



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS OVERVIEW

The National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) began when a dozen businesswomen in the Washington, D.C., area met informally in late 1974 to exchange information on federal contracts, bank credit and other financial issues.

NAWBO was incorporated the following year and by 1978 the first chapters were formed with members recruited across the country. Today, NAWBO has nearly 80 chapters in the nation, approximately 8,000 members and is recognized as a policy leader on Capitol Hill where it continues to champion women business owners and their issues to lawmakers, the media, federal government agency heads, White House staff and the greater business community.

NAWBO has pioneered federal legislation and policy change on behalf of women business owners by making the case for adding women to the list of minority business owners, for the Small Business Administration to include women business owners in federal procurement assistance programs, and for H.R. 5050, the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988.

NAWBO has continued its political involvement this year, submitting testimony to the House and Senate Small Business committees criticizing controversial proposed SBA rules for women-owned business set aside programs.

As a dues-based organization, NAWBO seeks to build a diverse and inclusive membership with the goal of increasing representation and leadership opportunities in ethnic and minority communities nationwide. It has an international presence in more than 60 countries as the official U.S. member of Les Femmes Chefs d'Enterprises Mondiales (FCEM).

Committed to social and humanitarian outreach, NAWBO formed WomenBizRelief and raised \$40,000 to assist women entrepreneurs impacted by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. NAWBO's efforts earned it an Award of Excellence from the American Society of Association Executives.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS HISTORIC MILESTONES

- **1975** Association of Women Business Owners (AWBO) is incorporated.
- **1976** AWBO organizes a national network of chapters.
- **1977** The newly renamed National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) receives a \$20,000 grant from Equitable Life Assurance Society to publish a directory of about 1,000 firms in the Baltimore area of which women were majority owners. The practice of publishing an annual directory continues, and today it functions in an online format.
- **1980** NAWBO national and chapter members attend the White House Conference on Small Business, testify before congressional committees, and participate in task forces and small business groups.
- **1982** NAWBO holds its first conference in Houston, Texas. The National Public Affairs Day attracts Vice President George Bush and nine members of Congress who are presented with NAWBO's six point plan.
- **1985** NAWBO organizes Project 2000 to direct where members want the organization to be in the year 2000. NAWBO celebrates its 10th anniversary with 21 chapters representing 30 states and membership in Les Femmes Chefs d'Enterprises Mondiales (FCEM).
- **1986** NAWBO national and chapter members participate in the White House Conference on Small Business.
- **1988** NAWBO is instrumental in helping pass H.R. 5050, the Women's Business Ownership Act, which is signed into law in a White House ceremony with President Reagan.
- **1989** The National Foundation for Women Business Owners (NFWBO) becomes active as a research organization; it later changes its name to the Center for Women's Business Research.
- **1990** A delegation of 13 Russian women, attempting to establish a Soviet Association of Women Business Owners similar to NAWBO, fly to Washington, D.C. and meet with NAWBO members and President George Bush. They also visit NAWBO Chapters in New York City, Miami, Houston, St. Louis, and Silicon Valley in California.
- **1992** Women-owned firms employ more people than all Fortune 500 companies combined.
- **1993** Past national NAWBO presidents are inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.

- **1995** Community banks use local data from NFWBO to designate women-owned businesses as a key market and take initiative to offer financial advice and education.
- **1996** The U.S. Small Business Administration regional offices use NFWBO data to develop fact sheets for staffs to better understand and meet the needs of women entrepreneurs.
- **2000** NAWBO headquarters moves to Washington, D.C., signaling a more assertive stance in public policy and providing a unified voice for women-owned businesses.
- **2002** NAWBO signs on to the Women21.gov project, and participates in four town hall meetings across the country with President Bush.
- **2003** NAWBO incorporates the NAWBO Institute for Entrepreneurial Development (NAWBO IED), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that seeks to create educational experiences for established women entrepreneurs.
- **2004** NAWBO welcomes American Express as a corporate partner, and exceeds \$1 million in corporate partnerships for the first time. NAWBO hosts its first Summit of Women's Organizations, with 14 organizations participating.
- **2005** NAWBO celebrates its 30th anniversary, with 8,000 members and 78 chapters. NAWBO forms WomenBizRelief to assist women entrepreneurs impacted by Hurricane Katrina. The effort raised over \$40,000 in two weeks and received an Award of Excellence from the American Society of Association Executives.
- **2007** NAWBO leads a Women in Business Trade Mission to The Netherlands and Belgium, with 10 women entrepreneurs participating. The Mission is rated as "one of the most successful in the past five years" by the U.S. Department of Commerce.
- **2008** NAWBO submits testimony to the House and Senate Small Business committees emphasizing its opposition to proposed rules issued by the Small Business Administration for the women owned business set-aside program. NAWBO celebrates the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Women's Business Ownership Act.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS AT A GLANCE

- NAWBO is the unified voice for the nation's 10.4 million women-owned businesses employing 13 million workers and representing more than 40 percent of all privately held firms with \$1.9 trillion in sales in 2008.
- In its more than three-decade history, NAWBO has grown to nearly 8,000 members in nearly 80 chapters across the country.
- NAWBO is represented in more than 60 countries as the official U.S. member of Les Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises Mondiales (FCEM), or World Association of Women Entrepreneurs.
- NAWBO stresses diversity and inclusion in a membership representative of 1.9 million firms owned 51 percent or more by minority women with 1.2 million employees and \$165 billion in annual earnings.
- NAWBO members on average own companies larger than the norm for women-owned businesses, with 16 percent employing more than 11 people and 25 percent making over \$1 million in annual sales.
- NAWBO members have owned their companies an average of nearly a decade, with 42 percent reporting annual sales of over \$250,000.
- Nearly one-third of NAWBO's members run companies in the professional, scientific or technical services fields; 13 percent operate administrative support service companies and 8 percent head information-related firms.
- Most NAWBO members have plans to expand their businesses, with 36 percent extremely interested in selling products and services to large corporations, a quarter expressing a similar level of interest in government business and 15 percent in international opportunities.

Sources: NAWBO and Center for Women's Business Research

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS MISSION AND MEDIA RELATIONS

The National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) is the powerful voice of America's 10.4 million women-owned businesses. As a dues-based organization with far-reaching clout, it is the one-stop resource to propel women business owners into greater economic, social and political spheres worldwide.

NAWBO prides itself on being a global beacon for influence, ingenuity and action and is uniquely positioned to be the incisive commentary on all issues of importance to women business owners.

National Association of Women Business Owners propels women entrepreneurs into economic, social, and political spheres of power worldwide by:

- **Strengthening** the wealth creating capacity of our members and promote economic development within the entrepreneurial community
- **Creating** innovative and effective change in the business culture
- **Building** strategic alliances, coalitions and affiliations
- **Transforming** public policy and influence opinion makers

In principle and in practice, NAWBO values and seeks a diverse and inclusive membership. NAWBO seeks full participation in the organization by all business owners who support our mission to empower women entrepreneurs, regardless of race, religion, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. NAWBO's goal is to represent effectively the full diversity of the women business owner community and to expand access to leadership opportunities across the full spectrum of our membership.

CONTACT MEDIA RELATIONS

For more information or to arrange interviews with NAWBO's Officers, Directors, or leading women business owners contact our Media Relations Department at (800) 556-2926 or media@nawbo.org.

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