



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
WASHINGTON

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“If You Want to Solve a Problem, Throw a Bunch of Women in the Room”
*Congressional, Business, Military Leaders Share Expertise and Insight at
Junior League of Washington’s Annual Women’s Leadership Luncheon*

WASHINGTON, DC— A “bunch of women” - in the words of Lieutenant Colonel Julia Oh Coxen - came together to share their experiences as woman leaders on Tuesday, September 20, at the Junior League of Washington’s (JLW) second annual Women’s Leadership Luncheon.

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative from Washington’s 5th Congressional District; Lt. Col. Coxen, Battalion Commander and Jumpmaster, U.S. Army; Nicole Hassoun, Head Distiller for DC’s Joseph A. Magnus & Co. distillery; Nancy Dorn, Vice President of Corporate Government Relations for GE; and moderator Emily Heil of *The Washington Post* discussed their career trajectories and imparted words of wisdom to the more than 140 women in attendance.

“This panel represents an unparalleled level of achievement from women leaders across the professional spectrum – showing that any woman anywhere has the potential to grow into a leadership role and be a trendsetter in her field,” JLW President Elizabeth Keys said. “The Junior League of Washington is proud to have assembled this panel, not only to educate and empower those who attended, but also to benefit our mission and our work in the community.”

The panel cited several themes throughout the discussion: Take risks. Believe in yourself. You are not alone.

Each panelist shared her own story of having confidence in her professional and personal decisions. “Be a risk taker,” said Rep. McMorris Rodgers. “Don’t wait until you’re 100 percent.” Hassoun encouraged the audience to always be open to new possibilities, citing her transition into a new industry as an example. Dorn, similarly, conveyed the importance of “transferring personal courage into professional courage” and recognizing that women aren’t single-dimensional.

Panelists also highlighted strengths women bring to the table. Rep. McMorris Rodgers echoed that women naturally are good listeners, trustworthy, and work across the aisle – key traits for elected service; Lt. Col. Coxen shared that consistency, transparency, and bringing people together are key tools women can utilize, especially when solving problems or in male-dominated work settings. And all noted that women should be champions of other women. “Be an instrument of confidence for others,” Lt. Col. Coxen said. “Give people as much as you can, and let them do the rest,” Hassoun said.

Overall, the panel shared the belief that having confidence, a willingness to learn, and an understanding of one’s priorities are critical for continued development in and out of the workplace. Said Dorn, “We all have strengths and weaknesses; we have to accept that. But believe in yourself. Be yourself.” Echoed Rep. McMorris Rodgers, “Know who you are and what’s most important. Have confidence in yourself, and believe in yourself and that you have something worth contributing.”

This event is a part of the Junior League of Washington’s annual Holiday Shops fundraiser. Funds raised support JLW’s ongoing efforts to improve the Washington, DC, community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers and annual grants awarded to local nonprofits. For more information on Holiday Shops, please visit www.jlw.org/HolidayShops.

ABOUT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF WASHINGTON

The Junior League of Washington (www.jlw.org) is a nonprofit organization of more than 2,300 women who annually donate thousands of dollars and volunteer hours to the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. JLW is committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. JLW focuses its financial and volunteer resources on the issues of literacy – adult, child, and cultural – and works with a diverse group of community partners. Since 1912, the JLW has donated more than five million hours of direct volunteer service and more than \$5.8 million to the Washington, DC, community.

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