



When we attend the Entrepreneur Of The Year® regional program galas, we're always impressed and amazed by the creativity, ingenuity, passion and undying optimism exuded by the entrepreneurs we meet.

That spirit defines our Entrepreneur Of The Year 2017 Award winners. They don't follow trends – they define them, and in doing so they've created the products, services and jobs that help our economy grow. They've built some of the world's most enduring companies – surpassing US market performance in revenue growth, job creation and longevity along the way – while developing innovative solutions to the most vexing challenges businesses face today.

Their accomplishments are awesome:

- ▶ In 2017, the 261 award winners employed more than 230,000 people and had job growth of 20%.
- ▶ These winners represent 219 entrepreneurial companies.
- ▶ They generated revenue of more than \$77 billion, with revenue growth in excess of 30%.

The panel of independent judges who selected this year's finalists and winners used a balanced scorecard that considers revenue, profit and employment growth. The judges also consider the entrepreneurs' overall lifetime achievements, their approach to innovation and future growth, their commitments to building strong teams and sustainable businesses, and their enthusiasm for giving back.

But as different as this year's winners are, and regardless of their founding purpose, they're bound by a common thread: they saw past the present to define the future. We celebrate their exceptional achievements, the contributions they've made in the past and all of their future accomplishments.

Please join us as we honor the Entrepreneur Of The Year 2017 Award winners who join the ranks of the now more than 10,000 US program alumni.



David Jolley
EY Americas Growth Markets Leader



Debra von Storch
Americas Director,
Entrepreneur Of The Year

Overall Award winner

Giving patients a voice

Life Sciences

Lonnie Moulder
CEO & Co-founder

Mary Lynne Hedley, PhD
President, COO and Co-founder

TESARO, Inc.
Waltham, MA
Founded: 2010



Chalkboards filled with cancer patients' personal stories line the walls of TESARO's headquarters in Waltham, Massachusetts. The stories help to remind associates about why they come to work: to help make a difference in the lives of people suffering from cancer.

"We are inspired and motivated by our patients' stories," says Lonnie Moulder, CEO & Co-founder. "The stories really bring home our mission."

They also serve as a powerful incentive for Moulder and Mary Lynne Hedley, President, COO and Co-founder. In seven years, TESARO has already commercialized two drugs and started clinical trials on several others, establishing a deep pipeline of products in development.

Introduced to each other when Moulder was CEO of MGI Pharma and Hedley was CEO of her start-up Zycos, they quickly realized they share a passion for making "a real difference on behalf of cancer patients." In short order, MGI Pharma acquired Zycos, and Moulder and Hedley have worked together ever since.

In 2010, they co-founded and self-funded TESARO. In addition to wanting to build a meaningful oncology company, they were just as committed to one with a business culture based on collaboration.

"Mary Lynne and I have very different backgrounds," Moulder says, "but our strengths complement each other."

To gain traction, they licensed the drug rolapitant, which they brought to market as VARUBI. They repeated this approach in 2012 when they acquired niraparib. Marketed as Zejula, the drug represents a new approach in cancer treatment, PARP inhibitors, that prevent cancer cells from repairing themselves after they have been damaged by chemotherapy. At the same time, TESARO initiated three phase 1 studies to develop early-stage immune-oncology antibodies.

Many cancer treatments emphasize curing or treating the disease itself, Hedley says, leading to TESARO's added attention to supportive care, an area that sometimes gets overlooked in the fight to help cancer patients.

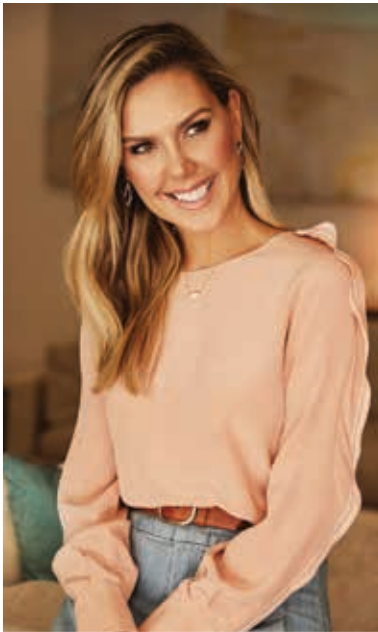
"We recognize the cancer patient as a whole person and want to give them a therapy that not only makes them better" but lets them enjoy their life, says Hedley, who cited a survey in which many cancer patients said they dread the side-effects of chemotherapy almost as much as dying.

As Moulder and Hedley look ahead, they plan to expand TESARO's international footprint while remaining focused on helping cancer patients, both through new drugs and by supporting a broad range of nonprofits dedicated to fighting cancer.

"We are very focused on patient outreach and advocacy," Hedley says.



Building a better
working world



Indulging a passion for fashion

Consumer Products and Retail

Kendra Scott
Founder & CEO
Kendra Scott, LLC

Austin, TX
Founded: 2002



The mathematics of winning

Distribution and Manufacturing

Ilene S. Gordon
Chief Executive Officer
Ingredion Incorporated

Westchester, IL
Founded: 1906

Kendra Scott learned about fashion, beauty and the value of hard work from her family. Her mother was a Mary Kay consultant, and a favorite aunt was the lead fashion designer for a Wisconsin department store.

“My family taught me that if you love what you do, work hard at it and treat people right, you can achieve anything,” says Scott, who was raised in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

But it was a personal crisis that motivated Scott to start her first company. Her stepfather was diagnosed with brain cancer when Scott was a 19-year-old college freshman. She left school and headed to Houston to be at his side. While there, she created The Hat Box, a line of hats for women going through chemotherapy. But the business struggled and closed five years later.

The idea behind her next business was surprisingly simple: “I noticed a white space in the market for quality, affordable gemstone jewelry and seized the opportunity to design my own.”

Scott spent 2002, her company’s early days, wrapping gemstones by hand and going door to door to boutiques in Austin, Texas. While the business had started as a wholesale operation, the 2008 recession convinced Scott to rethink the business model. “Businesses all around us were shuttering their doors. But I decided to take a risk. We launched our e-commerce business and opened our flagship store,” she says. “These were risky moves at the time – I had to put the fear of failure out of my mind and concentrate on success.”

Her flagship store, launched in 2010, featured a distinctive look. “I designed the store to feel like a room in my home – a warm, inviting, engaging experience to make our customers feel like family and build loyalty,” she says. The company expects to grow to 75 stand-alone stores nationwide by the end of 2017.

The Kendra Scott philosophy is built on three pillars: family, fashion and philanthropy. Today, as next steps for Scott and her company come into focus, she is looking to expand into the home decor and beauty industries. Part of that growth strategy involves taking on new partners and investors, such as Berkshire Partners.

“If someone had told me 15 years ago I’d be running a \$1 billion company with 2,000 employees and 75 stores across the country, I wouldn’t have believed it,” she says.

Albert Einstein said, “Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas.” If that holds true, Ilene Gordon is an entrepreneurial poet.

Gordon has applied her love and facility for math to the operations of Ingredion Incorporated, which turns grains, fruits, vegetables and other plant materials into value-added ingredients and biomaterial solutions for the food, beverage, paper and corrugating, brewing and other industries.

“Even as a child, I was very interested in math and very analytical,” Gordon says, adding that she and her parents sometimes had to advocate to make sure she was given the opportunities she needed to pursue her passion within a field traditionally reserved for males.

She recalls being placed in the middle section of an elementary school math course when she was a 10-year-old simply because girls weren’t placed in the top section. Despite the inherent sexism, she says she never thought of it as a female-male issue.

Gordon again was among the minority as a math major at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the 1970s, when undergraduate men outnumbered women 18 to 1. Gordon graduated Phi Beta Kappa.

After MIT, Gordon accepted a position with Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

When BCG opened a new office in Chicago, Gordon was asked to establish the new location. She then worked for a packaging company where she gained the experiences that would allow her to assume numerous VP roles – and become the first female corporate officer – prior to Alcan’s acquisition of the company.

In 2003, Alcan asked Gordon to head its Americas packaging business. In three years, she was promoted to run the global packaging business in Paris.

She then became CEO of Corn Products International, where she championed the acquisition of a \$1 billion company that became Ingredion Incorporated.

Consistent with her growth strategy, Ingredion has made several additional acquisitions to expand its portfolio of specialty ingredients, including the bold 2010 acquisition of National Starch. Gordon prides herself on acting as a bridge between the two.

“I grew up as the middle child,” she says. “You always are trying to bridge solutions.”



A standing ovation

Emerging

Dan Flaherty
Founder

Jason McCann
CEO

VARIDESK

Coppell, TX
Founded: 2013



Digging deep

Energy, Cleantech and
Natural Resources

Loretta F. Rosenmayer
Founder
INTREN L.L.C.

Union, IL
Founded: 1988

Since founding VARIDESK four years ago, Dan Flaherty and Jason McCann have set new standards for doing business in the office furniture category by putting consumers first, cutting out the middleman, selling directly to customers, and introducing an “everyday value” model to an industry that has been built on list prices and discounts.

The VARIDESK model was born from a real physical need. When Flaherty was diagnosed with sciatic nerve pain, a physical therapist told him to use a standing desk to relieve his discomfort. After weeks of trial and error looking for a desk that would be comfortable for him, Flaherty did what any entrepreneur would do: he built his own product.

VARIDESK made itself known in the marketplace by launching a website and selling directly to customers, bucking the notion that the only way into the office furniture business was through dealers.

By listening to customers and responding to their feedback, Flaherty and McCann knew that creating a collaborative environment and fostering relationships with them was the better way.

Starting with just a height-adjustable standing desk solution, the company now offers multiple versions of the height-adjustable desk, in addition to conference room furniture, seating solutions, lighting and movable walls to accommodate the ever-changing office environment.

Together, Flaherty and McCann have built a culture of listening and learning, which pushes VARIDESK employees to find the most innovative solutions by taking calculated risks and encourages them to question the status quo.

The company’s headquarters is the model for the active office revolution. Under the pair’s guidance, VARIDESK has built a flexible and collaborative workspace where their employees are able to move an entire office space in a matter of hours. The company continually reconfigures its space every few weeks with the goal of no one being offline for more than 30 minutes.

As part of its future plans, the company is expanding into the space planning sector as more customers want the VARIDESK headquarters look and feel for their own spaces.

VARIDESK is constantly seeking and developing future leaders who have the right mix of intellectual curiosity, passion and cultural fit. In fact, Flaherty and McCann brought in outside consultants to help develop their young leaders, pairing them with more senior leadership as accountability partners. These duos meet monthly to continue to challenge each other and to grow, pushing team members to perform their best and drive innovation.

When her husband was forced into early retirement, Loretta Rosenmayer knew she had to join the workforce to support her family. Taking a job that paid minimum wage, however, was not an option.

Then a family friend loaned her the old trailer and truck from his landscaping business, and Rosenmayer launched the trenching business that she grew into the industry leader currently employing more than 1,300 people.

The timing was perfect to offer trenching services. In the late 1980s, housing developments were sprouting up along the “golden corridor” west of Chicago, and Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) hired two local contractors to provide short-term trenching services to keep up with demand. INTREN, then called Trench-it, was one of the two.

The contract represented a major coup for Rosenmayer. To continue providing services, however, she also needed to secure union backing and buy insurance. She didn’t have the cash, but then a female friend loaned her \$15,000.

Buoyed by the loan, she grew the business to the point where she realized she would need additional trucks. She still lacked resources, so “I picked every brain I could for ideas.”

Eventually, she learned that a local Ford dealership was rehabbing and selling old ice cream trucks. The dealership offered her credit based on the strength of her character.

Trenching generated steady revenue during the housing boom of the 2000s, but when the mortgage crisis shut down new housing start-ups, Rosenmayer helped INTREN pivot to dig trenches for natural gas lines. The move expanded the company’s footprint, and when the economy rebounded, INTREN was firmly positioned for sustained growth.

A women in a male-dominated industry, Rosenmayer was an early supporter of diversity initiatives. In 1993 she certified her company with Women’s Business Enterprise National Council, giving her an edge with utility companies seeking to meet their quotas for hiring minority- or woman-owned businesses. And INTREN was one of the founding companies of CONSTRUCT, a job-training program in Chicago that helps people from disadvantaged areas develop job skills.

As she prepares for life beyond INTREN, Rosenmayer ultimately chose Kelly Tomblin, former CEO of Jamaica Public Service, to succeed her.

“I have been lifted up by women my entire career,” she says. “I had to hold the door open for another woman.”



Say cheese!

Family Business

Neal Schuman
CEO
Schuman Cheese

Fairfield, NJ
Founded: 1945



Telling the right stories

Financial Services

Asif Ramji
President and CEO
Paymetric

Roswell, GA
Founded: 1998

Family roots run deep at Schuman Cheese, a fourth-generation business that has thrived as a diversified cheesemaker, processor and importer with CEO Neal Schuman at its helm.

Schuman's grandfather Arthur Schuman, a salesman at an Italian food and cheese business, and his sons started the company in New York City in 1945 as cheese importers. As the World War II-era embargo on Italian products lifted, the Schumans aimed to share their passion for European cheeses with Americans.

In its early years, the company struggled with a lack of capital, fostering a spirit of entrepreneurship and creativity. To expand its sources of cheese, Schuman Cheese built partnerships with Italian emigrants in Argentina and Uruguay, ultimately becoming the largest US importer of South American cheeses.

Neal Schuman joined Schuman Cheese after college in 1972, focusing on expanding the company's imports of French cheeses, introducing new products such as condiments and licensing Schuman cheeses to restaurants. In 1986, as President, he refocused the company on its core competency of global cheese imports and production.

Key to this strategy was the acquisition of a Polish manufacturer, which enabled Schuman Cheese to enter the processing, food service and food ingredient sectors without having to build facilities. "We evolved from a broker and bulk cheese trader to a company that does importing and processing, with increased sales in our food ingredient business," Schuman says.

In the 1990s, Schuman drew on his industry insight to predict that the US faced a looming oversupply of dairy. Hedging that this might cause a shift to increased domestic cheese production, Schuman prompted the company to launch stateside manufacturing. Between 1998 and 2009, Schuman Cheese acquired or started four plants, saving extensively on importing and transportation costs.

Over the past decade, the company has grown an average of more than 10% annually. A critical element to their success, Schuman says, stems from his family owning the entire company, which allows management to take the long view of operations and be responsive to customers and vendors.

"We're much more aligned with what's best for us in the long term than what we have to accomplish now," Schuman says. "We try to do things right, knowing it will work out, rather than rushing to make it great or get rid of it really fast."

Some people don't shift careers unless the opportunity is just right. Others, like Asif Ramji, follow their gut.

Paymetric was losing millions when he joined the integrated payments company in 2009 as Chief Revenue Officer. "I would be lying to you if I told you that I thought, 'Hey, it was one of the best decisions I've made in my life' at the time," Ramji says. He joined "on just blind faith, knowing that I could impact the organization."

Ramji set his sights on the cloud, where few were operating at the time. He wanted to change Paymetric's business model from licensed software to a cloud-based software-as-a-service subscription.

The board was skeptical, and clients balked because they already had bought the licensed software. But Ramji and his team stressed that payments and data security were constantly changing and evolving. The conversion also included the creation of new industry solutions, such as tokenization, which secures raw credit card data.

Within 18 months, the value that Ramji envisioned started to materialize. Paymetric transformed every client from licensed software purchaser to monthly recurring subscriber – generating monthly recurring revenue. The company's client base tripled, and it began to turn a profit.

In September 2013, Paymetric sold a stake to a private equity firm, and in May 2017, the PE firm sold Paymetric to Vantiv, a leading payment processor. Today, it is recognized as a global leader for integrated payments and data security.

The desire to find a way to do something more effectively and create value is what drove Ramji to become an entrepreneur. His family used to tease him about having big dreams. "I always got accused of building castles in the sky," he says.

Ramji's first entrepreneurial venture was importing accessories from China when he was 18. Several businesses followed, including his first internet-based company. With each business, Ramji honed his ability to creatively sell potential clients on the benefits of an offering. "Anytime you take new, emerging technology to the market, you're going to face a lot of roadblocks," Ramji says.

Joining Paymetric allowed him to return to a more entrepreneurial environment. And Paymetric's culture has been a factor in its success.

"It's really something everybody talks about," Ramji says. "This isn't something that's just on a wall. It's something that has really truly been embraced."



Right on target

Media, Entertainment and Communications

Dave Pickles
CTO and Cofounder

Jeff Green
CEO and Cofounder

The Trade Desk
Ventura, CA
Founded: 2009



Room(s) for improvement

Real Estate, Hospitality and Construction

Bill Bayless
CEO
American Campus Communities

Austin, TX
Founded: 1993

In their company's early days, after an initial round of funding, Jeff Green and Dave Pickles were scrambling to develop and shape the technology behind The Trade Desk and position themselves to raise money again. Facing delays and a tight timeline, with the pressure at its most intense, "our conflict was at an all-time high," Green recalls.

The tension was so great, he adds, that "between our investors putting pressure on us and the pressure we were putting on each other, it was possible for us to just blow the whole thing up and ... go away."

But The Trade Desk didn't go away, and today they've found themselves atop a company whose IPO was ranked among the most successful of 2016.

Their cloud-based platform helps users to better harness data to drive their digital ad campaigns across different formats and devices. It also integrates with publisher partners and others, and its enterprise application program interfaces allow for customization. But Pickles says the technology isn't only about what ad appears where.

"We're just eliminating a lot of the waste and a lot of the noise that existed in traditional advertising," he explains.

The Trade Desk enables its clients to explore how they conduct campaigns. Similar to how traditional search engines deliver personalized results by factoring in a user's location, previous searches and more, The Trade Desk aims to do the same for advertisements, offering information tailored to the user and not just the "average" consumer. Digital ads narrowly targeted to specific groups are then bought and sold in the moment, through real-time bidding, with the platform's data-driven insights allowing for optimization.

"Our product has a humongous impact on our clients' businesses, but it also has a huge impact on the way the internet works," says Green. "What we're doing is about a better media ecosystem [and] attaining its potential in terms of influence."

So what does the future hold? In short: changes to every form of advertising in the world, says Pickles.

"Television is the biggest opportunity," he says. "Because we think we can make every ad on TV customized to the people that are watching it. ... It'll be like the Super Bowl all the time, in the sense that you actually look forward to the commercials."

As a marketing major and dormitory resident advisor at West Virginia University, Bill Bayless dreamed of starting a company that would enhance the student housing experience, one he thought was lacking at most institutes of higher learning.

"You lived in a dorm the first year, then maybe moved off campus, to low-quality housing with absentee landlords," he says. "I thought there was a better way."

His vision of student housing as a potentially lucrative venture defied conventional business wisdom. Undeterred, Bayless tried to interest his bosses in student housing. His arguments fell on deaf ears.

"Nobody really bought into it," he recalls. "It was unproven. Fast-forward to today, and student housing is one of the hottest global investments."

Bayless launched American Campus Communities, Inc. (ACC) in 1993 in Austin, Texas. But the game changer occurred in 2004 when Bayless took it public.

"We launched an IPO in an industry that did not exist," he says. "We didn't just create a company – we literally created an industry."

Today, ACC owns and operates 200 facilities and accommodates 140,000 students at more than 90 colleges and universities.

Going public coincided with budget-driven changes in how universities were planning and operating student housing. Deep cuts to public university and college funding across many states forced school leaders to search for spending alternatives. Bayless responded with American Campus Equity, a program to build and operate on- and off-campus apartments directly.

"We could build it better and at higher quality for a fraction of what they could, and deliver it faster – with no use of taxpayer dollars," he says. "This is our core competency."

Bayless is a father of two and grandfather of three; both of his children attended Texas State University. Any added pressure on them as they searched for housing? Not at all, he says. "They had no decision in it – it was mandated by their mother and me where they would live." It was, of course, an ACC building.

There was one concern, though. "I was always paranoid that they paid their rent on time," he says. "I'm sure my operations people would have liked nothing better than to see my name on a delinquency notice."



Soaring to success

Services

Joseph E. Fluet III
CEO and Chairman of the Board
MAG Aerospace

Woodbridge, VA
Founded: 2009



Protecting a nation

Technology

Phyllis Winchester Newhouse
CEO
Xtreme Solutions, Inc.

Atlanta, GA
Founded: 2002

Joe Fluet believes there are three ways to be sure you are hiring a leader. The first is to “find the unicorn” – the natural-born leader. The second is to train someone. But, to be certain, “hire a veteran.”

Why? Because “veterans are a sure bet,” Fluet says. “You can get someone who is trained and skilled in leadership.”

A decorated veteran himself, Fluet spent 20 years in active and reserve forces. He was a combat commander in several aviation and special operations units overseas, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

His inquisitiveness and ambition led him to become a lawyer. He clerked for the U.S. Court of Appeals and was an attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor before joining a prominent litigation firm.

It was during this heady period that the 9/11 terrorist attacks occurred and duty called. In 2004 he traded his suits for fatigues. Fluet deployed to Afghanistan with a mission: to build an Afghan Air Force.

He witnessed firsthand the critical role that military aviation and ISR – intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance – played in the mission’s success. While there, he decided to build a company to provide real-time situational awareness to customers around the world.

Though he still loved the law – and, in fact, founded a new law firm while he simultaneously founded MAG Aerospace – his passions changed. “I missed managing, leading, creating – all the things that go into entrepreneurship,” Fluet says.

Fluet polished the idea for MAG – which delivers manned aerial surveillance, unmanned aircraft systems and a host of other aviation services to federal, civilian and commercial customers around the world – in his spare bedroom. MAG today boasts 1,000 employees on six continents.

Fluet took plenty of calculated risks in building MAG. He and a few partners invested their life savings and mortgaged their homes to purchase \$4.5 million in aircraft so they could win and execute on their first contract. They also partnered with a private equity firm to support MAG’s soaring growth, and they acquired BOSH Global Services in 2015 to provide ISR services for manned and unmanned aircraft, a distinct competitive advantage.

These decisions solidified MAG’s reputation and brand. Also embedded in the company’s success is a commitment to “God and country first. We won’t do any work for any entity that doesn’t align with the values we hold dear.”

That does not diminish MAG’s determination to lead. “We don’t seek win-win,” he says. “We want to win.”

As the youngest child in a family of modest means, Phyllis Newhouse relied on hard work, ethics, her love of technology and a desire to make a difference to become recognized as one of the top leaders in the technology industry.

From her days as an Army officer to her time at the Pentagon, Newhouse, a service-disabled veteran, has been at the forefront of developing and improving computer technologies for defense and homeland security. As CEO of Xtreme Solutions, an information technology services provider, she is passionate about helping clients by offering state-of-the-art cybersecurity and forensic analysis expertise.

Newhouse’s path from working for the government to working with the government began with establishing the Pentagon’s Cyber Espionage Task Force. The skills she learned from her 22 years of service resulted in Xtreme Solutions.

“The military is five years ahead of the current trends in the market, so when I left the Pentagon I thought, ‘I’ve already done this kind of work,’” she says. “Why not pursue a cybersecurity start-up?” Failure, she said, “was simply not an option.”

Veterans and entrepreneurs, she says, are comfortable with being uncomfortable – a valuable quality for building a high-growth company, Newhouse explains: “I think by taking on this leap of faith to start a business and scale, I have two of the most distinct qualities that entrepreneurs and service members share, and that’s discipline and concentration. In scaling a business, I pride myself on the mindset of ‘mission focus.’”

Newhouse is heavily involved in supporting veterans and maintains a passion for supporting homeless veterans in Atlanta. “I didn’t realize what is going on with our veteran population,” she says. “This is a community forgotten about, and it totally broke my heart.”

“We started a five-year plan to help stop the cycle of homelessness for veterans in the metro Atlanta communities,” she says. “These vets don’t need sympathy; they needed a solution.”

Newhouse also advocates for Women Veterans of Social Justice, whose goal is to recognize the challenges and barriers faced by today’s women in the military and those veterans who are not allowed to use Veterans Affairs resources because of their specific discharge.

“Veterans aren’t a charity; they’re an investment,” she says. “And part of my commitment is to be a part of the philanthropic community that will support the 21 million men and women who put their lives on the line for this country.”

EY Entrepreneurial Winning Women™

Winning big: breaking through and creating outsized value

At EY, our purpose is to build a better working world. That means for everyone, inclusively. A decade ago, when we realized women entrepreneurs faced unique challenges that held them back, we stepped in and created a program in the US to address the gaps.

Today, EY Entrepreneurial Winning Women is a vibrant global community of more than 400 women entrepreneurs across 50 countries. Creating new products and solutions in life sciences and consumer products, technology and manufacturing, and every other sector, they are setting the pace for generations of ambitious women who are looking up and wondering whether entrepreneurship can be a viable, rewarding career option.

Through access to EY's talented professionals and our rich networks throughout the entrepreneurial ecosystem, along with injections of operational know-how, these ambitious founders secure the information, advice and contacts they need to scale their companies to full potential.

And in many cases, their great work now extends well beyond their primary businesses through investments and initiatives designed to advance women, create equal opportunity and improve the world around them.

In short, they have become the role models they never had. Join us in saluting this impressive group of women founders and in welcoming the Entrepreneurial Winning Women North America Class of 2017 into the EY family. With our focus and your help, the sky is no limit to what they can accomplish, individually and collectively.



Dr. Nazli Azimi, PharmD, PhD, Bioniz Therapeutics – Irvine, CA

Bioniz Therapeutics is a biotechnology company dedicated to the discovery and development of first-in-class therapeutics for the treatment of autoimmune diseases and cancer. Bioniz is introducing a new class of therapeutics for several unmet medical conditions such as T-cell leukemia, a rare form of blood cancer; alopecia areata, an autoimmune mediated hair loss disease; and celiac disease, an autoimmune disease of the gut.



Nina Tandon, EpiBone, Inc. – Brooklyn, NY

EpiBone is developing revolutionary technology that will allow patients to receive bone grafts, made from their own stem cells. EpiBone's pioneering process uses a scan of the patient's bone defect and the patient's own stem cells to construct and cultivate a defect-specific bone graft. The result is a precision-engineered bone graft, simplified surgical procedure and shorter recovery time for the hundreds of thousands of patients who undergo bone-related surgeries each year.



Christina Stembel, Farmgirl Flowers – San Francisco, CA

Farmgirl Flowers is an e-commerce flower company that aims to change the way flowers are delivered by offering better options using ethically and honestly sourced materials. This approach has enabled the company to offer designer-quality flowers at e-commerce prices, featuring an eco-friendly design aesthetic (think upcycled burlap coffee bags acquired from local roasters) that appeals to a new market of consumers.



Saryu Nayyar, Gurucul – El Segundo, CA

Gurucul is changing the way government and enterprises protect themselves against insider threats, cyber fraud, login credentials hijacking and data breaches. The company's advanced security analytics technology uses machine learning and predictive anomaly detection algorithms to identify suspicious activity that appears "normal" to traditional information security products. Its mission is to help organizations protect their intellectual property, regulated information and brand reputation from insider threats and sophisticated external attacks.



Ellen Bennett, Hedley & Bennett – Los Angeles, CA

Hedley & Bennett is a premium apron and workwear brand that outfits some of the best chefs in the world. The company's products are handcrafted from start to finish using top-grade materials and are built to handle the rigorous hustle and bustle of professional kitchens. Hedley & Bennett outfits more than 4,000 restaurants in the US and sells to major retail stores. The company's goal is to become the top outfitter to the culinary world and beyond, cultivating a lasting community of chefs and creators who wear their aprons and work gear loudly and proudly.



Lori Torres, Parcel Pending – Irvine, CA

Parcel Pending is a package management solutions provider that makes life easier for residents, property managers and couriers. Parcel Pending's electronic locker systems provide a secure and simple way for couriers to deliver packages and offer 24/7 access to residents, allowing them to pick up packages on their own schedule. The company's proprietary software assumes all the customer service responsibilities for package delivery, notification and retrieval, delivering peace of mind for property managers and residents at the same time.

**Sarah Ribner and Jess Edelstein, PiperWai, LLC – Philadelphia, PA**

PiperWai Natural Deodorant is an aluminum-free deodorant made with the absorbent power of activated charcoal. Its all-natural, uniquely effective ingredients neutralize odor and absorb moisture without irritating sensitive skin and, best of all, stand up to the most active lifestyles. This American-made innovative deodorant solution from PiperWai has redefined an entire category in the deodorant market, influencing the way consumers achieve their wellness goals. By bringing a safe, effective and easy solution to the masses, PiperWai is empowering consumers to make better choices in their everyday personal care regimens.



Laura Behrens Wu, Shippo – San Francisco, CA

Shippo provides the platform to help businesses succeed through shipping. Its multi-carrier API and dashboard help merchants get real-time rates, print labels, automate international paperwork, track packages and facilitate returns to reduce shipping costs, streamline process and enhance customer satisfaction.

**Sarah Segal, SQUISH Candy – Montreal, Quebec**

SQUISH is a leading Montreal-based retail candy company specializing in artisanal gummies. With an emphasis on quality ingredients and a creative flavor palette, SQUISH offers more than 100 gummy varieties in unique flavors and shapes with the widest vegan and vegetarian options in the market. Focused on a personalized shopping experience, SQUISH offers retail, online and social media experiences that engage directly with customers.

**Cathy Forsyth, Strongbow Consulting Group, LLC – Wyckoff, NJ**

Strongbow helps drive network transformation for the world's largest enterprises by optimizing global voice and data networks to better connect the data centers, applications and people that run your business. In today's market there are few places for enterprises to turn to for impartial counsel and support. Strongbow prides itself on its ability to provide unbiased guidance, working hand-in-hand with clients to make positive change a reality. The company unlocks the best possible solutions for enterprises, yielding better performing, more reliable global networks that return millions in savings to the bottom line.

**Fran Dunaway, TomboyX – Seattle, WA**

TomboyX – bearing the slogan, “We are not for everybody, but we are for any body” – is rethinking underwear, loungewear and swimwear and fulfilling the need for comfortable, functional underwear for active, plus size, and unconventional women and people. The brand promises inclusivity, body positivity and celebrating you for being unapologetic about who you are. TomboyX's mission is to help customers feel comfortable in their own skin.

**Sarah Dusek, Under Canvas Inc. – Bozeman, MT**

Under Canvas creates luxury safari-style camps at scenic US sites, currently in several National Park locations (Yellowstone, Glacier, Moab and Zion Utah). Under Canvas also creates pop-up style luxury camps for private corporate retreats, adventures, weddings, private events and experiential marketing events and brand activations, providing a green, luxurious solution to experiencing beautiful places. Under Canvas creates an eco-friendly experience that makes the great outdoors accessible in comfort and style, acting as a bridge for people to get outside and enjoy nature.
