

HAUTE AMBASSADOR

+ EMBRACE,
EMBOLDEN
AND EMPOWER

*My plans for Women's
History Month*

BY MARIA SHARAPOVA



*Sugarpova, the candy
brand I'm proud to
have created*



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LAST YEAR, I ANNOUNCED MY PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) to form the Maria Sharapova Women’s Entrepreneur Program. From the inception of this program, it was about women helping other women, and I couldn’t have been more inspired to help fellow female business owners, who were just starting out, gain momentum and traction with their companies.

Starting out as an entrepreneur is an adventure, and no one gives you a road map. I launched Sugarpova back in 2012, not having an in-depth knowledge about running my own business. I relied heavily on intuition and surrounding myself with industry experts to learn the ins and outs. After seven years, the company continues to thrive, launching new products and securing strategic retail partnerships. It’s highly rewarding for me to be able to pay forward what I’ve learned and achieved in my on- and off-court business pursuits with women just beginning their own.

We’re just about halfway through the 12-month-long mentorship program with NAWBO, and I’ve had the chance to interact with the “Sensational 7” participants. Back in November, they met me in New York (during a terrible snowstorm!) for a two-day consortium, where I had the chance to introduce them to Veronica Miele Beard, co-founder of Veronica Beard—another powerhouse female-run business.

I’ve teamed up with Veronica Beard for its charitable initiative, Veronica Beard Gives Back. I was really inspired by its monthly blog feature that highlights a prominent woman in business and her social cause, and thought, “Wait—this is the perfect fit for my NAWBO program!” So, for the month of March, which happens to coincide with International Woman’s Day and Women’s History Month, Veronica Beard will donate \$10 for every online sale toward the NAWBO/Sharapova Entrepreneur Program, which will directly benefit the seven budding entrepreneurs in the program.

It’s truly all about women for women for women. I want to encourage women of all races, creeds, income levels, etc. to be emboldened and empowered in what they do. And to embrace the opportunities that come their way—and have a voice that can be heard.



Top to bottom: Me, chatting with the women from my Entrepreneur Program at sbe Hudson Hotel in New York City; posing with the program’s “Sensational 7,” including Lynda Bishop, NAWBO Institute National Program Director; and Veronica Beard founders Veronica Swanson Beard and Veronica Miele Beard.