



ZONTA

CLUB OF
WASHINGTON, D.C.

BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Presents: NGOCSW67 Parallel Event
Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Women in STEM Closing the Digital Gender Divide, Amplifying Women's Voices

NGOCSW Parallel Event Title: Women in STEM Closing The Digital Gender Divide, Amplifying Women's Voices

Description of your Parallel Event: Women in STEM closing digital gender divide, amplifying women's voices through global interconnectedness to educational and economic opportunities. Technology has accelerated unique experiences for women and girls through global interconnectedness, amplifying women voices for freedom, life, equality, gender equity and parity. Women in STEM are building knowledge societies, advancing human capital, and providing educational and economic opportunities for women and girls globally, in all sectors. How do we advocate for gender-responsive policies with specific actions to tackle the issues. What's the best approach to increase investments in STEM Education and digital skills development, to ensure lifelong access to learning and economic opportunities of the future.

Moderators:

Carletha Cole, Advocacy Committee Chair, Zonta Club of Washington DC;

Lisa Burton, District 3 Governor, Zonta International;

Sonya Baskerville, Advocacy Chair, Zonta International

Panelist:

Zonta International Amelia Earhart Fellowship Recipients:

Maya Nasr, PhD Candidate, Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, MIT;

Katherine Opacich, PhD Candidate, Aerospace Engineering, University of Dayton;

Other speakers include

Grace Jerry, Executive Director, Inclusive Friends Association;

Melissa Matlock, Director, Gender and Social, Inclusion, ACDI/VOCA

Carletha Cole



Carletha “CeCe” Cole is a Real Estate Concierge with Keller Williams Capital Properties offering state-of-the art real estate services globally and host of the podcast, Take Away Tuesdays, with industry experts. She is the CEO of Silke Endress International, a multi-digital media platform for executive women who advocates for gender equity, inclusion and diversity.

Carletha has been supporting United Nations initiatives for over 25 years after meeting the prominent Ghanaian diplomat, Kofi Annan, who served as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Through her advocacy, Carletha is a champion of women’s rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, promoting access to education, gender equality, equity, and peaceful, sustainable development. She is the Zonta Club of Washington DC Advocacy Committee Chair and former Director, immediate past president of the U.S. National Committee of UN Women serving Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, as well as serves in the capacity as committee VP for two other international organizations with focus on women in media, maternal health and the girl child.

Carletha is a mentor to young women from President Barack Obama’s Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders Institute and partners with organizations to mentor young emerging leaders from various countries.

Lisa Burton



A member of the Zonta Club of New Rochelle since 2008, Lisa Burton has served in numerous roles in her club and is excited to be leading District 3 in the 2022-2024 biennial. A proud alumna of a woman’s college, the mission and spirit of Zonta has always resonated with her. Lisa’s professional career was in the field of law firm administration and financial services. After more than 30 years she retired as the Practice Group Manager of an international firm in 2015.

In 2018, Lisa came out of retirement to become a part time legislative aide for a Westchester County legislator. As a legislative aide, she is responsible for mentoring high school interns, investigating constituent concerns, and researching proposed legislation.

In addition to her work with Zonta, Lisa is an active member of her community. She has been a member of the Bryn Mawr Club of Westchester, the New Rochelle League of Women Voters, the Westchester Black Women’s Political Caucus, New Rochelle Against Racism, is the Vice President of the Board of the New Rochelle Boys & Girls Club, is a on the board of the Energy Justice Law and Policy Center and continues to support her school district’s PTA.

Sonya Baskerville

Sonya Baskerville is the manager for Bonneville Power Administration's Office of National Relations and also currently acting as Director for Intergovernmental Affairs. In that role, she is BPA's liaison to the Department of Energy, other executive branch agencies, the Congress, energy trade organizations, and other stakeholders. Sonya was BPA's Assistant General Counsel for Transmission in BPA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) from 2002-2005.



Prior to that, Sonya was a staff attorney in the corporate section of OGC for 10 years. Sonya earned a B.S. Engineering from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1989 and a Juris Doctor from Tulane University in 1992. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (and The Federal City Alumnae Chapter), Zonta Club of Washington, DC, Energy Bar Association, American Bar Association, American Association of Blacks in Energy, Women in Government Relations, and the U.S. Member of the Columbia River Treaty Permanent Engineering Board.

Maya Nasr

Maya is a PhD candidate in the Aerospace Engineering department at MIT, working with Prof. Jeffrey Hoffman on the Mars Oxygen ISRU Experiment (MOXIE) for NASA Jet Propulsion Lab's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover. A native of Lebanon, she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Aerospace Engineering from MIT in 2018 and 2021 respectively. She has previously worked on several projects including NASA's Cassini mission activity on Titan, the OneWeb satellites network, the MIT KitCube Satellite, Zero Robotics ISS programming competition and the AquaMAV at Imperial College London.



Her interdisciplinary research interests are in spacecraft operations, engineering systems/systems engineering, technology strategy, and international space law, policy and ethics. Outside of MIT, she loves traveling around the world, painting, and writing Arabic poetry.

She is passionate about increasing global representation and access in the space sector and bringing awareness to nationality-based discrimination in career opportunities for foreign nationals. Maya is also interested in entrepreneurship and has organized MIT's Global Startup Workshop in Colombia and Global Startup Labs (GSL) in Peru. She has received a series of awards including the Zonta International Amelia Earhart Fellowship (2022), and MIT Rene H. Miller Prize for Excellence in Systems Engineering (2022).

Katherine Opacich

Katherine Opacich is a doctoral student in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. Her research focuses on plasma assisted ignition and combustion through the application of nanosecond discharges. Ms. Opacich's research is in collaboration with the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and looks to explore the benefits and limitations of nanosecond discharges to assess their practicality for implementation in air breathing propulsion, internal combustion engines, and stationary power generation settings.



Prior to her doctoral studies, Ms. Opacich graduated from the University of Dayton with Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering and Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering degrees. She is a recipient of the Amelia Earhart Fellowship, a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, an American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) student member, and a teaching assistant. In her free time, she volunteers at outreach programs aimed at introducing and inspiring K-12 students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Melissa Matlock



As director of gender and social inclusion, Melissa Matlock develops strategies to help empower women and youth by integrating considerations related to gender, youth, and other marginalized populations across ACIDI/VOCA's projects and new business efforts. Melissa has over 12 years of experience working on gender, finance, value chains, access to technology and market development issues.

Prior to joining ACIDI/VOCA in 2019, Melissa provided technical assistance and managed agricultural finance and market development projects at Connexus Corporation and the SEEP Network. She also served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Costa Rica. Melissa holds a BA in global affairs and economics from North Central College and an MS with distinction in gender, development, and globalization from The London School of Economics and Political Science. She is fluent in Spanish.

Grace Jerry

Grace Alache Jerry is a Human right/Disability advocate, Peace promoter, a Recording artiste and a strong gender advocate with special interest Democracy and ending violence against women and girls with disabilities. She is working to create an inclusive world where everyone counts.

Within the last few years Grace has brought freshness to advocacy efforts in Nigeria through her unique blend of passion and music bringing prominence to the important roles Persons with disabilities can play in National development. She is the founder and Executive Director of Inclusive Friends Association. A Mandela Washington Fellow of the Young African Leaders initiative (2015 cohort).



First ever Ms. Wheelchair Nigeria Queen (2011/2012) and formal official Spokesperson on Disability in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) with Water Aid Nigeria. Since 2012, Grace Jerry and Inclusive Friends have organized special benefit concert tagged "Music for Toilets" to provide awareness and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene facilities for schools serving children with Disabilities in Plateau State, Nigeria. Her organization has worked with Disability rights fund (DRF) to advocate for increased budget allocation to implement Nigeria's National sexual and reproductive health policy for Women and girls with disabilities.

In June 2015, Grace Jerry participated in the Young African Leadership initiative of President Barak Obamas Mandela Washington fellowship, where she joined other 500 young Africans to undergo 6 weeks leadership exchange program. Highlight of the event was the production of the YALI tribute song by Grace Jerry and introducing President Barak Obama on stage during the Presidential summit town hall meeting.

Special thanks to all involved to make this Parallel Event a success. From the moderators, speakers, attendees, NGOCSW/NY team, Zontians globally, thank you!!!

Together we can achieve gender equity!



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BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

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**BUILD A BETTER WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**



**Carletha "CeCe" Cole, Advocacy Chair
Zonta Club of Washington DC
Host & Co-Moderator**



**Lisa Burton, District 3 Governor
Zonta International
Co-Moderator**



**Sonya Baskerville, Zonta International
Advocacy Chair
Co-Moderator**

**Tuesday, March 7, 2023
12pm-2pm**

NGOCSW Parallel Event

Women in STEM Closing The Digital Gender Divide, Amplifying Women's Voices

Join in the conversation with some powerful women as they share insights on women in STEM building knowledge societies, advancing human capital, and providing educational and economic opportunities for women and girls globally, in all sectors.

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83605948320>

Guest Panelists:



**Grace Jerry, Executive Director
Inclusive Friends Association**



**Melissa Matlock, Director,
Gender and Social
Inclusion, ACDI/VOCA**

Zonta International Amelia Earhart Fellowship Recipients



**Maya Nasr, PhD Candidate,
Department of Aeronautics and
Astronautics, MIT**



**Katherine Opacich, PhD
Candidate, Aerospace
Engineering, University of Dayton**