowering the next generation of leaders, while also mastering the art of "mentoring up" by learning from those above you and guiding them in return. Learn strategies for "building your bench" by finding and cultivating mentors in a post-COVID return-to-office world and fostering a diverse network of guidance and support. Whether you're a seasoned leader or an emerging professional, this session will equip you with actionable tools to create meaningful, reciprocal mentoring relationships.</p> <p>Speaker: Emily Guy, Technical Program Manager, Google</p>
<p>2:45 - 3:10 PM</p>	<p>CAREER Strategies to Effectively Lead Your Team</p> <p>Join Tina Weinberger from Cisco as she shares actionable strategies to build and lead high-performance teams, rooted in insights from Cisco's Best Team Study. This highly interactive session focuses on leveraging three key pillars: Value, Trust, and Strengths. Learn how aligning team values fosters deeper connections and drives collective success. Discover the transformative power of vulnerability-based trust in creating a safe and collaborative environment. Finally, explore how identifying and leveraging individual and team strengths can boost engagement and maximize performance. This engaging and practical session will equip leaders with practical tools and takeaways to elevate their teams to new heights, increasing both productivity and employee satisfaction.</p> <p>Speaker: Tina Weinberger, Senior HR Business Partner, Cisco Systems</p>
<p>3:15 - 3:40 PM</p>	<p>CAREER Ask for It All: Overcoming the Fear of Expressing Your Needs at Work</p> <p>Why do so many women feel compelled to downplay their needs to preserve others' comfort? In this transformative session, Communications Leader Katie Lawson dives into the cultural, historical, and deeply personal factors that keep women from asking for what they deserve. Through candid insights and actionable strategies, participants will confront their fear of asking, learn to navigate anxiety and shame, and master the art of the "Empowered Ask." By reframing needs as sacred and reclaiming your value, you will leave with the confidence and tools to unlock enduring self-belief and take bold steps toward the careers you desire.</p> <p>Speaker: Katie Lawson, Head of Communications, North America, ZEISS</p>

<p>3:45 - 4:10 PM</p>	<p>CAREER Understanding and Negotiating Equity Compensation</p> <p>Join Emily Cervino, Fidelity’s thought leadership expert for an engaging session on understanding and negotiating equity compensation. Designed to demystify this often-overlooked component of total rewards, the session will cover the basics of equity compensation, the types of employers that offer it, and the risks and rewards associated with public vs. pre-IPO companies. Learn why equity compensation is especially relevant in Silicon Valley and why it’s critical for women to advocate for inclusion in long term incentives (LTI) and increase participation in programs like Employee Stock Purchase Plans (ESPP). Gain practical insights on LTI, common mistakes to avoid, and how to align equity awards with your financial goals. Leave with actionable takeaways to incorporate equity compensation into your career planning, including how to research ESPP offerings, discuss LTI opportunities with your manager, and evaluate equity programs during your job hunt.</p> <p>Speaker: Emily Cervino, Head, Thought Leadership, Fidelity</p>
<p>4:15 - 4:40 PM</p>	<p>WELLNESS How to Feel Better at Every Stage</p> <p>Ready to learn one tiny habit that can transform your well-being? In this insightful session, Amanda Henry will show you how to listen to your body throughout the M’s of womanhood—Menstruation, Mental Well-Being, Motherhood, and Menopause. You’ll learn simple strategies for better managing your health and prioritizing self-care, plus how to empower yourself to live in sync with your body’s needs.</p> <p>Speaker: Amanda Henry, VP, Business Development & Women’s Wellness, TheraBody</p>

SMALL GROUP PEER NETWORKING
Location: HALL 1

<p>9:00 - 9:45 AM</p>	<p>Small Group Peer Networking Meetup</p> <p>Effective networking is a mix of give and take and these peer-to-peer Meetups are designed to do just that (and also take the intimidation out of networking). The Meetup is led by a facilitator who will guide participants through a series of prompts that will foster conversation and idea exchange. Everyone has the chance to “give” and to walk away with new insights, perspectives, and connections.</p> <p>Facilitator: Monica Murarka, President & CEO, Amplify Yourself</p>
<p>2:00 - 2:45 PM</p>	
<p>3:15 - 4:00 PM</p>	