Good day to all in our FWA community! I love November for so many reasons: it's a month full of many observations and memories, the Fall foliage creates beautiful scenic views, we get snippets of “Indian summer”, and it’s deemed the beginning of the holiday season.

Where we've been, the power of the FWA, and its programming:

As mentioned in my letter last month, the FWA's Back2Business re-entry program kicked off on October 14th with a virtual informational workshop which provided interested individuals with a chance to learn more about the FWA's Back2Business program, discuss re-entry challenges, and meet this year's participating organizations: BMO Capital Markets, Citizens, MUFG, and New York Life. Applications were accepted through November 12th. I wish all those that have applied the best of luck with any interview opportunities.

November is an impactful month full of so much meaning. Here's some notable reasons why:

• Daylight Savings Time, the practice of setting clocks an hour ahead for the summer and an hour back for winter, has been justified as a way of saving energy and a better use of light. Hopefully you didn't forget to “Fall back” on November 7th and move all non-digital clocks and watches back an hour. Don’t worry if you missed one – there's still time (get it - SMILE 😊)!
• November is National Native American Heritage month (also commonly referred to as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage month), a time to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories, as well as acknowledge the important contributions of Native people.
• “Movember” is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of all men in your life. This month's commitment takes on three serious issues facing men's health: prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and mental health. Here are two ways to help and show your support: grow a mustache and raise some money for charity - ladies you may want to pass on that one, but you can walk or run a distance of 60 miles for each of the 60 men lost to suicide each hour! Missed the NYC marathon? No worries, there are 15 days left that your fitness app can track your progress!
• November is also National Gratitude Month which is appropriate because it's also the month when Thanksgiving is celebrated. Thanksgiving is a day of
Gratitude. Gratitude is more than just saying thank you. Practicing gratitude daily gives you a deeper connection with yourself and has the ability to shift you from focusing on the negative to appreciating what is positive in your life. If everyone practiced daily gratitude, we could embrace gratitude's amazing powers to help shift not only change in ourselves, but the planet for the better. Love would grow and hate would decrease, and the world would start to experience and know true peace. I know times have been hard and often sad which is why we need to especially practice gratitude on Thanksgiving as well as indulge in some self-care given these unprecedented times.

- Dewali is India's biggest and most important national holiday of the year. This Festival of Lights lasts for five days and commenced on November 4th this year. It symbolizes victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance, and is celebrated all around the world. For those that have never experienced Dewali festivities consider adding it to your bucket list for next year and be ready for some beautiful clothing, delicious food, and cultural awareness.

- Hanukkah (Chanukah), also known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the re-dedication of the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem. It will begin at sundown on Sunday, November 28th and end at nightfall on Monday, December 6th.

- November is Military Family Month, a time when America honors and recognizes those unique sacrifices and challenges family members make in support of their loved ones in uniform.

- Did you know that all of the following are deemed American patriotic holidays: (i) Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January, (ii) Washington's Birthday in February, (iii) Memorial Day in May, (iv) Flag Day in June, (v) Independence Day in July, (vi) Constitution Day in September, (vii) Election Day in November, (viii) Veterans Day, also in November, and (ix) the Bill of Rights Day in December?

Allow me to elaborate on the two patriotic holidays that occurred this month: Election Day and Veterans Day. November 2nd was Election Day. People (especially women) have sacrificed their lives for us to have the ability to vote on one annual day set by law for the general elections of federal public officials. I hope that those that have the privilege to vote took advantage of it either in person or via the early voting option that was provided. For those that wanted to, but couldn't or weren't registered in the right district, please take this time to update your address, familiarize yourself with your local area polling locations and rules, and get ready for future elections. YOU matter and so does your vote! We can't help make the world a better place if we don't voice our opinions via voting when the opportunities arise.

Similar to Dewali, Veterans Week was celebrated over five days this year (i.e., from November 8th through November 12th). Veterans Day is a day when we honor all who have served in the U.S. military. November 11th is when Veterans Day is observed every year because the fighting in World War I ended with a truce on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

Those that truly know me are aware of how patriotic I am. Therefore, I'd like to take a moment to again acknowledge everyone in the military (past, present, and future service members) - especially those that are helping to protect us right now. As the world continues to be faced with many unprecedented matters and lots of turmoil, we pray and solute each and every one of you. Thank you for your service!
Susan Harper, the FWA’s Military Liaison and FWA President (2012-2013), and I had the honor and privilege of co-moderating an interview with the Honorable Gina Ortiz Jones, Under Secretary of the United States Air Force. Gina Ortiz Jones was selected by President Joseph Biden and approved by the United States Senate in July 2021 to be the 27th Under Secretary of the United States Air Force, the second highest-ranking civilian leader. A Filipina American, she is the first woman of color to become the Under Secretary of any military branch and the second member of the LGBTQ+ community. Our candid conversation with Under Secretary Jones included a discussion about her journey, roles and responsibilities, strategic competition with China, the recruitment and advancement of diverse women and men as the military seeks to build a diverse pipeline, and progress on sexual assault. Sorry if you were unable to join this exclusive virtual event on November 9th. Chatham House rules applied so there will not be a recording available for replay. This is just one of the amazing opportunities that the FWA brings to its community. Ah – the power of the FWA!

Missed any of the other FWA virtual events? Have no fear, they were recorded and can be viewed at your leisure on the FWA website.

Where we are:

Speaking of awareness, as part of my Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (I.D.E.A.) theme, the second event in the FWA's Courageous Conversations Series occurred last night, November 15th.

GivingTuesday is a global day of generosity that will take place on November 30th. It was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Over the past nine years, this idea has grown into a global movement that inspires millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity. It is an opportunity for people around the world to come together to thank, help, give, show kindness, and share what they have with those in need. Every contribution you make to the FWA will help us fulfill our mission to promote the professional development and advancement of all women through education, mentorship, scholarships, networking, and alliances across the financial community. The FWA is able to continue its mission because of your support and generosity, but we need your help to reach at least $15,000, our minimum goal, by November 30th. It is never too early to donate to the FWA's Giving Tuesday campaign #GivingTuesday2021 - FWA of New York, Inc. Online donations are quick and easy using our secure systems payment methods. We welcome donations of all sizes. Thanks in advance for your continued support.

If you can't provide help via financial assistance to others in appreciation of one's own success or good fortune then consider donating your time and volunteer with the FWA's various mentorship initiatives or financial literacy programs, perform a random act of kindness for a neighbor, help a child in need, participate in fundraisers and charitable events, volunteer at your local senior living community, plant a tree, or recycle your plastics at a local recycling center - just to name a few options.

Speaking of generosity, Min Santandrea, the founder and CEO of SantM, a functional luxury, comfort chic, handmade in Italy footwear brand, not only spoke to us on October 21st about the structure, wellness, and importance of our feet, but has graciously provided a discount coupon offer to the FWA community. Yes, shoes and/or slippers will be delivered directly to you upon purchase. Check it out and
Where we're going:

Lastly, November is National Family Caregivers Month – a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It also offers an opportunity to raise awareness of care-giving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers. Per the American Association for Long-term Insurance, did you know that the average caregiver is a women around 46 years of age and that 40% of caregivers have to switch from working full time to part-time?

Similarly, November is National Long-term Care Awareness Month. Did you know that 70% of men and women over the age of 65 need some kind of long-term care services which can be expensive and can take a toll on the family as a whole as they try to figure out payment, roles of family members, and other logistics of making long-term decisions for a loved one. The FWA's New Jersey committee will be partnering with Lantern Hill Senior Living Community and hosting a luncheon event on December 1st featuring a distinguished panel comprised of practitioners that will explore the various dimensions of navigating this very emotional, timely, and relevant topic. Let's not only show support to those giving and receiving long-term care, but attend this FWA event titled “Difficult Conversations: Child/Parent Role Reversal”.

As this year winds down (approximately 45 days left), we are mindful of competing priorities and virtual platform fatigue so we will limit our December events. I would be remiss if I didn't mention our event on December 2nd regarding LIBOR transition. Hear from an amazing and dynamic panel as they discuss the movement of the financial markets away from using London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) as the interest rate benchmark to using alternative “risk free” benchmark rates (“RFRs”). Keep in mind that LIBOR's departure is effective December 31st, and will impact us all so join us for "LIBOR – Going, Going, Gone: 2022 and Beyond". Click that link to register!

In closing, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of the distinguished speakers, our corporate sponsors, allies, mentors, mentees, Pacesetters, FWA Leadership Council, FWA Board, all other FWA constituents, and especially the FWA office team. Each of you are known, valued and loved! THANK YOU ALL for the volunteerism, partnership, support, and dedication. It takes a village and together we will continue to be the unwavering champions across the financial industry - making a difference one person at a time!

Best wishes to all for a safe, healthy, and enjoyable rest of November.

Hermina "Nina" Batson
FWA President 2021-2023

FWA connects a vibrant community of dynamic financial professionals and proactive institutions focused on development and empowerment to advance leadership growth and accelerate the success of all women in finance.